



Lost Child Policy

Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School

Policy Written: 11th March 2026

Policy Review: 11th March 2027

Policy Overview

At Heathfield Swim School & Swim Stars South East, the safety and well-being of all children in our care is our highest priority. We are committed to following safeguarding legislation, including the Children Act 1989, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, in addition to Swim England guidelines. This policy outlines the procedures to be followed in the rare event that a child goes missing during a swimming lesson or related activity.

While the risk of a child going missing is minimised through strict supervision, maintaining appropriate child-to-teacher ratios, and ensuring secure premises, this policy ensures that immediate and appropriate actions are taken if such an incident occurs.

Aims

- To outline the procedure in the event that a child goes missing.
- To ensure compliance with UK Law, Swim England guidelines, and the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- To establish a clear framework for investigating and managing any incidents of a lost child.
- To provide clear communication protocols with parents, staff, and authorities.

Preventive Measures

1. Supervision: Children are supervised at all times during swimming lessons by qualified staff, in line with Swim England recommendations.

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2. Child-to-Teacher Ratios: We adhere to appropriate child-to-teacher ratios in all lessons, ensuring effective supervision. It is the responsibility of schools to provide additional parental support / staffing support to adhere to ratios relating to swimming lessons.

3. Poolside Monitoring: Parents or guardians are encouraged to remain poolside during lessons to reduce the risk of separation.

4. Hand-Over Procedures: Teachers ensure children are handed back to their parents/guardians at the end of each lesson. Emergency contact details are readily available for all children in case of issues.

5. Controlled Access: Visitors to the swim school are always supervised, and gates/doors are secured to prevent unauthorised entry or exit.

Procedure for a Lost Child

In the event that a child goes missing, the following steps must be taken immediately:

1. Alert and Secure

- The teacher or responsible staff member will immediately secure the safety of the other children in the class.
- Another teacher will be appointed to continue the class or supervise the group while the search is initiated.

2. Immediate Search

- A thorough search of the pool area, changing rooms, toilets, and immediate surroundings is conducted.
- All doors, gates, and potential exit points will be checked to ensure they are secure.

3. Escalation

- If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Swim School Manager or nominated lead is informed.
- Additional staff, including other teachers and volunteers (if available), will assist in a comprehensive search of the entire facility, including external areas like car parks, playgrounds, and adjacent buildings.

4. External Support

- If the child is not found after 10 minutes, the Police will be contacted immediately, providing them with the child's description, last known location, and details of the search conducted so far.
- The child's parents/guardians will be informed immediately once the Police are contacted.

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5. Reporting to Authorities

- In accordance with Swim England guidelines and UK safeguarding protocols, if the child cannot be located, the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) may be notified to offer further support and advice.

Investigation

Once the child is found or if the child remains missing, an internal investigation must take place to understand what happened and prevent a recurrence. The following actions will be undertaken:

1. Incident Report

An incident report must be created by the Swim School Manager. This report should include:

- Date, time, and location of the incident.
- Staff/volunteers involved and present.
- Names of all children present at the time.
- Details of when the child was last seen and the events leading up to the child being lost.
- Steps taken to search for the child.
- Time the Police and parents were informed.

2. Written Statements

- Written statements will be collected from all staff and witnesses involved in the incident, including teachers, volunteers, and parents.

3. Full Investigation

- A full investigation will be conducted, including a review of CCTV (if available), access controls, and safeguarding policies. This may involve discussions with Swim England's safeguarding team and other relevant bodies.

4. Insurance Notification

- The incident will be reported to the swim school's insurance provider as required by the terms of the policy.

Managing People and Communication

The emotional well-being of both staff and parents is critically important in these situations. We will ensure:

1. Staff Support:

- Support will be offered to the staff member responsible for the child at the time of the incident, including access to further training if required.

- Any staff member who feels unable to continue working will be given immediate assistance and time off if necessary.

2. Parent/Guardian Communication:

- Clear, calm communication with the child's parents/guardians is essential to reassure them that all necessary steps are being taken.
- In the event of heightened emotions from parents, staff will maintain professionalism, and any threats or aggression will be managed appropriately, with the Police contacted if required.

3. Remaining Children:

- The remaining children will be reassured by staff and kept informed appropriately without causing distress. Staff will continue to supervise and care for them, ensuring their emotional needs are met.

Post-Incident Review and Safeguarding

After the incident and once the situation is resolved, a review will be conducted to assess:

- Preventive measures: Were all preventive measures followed correctly? How can they be improved?
- Staff training: Was staff prepared for such incidents? Are additional training sessions required?
- Policy review: Does the Lost Child Policy need amending to prevent a recurrence of the incident?

Any updates to the policy or additional training will be implemented swiftly, and the policy will be reviewed annually or after any incident of a missing child.

This policy complies with:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Swim England Safeguarding Guidelines.
- Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Procedures.

Conclusion

The safety of children is of paramount importance at Heathfield Swim School & Swim Stars South East. By adhering to this Lost Child Policy, we aim to minimise the risk of any child going missing, and if such an event occurs, respond in a swift, organised, and legally compliant manner. All staff, volunteers, and contractors are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and understand their responsibilities.

Contact Information

Swim School Manager:

Elliott Stevens

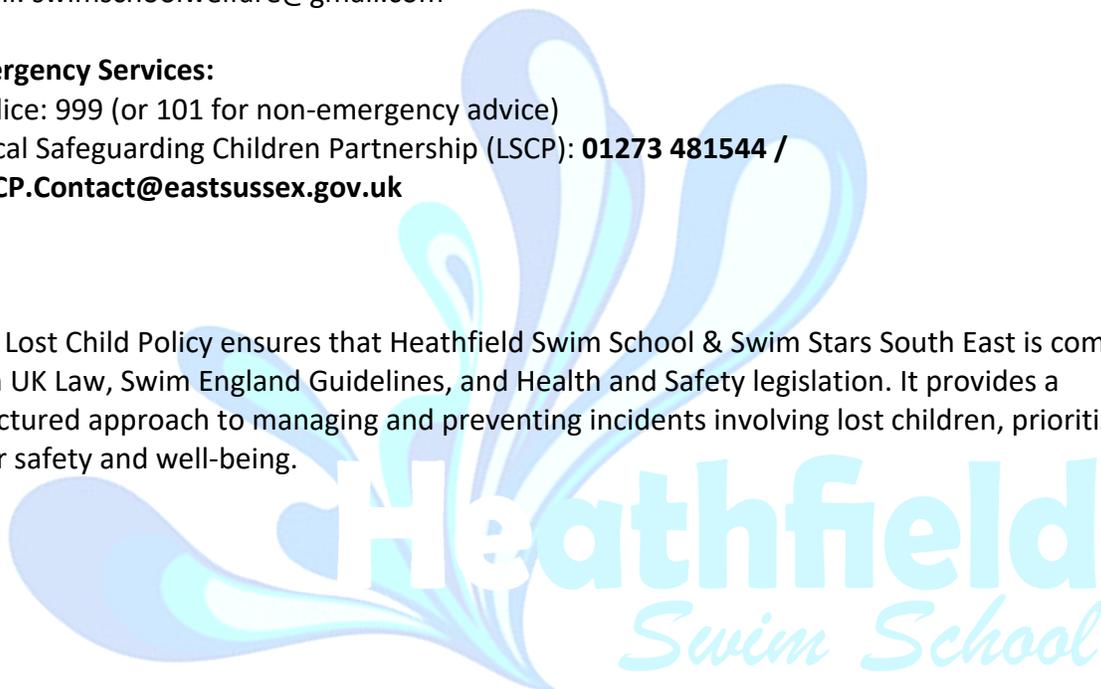
Phone: 07710039552

Email: swimschoolwelfare@gmail.com

Emergency Services:

- Police: 999 (or 101 for non-emergency advice)
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP): **01273 481544 /**
ESSCP.Contact@eastsussex.gov.uk

This Lost Child Policy ensures that Heathfield Swim School & Swim Stars South East is compliant with UK Law, Swim England Guidelines, and Health and Safety legislation. It provides a structured approach to managing and preventing incidents involving lost children, prioritizing their safety and well-being.



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