



Rye St Antony School
OXFORD

7g Children missing from education and missing pupil policy

Reviewed: 250121JRC/TJ

Governor Review: SH 041020

Review Dates: 260820
250919

MISSING PUPIL POLICY

Introduction

The safety of all our pupils is our paramount responsibility. A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation and so called 'honour based' violence. Every adult who works at the School is trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep pupils safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 and Annex A of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)*. Our staffing ratios are generous and are designed to ensure that every pupil is supervised, in ways appropriate to the age of the pupil, throughout the time when the pupil is in our care. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils.

This policy was drawn up having had regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements (paragraph 7 and 15), Early Years Statutory Framework (paragraph 3.73), National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 20.6) and Department for Education guidance Children Missing Education (September 2016).

Our *Pupil and Parent Handbook* and the document, *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Information for Parents* describes:

- the arrangements for pupils arriving at School and leaving the premises at the end of the day
- the qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in School
- the arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact the parent if the child fails to arrive at School without an explanation
- the physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the early years centre
- the supervision of the outdoor play area and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the school

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in the *Educational Visits Policy*. Both documents are on the parents' section of our website and can be provided to parents on request. We review these policies annually in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective.

Action to be followed by staff if a pupil fails to attend first day of school

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Headmistress without delay. The Headmistress will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

Children missing education and Duty to Report

The School's policy and practice is guided by DfE guidance, Children Missing Education (2016).

The School believes that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

The School recognises that Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance.

The School will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more without permission. The School will liaise with the local authority to agree the understanding of regular absence and reporting intervals.

Where a pupil has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the School and local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is, the School may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The School will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

The School will notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the register unless the pupil's name is being removed from the register at a standard transition point (eg Year 11 or 13)

When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A). Parents understand that should they remove their child from the School, every effort will be made to ensure that child is registered and is attending their next school.

All schools must also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

The School also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the school

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a pupil were found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:

Prep School (including EYFS pupils)

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other pupils were present
- Inform the Head of Nursery and the Pastoral Lead of the Prep School (the latter of whom will inform the Deputy Head Pastoral (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and the Head.
- Check with the Health Centre
- Check with Reception who will check the signing out/in sheet
- Ask adults and pupils for details of the most recent known whereabouts of the pupil.
- Occupy the other pupils, if possible in the area in which they would usually be occupied.
- As quickly as possible, arrange for one or more adults to search, both inside and out, carefully checking all areas.
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- The member of staff will take advice from the Deputy Heads, Pastoral Lead of the Prep School and the Head.
- The Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads or the Pastoral Lead of the Prep School) will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what actions have been taken and will be taken. Ask them to come to the School immediately.
- The Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads or the Pastoral Lead of the Prep School) will notify the Police immediately.
- The Heads (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads or the Pastoral Lead of the Prep School) will arrange for staff to search the rest of the school buildings and grounds.
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, members of staff will trace the route home, in case the pupil has taken this route.

Further procedures will be followed in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan. (See excerpt from the plan below)

Senior School

Within the school day (8.35 am – 4.00 pm) should a pupil be missing this procedure would be followed:

- The member of staff will telephone Reception (ext 100) or the School Office (ext 200/256) to report the situation and indicate the pupil's last known whereabouts.
- Administrative staff will check the day's absence list, the outings list, the signing-out list and then the various buildings including the Health Centre, Learning Development, the Performing Arts Building, the Sports Hall and local vicinity etc, with the help of other members of staff.
- Inform the Deputy Head (DSL) and the Head
- The pupil's friends will be asked, and if possible the missing pupil will be telephoned on the pupil's mobile telephone.
- Occupy all other pupils in their classrooms
- Check doors, gates and CCTV for signs of entry/exit

If the pupil is still missing, follow the procedures outlined above for the Prep School

Procedure during boarding hours

- Staff will check the house signing-out book, Out of School Visits form and diary.
- Staff will check with other staff and search buildings and grounds.
- The pupil's friends will be asked and if possible the pupil will be telephoned on the pupil's mobile phone.
- If the pupil is not located, the Senior Housemistress will be informed who will then deal with the matter if there is not a suitable explanation
- After another search, staff will inform the Head or, if that is not possible, then another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Housemistress, in consultation with the Head (or, on her behalf, another member of the Senior Leadership Team), will inform parents, guardians if appropriate and the Police.
- A Plan of Action will be prepared in accordance with the procedures of the Crisis Management Plan.

If the pupil is still missing, follow the procedures outlined above for the Prep School.

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the School, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an educational visit

- An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children are present.
- A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity.
- The remaining pupils will be kept occupied until arrangements are in place to return them to School
- The Head (or, if necessary, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) will be informed immediately by mobile telephone.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral, in consultation with the Head (or, on her behalf, another member of the Senior Leadership Team), will inform parents or guardians, if appropriate, and the Police
- The member of staff leading the outing should liaise with the venue manager and arrange a search.
- Further procedures will be followed in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan (see excerpt from the plan below)

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. The School will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil.
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral will speak with the parents to report the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the Education Safeguarding Advisory Team (ESAT) or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub if necessary), and she will then record in writing in a letter to the parents an account of the incident and a record of the meeting with the parents.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral will carry out a full investigation, involving, if appropriate, the Police and Education Safeguarding Advisory Team (ESAT).
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) (after discussion with the ESAT if appropriate).
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The written report of the incident will record details of time, place, members of staff and pupils, when the pupil was last seen, the circumstances in which the pupil went missing, an outline of what was understood to have happened, the purpose of the educational visit (if appropriate), the length of time during which the pupil was missing and an initial explanation of how the pupil appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.
- All relevant procedures will be reviewed in the light of the incident.

Procedures to be followed by staff when a pupil is not collected on time

If a pupil is not collected within 30 minutes of the agreed collection time, and no message has been received, the contact numbers for the parent or carers will be called. If there is no answer, the School will begin to call the emergency numbers for this pupil. If the difficulty arises out of main school hours a senior member of staff on duty will take responsibility, or delegate this task. While the pupil remains on site, the pupil will be safely looked after and, if appropriate, taken to supper with the boarders and later to the Boarding House.

If there is no response from the parents or carers within a reasonable time (one hour), the Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Housemistress will be contacted and Social Care and the Police contacted also if appropriate. Social Care will make emergency arrangements for the pupil and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police.

Parents are asked to remember that we shall undertake to look after the pupil safely throughout the time that the pupil remains in our care, until such a time as s/he has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the pupil's safety. The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a pupil from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the pupil's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's safeguarding policy and procedures.

A full written report will be made of the incident.

Missing Pupil Procedure (from Crisis Management Plan)

- Were a pupil to go missing and efforts to locate the pupil prove unsuccessful, then the Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) will inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board and LADO without delay
- The school will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any Local Safeguarding Children Board investigation.

- The Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) will inform the Chairman of Governors.
- The Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) will inform ISI/Ofsted.
- The Head (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) will inform the School's insurers.
- If the pupil is located but found injured, then a report would be made to the Heads (or, on her behalf, the Deputy Heads, or, failing that, another member of the Senior Leadership Team) and the Bursar, and the Bursar will then inform the Health and Safety Executive.

A full record of all activities taken up to the point at which the pupil is found will be made for the incident report. Procedures will all be reviewed in the light of the incident.

Please see also the Missing Pupils' Statement in the *Induction Handbook for Housestaff*.

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Annex A: Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended	
1	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and — 21 Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
9	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.

11	8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
12	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
13	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
14	8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
15	8(1)(o) where— (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.