



## MISSING PUPIL POLICY

If a student goes missing from school either during the day, overnight or when returning to school at the start of term, the student's Housemaster / Housemistress or another responsible adult from the Senior Team should be immediately informed and should follow the procedures given below. At the start of any investigation into a student who is missing from school, the Headmaster and/or the Senior Deputy should be made aware of the concern.

### 1) During the Day:

- i. Upon discovering the student's absence, every effort must be made to:
  - discover his/her exact whereabouts
  - make contact with the student
  - discover his/her reasons for absence
  - discover his/her intentions
- ii. In order to help with the above, use should be made of the student's teachers, friends and associates:
  - to help contact the student via his/her mobile telephone.
  - to ascertain where and when the student was last seen in school.
  - to ascertain what emotional condition the student was in when last seen.
  - to help in a search of the buildings and the immediate environment.
- iii. If contact is made with the student, every assistance should be offered to ensure that the student is safe and able to return to school by the safest and quickest means. Actions taken by the HM under these circumstances will depend upon the response of the student to being contacted, the reasons for the student's absence and the student's location. The HM should offer advice to the student as to the safest course of action to follow and provide financial assistance if this is necessary to enable the student to stay safe. If the reasons for absence are personal and emotional in nature and the student is considered to be in a vulnerable condition the HM should try to ascertain as much detail as possible about the student's whereabouts and offer whatever support and reassurance that is necessary. The HM should try to maintain constant or at least regular contact with the student and seek assistance in making contact with the student's parents and/or the police.
- iv. If the student cannot be contacted or located within a reasonable amount of time (dependent upon the HM's knowledge of the student's attitude, circumstances, age and maturity) after the last known contact at school, and after a maximum period of one hour, the HM should make contact with the student's parents. Where reasonably possible, the school holds two emergency contact numbers for each pupil.

- v. The results of telephoning the parent could be:
- a) No answer received.
  - b) The person answering the call was not the parent and the HM is not reassured that the student is safe.
  - c) The parent answered the call and the student is not safe and at home and the parent is concerned.
  - d) The parent answered the call and the student is safe at home.

In the case of **a)** and **b)** above the HM should consider, with the help of the school's DSL, the degree of vulnerability of the student. If there is reason to suspect that the student may be at risk then the HM should contact the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and they can be contacted on 0300 123 2044. And referrals can be made to Customer First on [customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk) or on 0808 800 4005 (24hrs).

In the case of **c)** above the HM should advise the parent to:

- Contact all people and places the student is known to visit and to tell them that the student is missing and ask for their help in locating the student either by offering information or in helping to search for the student.
- Contact the family GP and local Accident and Emergency Centres in case the student has sustained an injury.
- Contact the local police station to inform them that the student is missing.

In the case of **d)** above, no further action is necessary.

## **2) Overnight:**

- vi. Discovery of a student who has gone missing overnight will most likely be made at morning roll call. It may also come to light in the event of a fire alarm or information being passed on from another student. As the time of the student's departure from school is likely to be less certain, the adult who discovers that the student is missing should inform the student's HM immediately and the procedures at i), ii), iii), and iv) above should be put into action simultaneously without delay.

## **3) Returning to School:**

- vii. If a student is missing from school at the beginning of term or after a half term break, it is most likely that this will be on account of a delay or cancellation of his/her method of transport. When such absence is detected the adult discovering the missing student should inform the student's HM immediately. The HM should then put into action i) and iii) above. If the student cannot be contacted or located within a reasonable amount of time (dependent upon the HM's knowledge of the student's attitude, circumstances, age and maturity) and after a maximum period of one hour, the HM should make contact with the student's parents to inform them of the student's failure to arrive at school. If there is no explanation for the student's failure to arrive at school and the student's parents are unable to assist with any explanation, then the HM should follow procedures given at point v) **c)** above.

### **Children Missing from Education**

The school enters pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to

establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

The school monitors pupils' attendance through the daily attendance register and addresses poor or irregular attendance.

The school has a safeguarding duty in respect of its pupils, and as part of this investigates any unexplained absences. The school has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing in education. All staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

When a pupil has been removed from the admission register a 'Removal from roll form' is completed stating where they are now being educated. The school always contacts the new school to check that the pupil has started there. If the school has not been informed of the new school or the pupil has not been added to their admission register, then a missing in education form is completed. Both of these forms are returned to the local authority.