



Missing Child Policy

Updated: 01-18
Prepared by: JUH/SHCC

Next Review 01-20
Approved by: ISB

This Policy applies throughout the School from the EYFS to Year 6.

Introduction

The welfare of all pupils at The Cavendish School is our paramount responsibility. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. We are aware that this may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. Absence may indicate parent or child mental health problems. Additionally it may indicate risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Taking into account factors such as the age of our pupils, the School considers that it is comparatively unlikely for our pupils to be exposed to these risks, but we remain alert to the possibility.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all our pupils safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure that our pupils are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a pupil is missing from School, this Policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff has read Part 1 and Annex A of *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2019). Our staffing ratios are generous and are designed to ensure that every pupil is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

This Policy has been drawn up with regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Early Years Statutory Framework (April 2017) and the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance *Children missing education* (September 2016).

Information for parents

Our Supervision of Pupils Policy describes:

- The arrangements for pupils arriving at School and leaving the premises at the end of the day
- The arrangements for supervising pupils whilst they are in School
- The arrangements for registering pupils 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 parents if a pupil fails to arrive at School without an explanation

- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for our pupils when on outings are set out in a detailed Educational Visits Policy which can be found on the School's website.

We review all our policies regularly in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils and read Part 1 and Annex A of the DfE's statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2019).

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

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register (PASS – the School's information management system) at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in her absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) without delay. If there are concerns about the pupil's whereabouts, the Headteacher and DSL/DDSL will notify the local relevant authority at the earliest opportunity using the appropriate form.

Where there are changes affecting the pupil (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected on the PASS system. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing pupils.

The School requires parents to provide contact details for two or more adults who can be contacted in an emergency.

Duty to report

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.

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 also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006,

as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

Procedure 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 child is found to be missing, we will take the following steps without delay:

- Take a register to ensure that all other pupils are present
- If age appropriate, check with the pupil's friends to see if they know the missing pupil's whereabouts
- Check the timetable to ascertain whether the pupil attended the previous lesson. Speak to that class teacher
- Contact the School Office (sending a reliable pupil with a sealed note if no adult is available). The School Secretary will carry out the following checks:
 - The absence list
 - The music lists in the Entrance Corridor
 - The 'Pupils Out' list
 - The Medical Room
 - The sports fixtures and activities lists
- Inform the Headteacher and the DSL/DDSL
- Ask all adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the missing child
- Occupy the other pupils in their classroom(s)
- The Headteacher will arrange for one or more adults to search the School premises, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards etc., where a pupil might hide. The adults will be given specific areas to search. Particular attention will be paid to:
 - Music practice rooms
 - Lavatories
 - Learning Support rooms
 - All classrooms
 - Cloakrooms
 - Gym
 - St Mary's Hall (NB check under retractable seating)
 - Playgrounds
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the pupil is still missing, the School will take the following steps without delay:

- The Headteacher will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Headteacher will ask the parents to come to the School at once
- The Headteacher or DSL/DDSL will notify the police
- Carry out a local area check on foot (along Inverness Street and Arlington Road)
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them

- The DSL/DDSL will inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured, a report will be made under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days after the accident

Kentish Town Police Station non-emergency: (9)101

Emergency Services: (9)999

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

- An immediate head count will be taken to ensure that all other pupils are present
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity
- If appropriate, contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Inform the Headteacher and the DSL/DDSL by mobile phone
- Immediately contact the police
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to School as soon as reasonably practicable
- The Headteacher will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Headteacher will ask the parents to come to the venue or the School, as appropriate, at once
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the LSCB and the LADO
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days after the accident

Procedure to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil
- Inform the Headteacher, who will inform the DSL/DDSL and then the police if appropriate
- The Headteacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- The Headteacher will instigate a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate)
- The investigation should obtain written statements from all concerned
- The investigation report should be detailed, covering: time; place; numbers of staff and children; when the pupil was last seen; what appears to have happened; the

purpose of the outing; the length of time that the pupil was missing and how they appear to have gone missing; lessons for the future

- Reinforce, through PSHCE or other appropriate medium, the pupils' understanding that they should not leave the premises or separate from a group on an educational visit or sports fixture

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.

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

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

Linked Policies

- Attendance Registration Procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Other Adults
- Educational Visits Policy
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy

Resource

DfE statutory guidance *Children missing education* (September 2016)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf