St Giles' C.E. Primary School

Lost Child Policy and Procedures

'You must love one another as I have loved you.' John 13 v 34.

Working together with love we will provide a happy and nurturing environment where all will, ***'learn to love and love to learn'***, making outstanding progress through an enriched and creative curriculum. Through our strong Christian ethos we will celebrate and embrace the richness of our community.

Learn to Love - Love to Learn
'You must love one another as I have loved you.' John 13 v 34

This protocol refers to pupils who register at school in the morning and then go missing during the school day without a satisfactory explanation.

School has procedures for pupils who fail to register, if there are concerns about the level of attendance the attendance policy is followed. . A separate procedure exists for Children Missing Education. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a child missing education as a child who is not on a school roll and has been out of education for more than 4 school weeks.

The term Children Missing from Education (CME) therefore refers to all children of compulsory school age who are neither registered at a school nor educated otherwise (i.e. home educated or privately educated.)

Missing Definition: When a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another. Is the pupil at significant risk?

A pupil missing during schools hours incident would be prioritised as significant risk' where: · The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include;

- Children on a plan (Family First, Child in Need, Looked After or Child Protection Plan)
- A disability and/or special educational needs / Substance misuse / Education health care plan ·

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger. · There are indications that the child/young person has already come to harm (CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc.)

Other contributory factors should be taken into consideration when determining if the pupil is at significant risk, for example;

Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?

- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family? Ø Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence? Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the child?

Procedure

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Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed. Staff will use professional judgement and risk asses the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupils' whereabouts before notifying the Police. A decision to notify Police will be made within 15 minutes.

Timeliness should be on a case by case basis. Designated Safeguarding Lead should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

School staff will try to locate the pupil and try to establish the whereabouts of them. School staff will contact home and try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if known.

Notifying the Police (If not found after 10-15 minutes)

The information required by the Police to assist in locating and returning the pupil to a safe environment is as follows:

The pupils name/s; date of birth; status (for example looked after child); responsible authority;

- Where and when they went missing;
- Previous missing episodes and where they went;
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with
- What the child was wearing plus any belongings they had with them such as bags, phone etc.; include mobile number.
- · Description and recent photo;
- · Medical history, if relevant;
- · Time and location last seen;
- · Circumstances or events around going missing with relevant safeguarding information;
- · Details of family, friends and associates:
- · Contact details of safeguarding lead if it was after school hours.

Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the police and act in accordance with police instructions.

Option 1 – if the child returns before the police have arrived then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 2 - if the child returns to school of their own volition, then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 3 - if the police locate the child and bring them back to the school the Police will conduct the safe and well interview and the school will follow School procedure. Where a pupil has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the pupil will be written and put in to place.

Reviewed 12.11.26
Next date of review: 30.11.30