

Thackley Primary School

Missing Pupil Policy

April 2018



Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all staff and parents/carers are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a pupil going missing from school.

All who work in the school have a duty to:

- protect the health and safety of staff and children at all times
- comply with agreed policies and procedures at all times
- always be aware of the dangers of children going missing

Every member of staff has equal responsibility in ensuring that pupils are adequately supervised and protected.

Context

A pupil going missing is very rare in a school, but it is an event that all service providers must be prepared for if the children in their care are to be appropriately safeguarded. The school's arrangements for safeguarding were found by Her Majesty's inspectors to be effective as in the short inspection of Thackley Primary School in 2015.

Procedure

Procedure to follow in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- STEP 1:** The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Executive Headteacher or Head of School immediately.
- STEP 2:** The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- STEP 3:** A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School.
- STEP 4:** The following areas will be systematically searched:
- All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - The staffroom
 - The library
 - The ICT Suite
 - The school grounds
- STEP 5:** Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- STEP 6:** If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- STEP 7:** If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
- STEP 8:** The missing pupil's teacher will produce a written report for the Executive Headteacher and Head of School, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- STEP 9:** If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a Child Looked After (CLA), or has any special educational needs and disabilities, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- STEP 10:** When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- STEP 11:** The Executive Headteacher or Head of School will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- STEP 12:** Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- STEP 13:** The Executive Headteacher or Head of School will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- STEP 14:** Appropriate disciplinary procedures may be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- STEP 15:** A written report will be produced and policies and procedures may be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

Procedure to Follow if a Pupil Absconds from School:

In the event that a pupil is seen to try and run out of the school premises the following procedure will be applied:

- STEP 1:** Alert the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School and Office Staff by sending another member of staff to seek assistance.
- STEP 2:** Group any remaining pupils together. If outside school return remaining pupils into the school building. If on a school visit keep the remaining pupils grouped. If they are aware of the circumstances reassure them.
- STEP 3:** At the same time one member of staff should follow the pupil at a distance, walking not running after, but attempt to keep the child in sight at all times. The staff member should telephone and remain in contact with school at all times whilst following. As soon as possible one further member of staff should be directed to locate and accompany the original staff member who is following.
- STEP 4:** If pupil has absconded and will not return, Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to inform the Police immediately or delegate SLT member to dial 999 and provide relevant information.
- STEP 5:** The Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to inform parents / guardians by telephone of current status.
- STEP 6:** On arrival of Police ensure all known facts are given to officers. A request can be made for the Police to assist with further parent liaison.
- STEP 7:** The Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to commence an incident log and accurately document all actions/ relevant factual information (ensure date and times of actions are recorded).
- STEP 8:** If deemed necessary reassure remaining pupils.
- STEP 9:** The Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to alert the Chair of Governors - in their absence Vice Chair of Governors or named safeguarding governor should be notified.
- STEP 10:** Police instructions should be implicitly followed. No press briefing should be made (unless directed by the Police) without the input of the local authority Media Relations Office.
- STEP 11:** The Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to hold a staff briefing when possible to advise of current situation. Ensure all staff are aware of the information sharing protocols.
- STEP 12:** Once resolved, school to conduct a case review and arrange a follow up meeting with parents / guardians. Ideally this should be conducted prior to the pupil's return to school.

Procedure to follow if a Pupil Becomes Missing / is Abducted from an Educational Visit:

- STEP 1:** Alert all adults supporting the visit. If groups are in different locations, recall all groups to an agreed central meeting point. Mobile telephone numbers MUST be exchanged prior to the commencement of the visit.
- STEP 2:** If the pupil is missing the Visit Leader should instigate a controlled search of the last known location/ building.
- STEP 3:** If the pupil is located the Visit Leader should immediately inform the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School who may direct the party to return to school or give permission to complete the Educational Visit.

If the pupil is NOT located:

- STEP 4:** Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to inform the Police immediately or delegate someone to dial 999 and provide relevant information. Police instruction should be implicitly followed.
- STEP 5:** Unless otherwise directed by the Police, the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School should inform parents/ guardians (by telephone) of current status. This conversation should be carefully managed and pertinent details shared with the Police.
- STEP 6:** On arrival of the Police the Visit Leader should ensure all known facts are given to officers. A request can be made for the Police to assist with further school and parent / guardian liaison.
- STEP 7:** Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to commence incident log and accurately document all actions / relevant factual information. Ensure times and dates are recorded.
- STEP 8:** If the child is not located or known to have been abducted the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School should alert the Local Authority Director of Education and school's Chair of Governors (in their absence the Vice Chair should be notified)

- STEP 9:** No press briefing should be made (unless directed by the Police) without the input of the local authority Media Relations Office.
- STEP 10:** Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to hold a staff briefing when possible to advise of the current situation. Ensure staff are aware of information sharing protocols.
- STEP 11:** Under the direction of the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School, all staff should work with multi-agency partners to ensure parents, guardians and family members are supported.
- STEP 12:** Executive Head Teacher or Head of School may discuss arrangements for post trauma counselling with the Local Authority.
- STEP 13:** Executive Head Teacher or Head of School to arrange an emergency Governing Body meeting to advise of the situation and review safeguarding policy, protocols and arrangements.

Policy Written in conjunction with the Attendance Policy 2018

Date written: April 2018

Agreed by Governors:

Date to be reviewed: May 2021