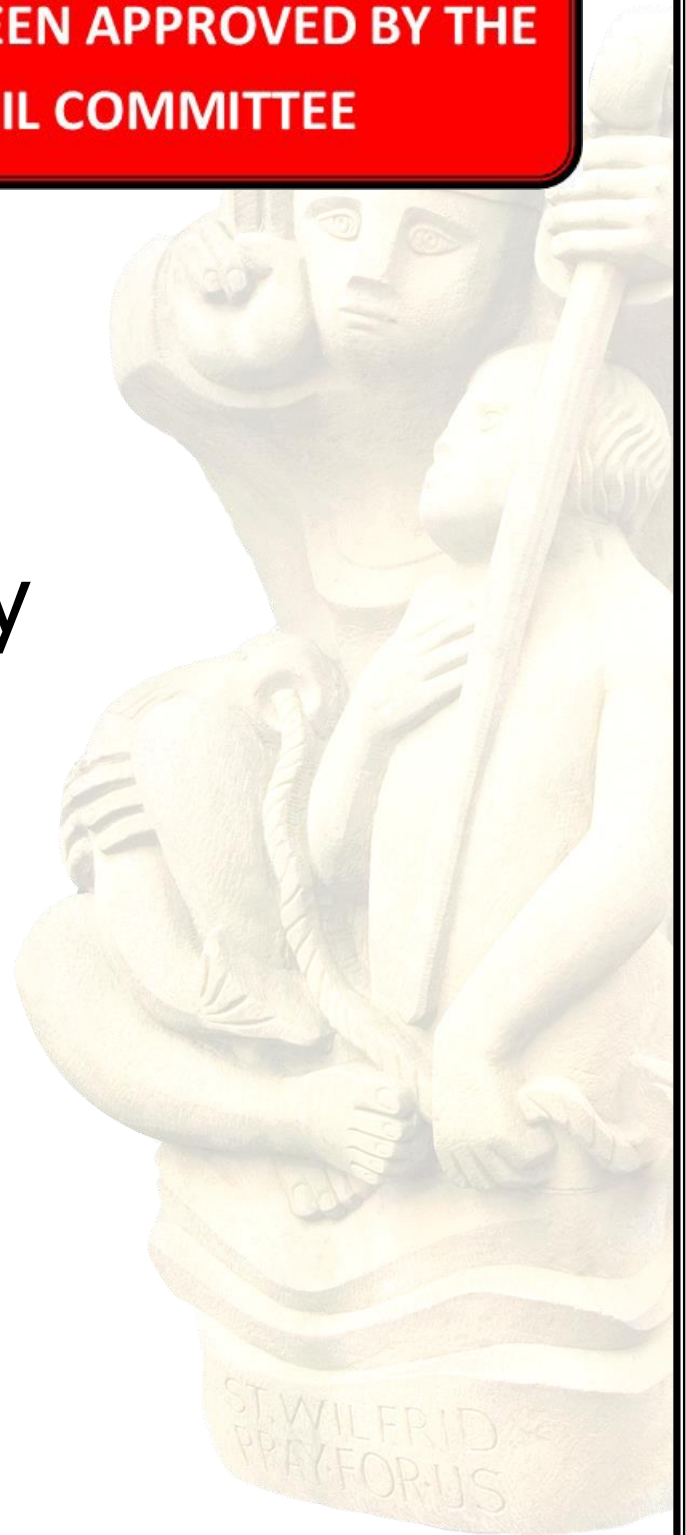


st. Wilfrid's

Catholic High School & Sixth Form College, a Voluntary Academy

**THIS POLICY IS CURRENTLY UNDER
REVIEW AND HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE
ACADEMY COUNCIL COMMITTEE**

Child Missing in Education Policy



Keeping the Faith in Education

POLICY DOCUMENT	CHILD MISSING IN EDUCATION POLICY
Legislation: Education/Other	Legally required for Academy Schools
Lead Member of Staff	Headteacher/DSL
Lead Governor	Chair
Revision Date	November 2018
Date last Reviewed	December 2017
Academy Council Committee	Full
Review Frequency	Annually
Publication date:	7 th December 2017

KEY FACTS:

This policy outlines the procedures that should be followed by all staff, teaching and non-teaching, to deal promptly and professionally should they discover a child is missing from school during the school day or a Child Missing Education (CME)

It emphasises:

- the responsibility for attendance, registers and keeping children safe
- procedures to follow should a child go missing or become lost during the school day
- the procedures to follow should a child be missing from education

The policy comes in two parts.

- 1) Children Missing in school, including Emergency Procedures (Section 3.0-7.0)
- 2) Children Missing from Education, incorporating timescales, guidance and safeguarding procedures (Section 8.0-10.0)

1 Purpose

- 1.1 It is essential that the school ensures that positive steps are taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The safety and welfare of all of our children at school is our paramount responsibility.
- 1.2 The procedures outlined in this policy will be followed alongside the Child Protection Procedures, Safeguarding Policy, Whistle-Blowing Policy and the Staff Disciplinary Procedure and any other relevant School policy or procedure.
- 1.3 All staff should understand what to do in the unlikely event that a child was to be lost or go missing either from the school building, site or during an off-site visit.
- 1.4 All staff should understand what to do if a child is missing from education
- 1.5 It is the Head's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if following an incident.
- 1.6 It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and to act at all times accordingly.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This policy is to be used if any child goes missing from our premises or wanders off from our care. This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is found that a child is lost or missing
- 2.2 This policy is also used in respect of all cases if a child is missing from education
- 2.3 Staff are responsible for completing attendance registers, including at after school clubs and activities. The register must be completed accurately and promptly.

3 Steps to Keep Children Safe

- 3.1 Our procedures will always be managed with common sense and sound judgement. If a member of staff takes a child out of school, appropriate procedures including risk assessments using EVOLVE, must be followed, permissions sought and parents and the school Attendance officer informed.
- 3.2 At all times, parents can be assured that all children remain within the safe environment of our school/setting, including attendance at any off site activities. We ensure that proper precautions are taken to prevent children going missing.
- 3.3 If any child is found to leave the premises without permission of the school and parents, they will be deemed to have broken the school's code of conduct and the

- application of appropriate and proportionate sanctions will be considered by the Headteacher accordingly.
- 3.4 Particular care will be taken to register all children in each and every out of or after school activity.
- 3.5 Attendance registers will be taken during form time and every lesson and as a minimum, if the electronic attendance system is not operating, any unexplained absences during the school day will be reported immediately to the school attendance officer by the responsible teacher so that swift and immediate action will be taken.
- 3.6 To identify if a child is missing:
- a register is taken every lesson and attendance recorded in SIMS
 - staff regularly conduct head counts of the children, particularly when returning to the classroom from outdoor activities, assemblies, PE and other activities which have involved leaving the classroom
 - children ask permission if they need to leave a classroom during lessons
 - children are made aware of boundaries of social areas
 - the school gates are closed throughout the school day and there are fob locks on all external doors on the school site.
- 3.7 Visitors must report to the School Office and are recorded arriving and leaving.
- 3.8 Permission from parents is obtained for any off site educational visits.
- 3.9 Mobile phones are taken on every school visit and the contact numbers are left at the school office. Students are instructed to contact the responsible teacher in the event of any unexpected incident or undesirable behaviour in the first instance before contacting their parents directly. This is because it is the school's responsibility to safeguard the pupil's health, safety and well-being while they are in the care of the school staff.
- 3.10 Students will only take part in after school clubs when the school has obtained written consent from parents with contact numbers, parents informed of the date and time that the activity will end, and parents taking responsibility for how the students are to go home and who with.
- 3.11 In addition, the following procedures will be followed for off-site visits.
- While staff are supervising children off site, the Educational Visits policy and the Missing Child Policy will apply at all times
 - Thorough risk assessments using EVOLVE must be carried out prior to Off Site visits. It is highly recommended that a site visit be carried out prior to the completion of the risk assessments
 - Adequate staffing levels are to be arranged for all off-site visits following the risk assessments, in accordance with government guidelines
 - A list of all pupils and any medical information must be carried by the Group Leader for all off-site visits
 - A register of the pupils present will be taken prior to departure with regular headcounts to be performed throughout the day and prior to the return journey
 - A mobile phone must accompany the Group Leader
- 3.12 Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity in accordance with the School's practice in maintaining confidentiality and our obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 4 [Procedures following a Child reported Missing from the school premises during school hours](#)

- 4.1 The class teacher will indicate in SIMS Lesson Monitor that a student is absent from a lesson.
- 4.2 If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they will contact the school Attendance officer immediately to determine if the child has another commitment or if the child has been collected by a designated parent or carer.
- 4.3 The Attendance officer will check the register and the sign in and out book. The Attendance officer will contact the nearest member of SLT.
- 4.4 A senior member of staff or nominated person will make a thorough search of the building and/or site and immediate surroundings including storage areas and toilets. The search will be coordinated from the BART office and SMT will decide on search areas for appropriate staff. A thorough check of all exits will be made, to ensure all gates/doors are locked and there is no other way a student could have left the site. If something is discovered, the SLT member must be immediately informed.
- 4.5 Classmates and friends should be asked of the child's whereabouts and ascertain the last sighting of child without alarming other pupils. Any relevant information noted. The search should last for no more than 15 mins.
- 4.6 If the child is not found after this initial search and/or approximately 15 minutes from the initial report of them deemed missing, the BART office will inform the Headteacher. The designated safeguarding officer in school will be notified immediately and they will ensure that the parents have been informed by a senior leader.
- 4.7 The Headteacher, or SLT member in the absence of the Head, will decide at which point the police will be called.
- 4.8 All personal details about the child should be available; date of birth, address, parents details etc. with a photograph of the missing child for the police and details of any special medical or learning needs. Provide a description of what they were wearing.
- 4.9 All relevant emergency contacts for children will be used to inform parent/carer(s) accordingly. However, until such time as the child is safely returned to the care of the parent/carer(s), the Headteacher remains responsible for the care and welfare of the child, including off site.
- 4.10 As soon as is practicable, the Serious Incident Reporting Form will be completed by the Headteacher and sent to the Head of Education Compliance. The Senior Leader will make a written record to provide full details of the incident and any action taken as soon as possible after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's record folder.
- 4.11 A note will also be made on the school's attendance register accordingly.
- 4.12 Any issues will also be recorded and reported to the Headteacher and details fully provided in writing to the school's governance panel or meeting. This Report must outline the steps being taken to avoid any repeat incident, communication with parents and actions to be taken following the risk assessment process to mitigate future risk.
- 4.13 If a missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to the police or other agencies.
- 4.14 A thorough search of the premises should continue until the child is found.

5 Following the Incident

- 5.1 It is in everyone's interest to resolve what has happened as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation.
- 5.2 A full and accurate report must be completed. The written findings of the investigation must be reported to the Headteacher within 48 hours of the occurrence of the incident. The incident report must include:
 - Date, time and venue

- Children and staff involved
 - Levels of supervision
 - Time child was noted to be missing
 - What the child was wearing
 - Who was involved in the search?
 - How long the search lasted
 - What time the Police were called
 - What time the parents were called
 - Outcome and steps taken
- 5.3 All media enquiries must be directed to the Headteacher, Trust and Diocese. Individual members of staff must not speak to the media.
- 5.4 The school's SLT will review all details and take immediate actions to prevent the situation from happening again. All relevant policies and procedures will immediately be reviewed and revisions presented formally to the Headteacher and Academy Council for approval within 5 working days.
- 5.5 All parents and staff must be kept informed and reassurances given that appropriate steps have been taken and procedures adjusted as necessary. The Headteacher or nominated person will speak to parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.

6 Procedures following a Child Missing after the end of the school day

- 6.1 The Headteacher and Senior staff on-site should be informed.
- 6.2 Communication with parents/carers should be conducted at the earliest opportunity
- 6.2. Available staff should begin a search of the school buildings and immediate grounds. This search should last for no more than 15 mins.
- 6.3. After 15 minutes the emergency services and parents will be contacted. A recent photograph of the child should be located via the SIMS System and handed to the emergency services.
- 6.4. A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon as possible after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's record folder.

7 Procedures following a Child Missing from an Off Site Location

- 7.1 An immediate head count should be carried out in order to ensure that all other children are present.
- 7.2 All children should be taken to a central point identified on the risk assessment and should remain there until the situation is resolved. The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
- 7.3 Make enquiries as to the last sighting of the missing child, without worrying the remaining children.
- 7.4 With regard to staffing ratios, one or more adults should begin a search of the immediate area.
- 7.5 If applicable additional staff from the site of the outing should be informed and involved in the search and venue staff to be asked to study any CCTV footage.
- 7.6 This search should last for no more than 15 mins.
- 7.7 After 15 minutes the school mobile should be used to inform the Headteacher, or in the case of out-of-hours, the nominated school contact for the trip, that the police will be contacted
- 7.8 The emergency services will be contacted.

- 7.9 The Headteacher, or in their absence the Deputy Head, should use their discretion about when to contact parents and whether to ask them to come to school or proceed directly to the venue.
- 7.10 If the child is not found within a reasonable time the remaining children should return to school.
- 7.11 The trip organiser should remain and cooperate with the police investigation.
- 7.12 A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon as possible after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's record folder.
- 7.13 The remaining procedures outlined above in sections 4 and 5 will then be followed.

8 Children Missing From Education

This policy considers the statutory guidance on Child Missing in Education (September 2016) and reflects 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. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. 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. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

- 8.1 A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff members must follow the schools safeguarding procedures if they suspect a child is missing from school
- 8.2 We will enter 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 should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity
- 8.3 The school will monitor the attendance of children through the register system
- 8.4 When a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school for twenty consecutive days the school will make reasonable attempts to establish the whereabouts of the child, considering previous referrals to other safeguarding services
- 8.5 When a member of staff becomes concerned for the safety of a child missing in education, the DSL will inform the relevant safeguarding services at the earliest opportunity
- 8.6 We will comply with our statutory duty to inform safeguarding services of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE September 2016)
- 8.7 All Staff should be alert to potential triggers for a Child Missing in Education considering risks of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- 8.8 Where child sexual exploitation, or the risk of it, is suspected, frontline practitioners should complete a cause for concern form and pass onto the designated member of staff for child protection
- 8.9 The DSL should complete the referral to relevant safeguarding services, should they suspect the child is at risk or harm

- 8.10 If the child /young person already has an allocated social worker, the DSL must contact them (or their team manager) to discuss any concerns about sexual exploitation
- 8.11 We will arrange for the education of a child for excluded pupils on the 6th day of their fixed period of exclusion
- 8.12 Where a parent/carer notifies the school that the pupil will be registered at another school, we will record the information in the admission register, including the full name and details of the parent with whom they will live, the new address and the date in which this child will move to that address
- 8.13 When a child moves address or primary carer, consideration will be given to the safeguarding needs of the child in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance
- 8.14 If there is evidence to suggest the child has moved to a different local authority area, contact should be made with the named person in the new authority using secure communication methods. The local authority should maintain a record of the child's details until they are located or attain school leaving age.
- 8.15 When the whereabouts of a child is unclear or unknown, it is reasonable to expect that the school will complete and record one or more of the following actions:
- make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details;
 - check local databases within the local authority;
 - follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC;
 - check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force;
 - check with agencies known to be involved with family;
 - check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;
 - check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved;
 - check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is;
 - in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS);
 - home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.
- 8.16 The attendance officer or DSL can also check with relatives, neighbours, landlords – private or social housing providers – and other local stakeholders who are involved. They should also record that they have completed these procedures. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate)
- 8.17 Making these enquiries may not always lead to establishing the location of the child, but will provide a steer on what action should be taken next, for example, to contact the police, children's social care and, in cases where there may be concerns for the safety of a child who has travelled abroad, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

9 Children at particular risk of missing education

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education so it is vital that local authorities make judgements on a case by case basis. Although not exhaustive, the list below presents some of the circumstances that local authorities should consider when establishing their CME policies and procedures:

- Pupils at risk of harm/neglect – Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected schools should follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children’s social care (and the police if appropriate). Local authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children’s social care. The Department’s statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education provides further advice for schools and colleges on safeguarding children
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families
- Children of Service personnel
- Children missing or runaways
- Children and young people supervised by the youth justice system
- Children who cease to attend school
- Children of migrant families

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 This policy and our procedures will be reviewed annually and more frequently following a near miss or missing child incident

10.2 If, as a parent, you are not happy with the way that you or your child is treated by any member of staff you should consider raising your concern with the Headteacher. You may find it helpful to refer to our formal complaints procedure for guidance. This procedure emphasises the importance of resolving any concerns informally and at the earliest possible opportunity. We expect our parents to share any concerns informally with us so that we can continuously improve the quality of education at our school.

11.0 Related Policies, Guidelines, Templates and Forms

- Special Educational Needs
- Safeguarding including Child Protection Procedures
- Allegations of Abuse against Teachers & Other Staff
- Complaints Procedure
- Educational Visits
- Accidents & Incidents Recording & Reporting
- Health & Safety
- Equality & Diversity
- Data Protection
- Exclusion
- Supervision
- Social, Moral, Spiritual & Cultural Education
- After School Clubs and Activities

- Attendance and Registration