

Judith Kerr Primary School

Missing Children Policy (a CfBT Schools Trust standard policy)

October 2017

Review Date: September 2018

Author		Target group	All employees, consultants and volunteers
Owner	CfBT Schools Trust	Next review due	September 2018
Issued			

Policy: Missing children

Scope and publication

This policy applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents at Judith Kerr Primary School. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following CST policies:

- Looked After Children (LAC)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Registration of Pupils

The Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy. This policy is a mandatory requirement of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education (DfE), Sept 2016).

This policy is provided to all staff in the Staff Handbook. Parents may request a hard copy from the school or view the policy on the school's website. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Aims of this policy

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- protect the health and safety of pupils at the school
- ensure that school staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

Responsibilities

The Trustees delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the school to the Headteacher. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the school by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the Headteacher and Senior Management Team. Schools are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent. Any member of staff who notices a pupil is missing or sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be has a duty to inform the relevant (class teacher, Head) without delay.

Procedure for pupil missing during the day

If a teacher/sports instructor/supervisor (adult responsible) notes that a pupil is missing from class/sport practice/other activity, the adult responsible should contact Reception immediately.

Reception will then:

- check the school register or child's timetable for that day
- check the list of music lessons
- ring the music department
- ring the Library in case the pupil is there
- contact the pupil's (class teacher/s)

If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the class teacher, form tutor/Head of Year will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in his/her absence, the senior member of staff on duty.

The senior staff member, class teacher will conduct an initial search using assistance from Reception/other staff as available or required. The Headteacher will be kept informed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Senior Member of staff on duty.

As part of the initial search process, the pupil's fellow friends and classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.

If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the school staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the school. If the pupil refuses to do so, staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts. Staff should consider contacting the parents in such circumstances.

If the pupil is not found after the initial search, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/senior teacher will ring Reception to register the pupil as missing together with any suggestions as to where the pupil might be based on information gained from speaking to staff and other pupils.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/senior teacher will contact the pupil's parents at this point and the situation must be reported to the Headteacher and Senior Management Team along with the relevant details. If the parents are abroad, there may need to be a delay in contacting them. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If the initial search is unsuccessful, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the Police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate) and provide the Police with the information listed below, as well as any other information reasonably requested by the Police. A decision will be taken in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures as to whether the school should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.

Procedure for pupils missing during or following a journey

If a pupil is missing from a journey or has not arrived at the school following a journey, the member of staff in charge will:

- if possible attempt to contact the pupil
- check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey
- check with other pupils, and then home to ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts
- contact the venue or the people that the pupil had visited, if applicable
- contact hospitals and the Police.

Information to be provided to the Police

When the school contacts the Police, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number

- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil such as 'I'm going to run away to Brighton'.

The information will then be passed to relevant officers through police channels, negating the need to report the incident multiple times. If the student is located the school must inform the Police without delay, so that the search can be called off.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review the Headteacher will take into account any incidents in the Missing Pupil Incident Book that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the school and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

Missing pupil incident book

The school must keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil including:
the pupil's name

- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing)
- the action taken to find the pupil
- whether the Police or children's social care were involved
- outcome or resolution of the incident
- any reasons given by the pupil for being missing
- any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident
- a record of the staff involved.

A full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's file.

School vigilance and attendance

The attendance of pupils is closely monitored so that persistent, unusual or unexplained patterns of absence are investigated. The school strongly advocate that parents or guardians ring the Reception before 9am to provide an explanation for pupil absence.

The school operate a first response system, that enables office staff to ring parents or guardians of pupils when they have not arrived at school after the closing of registers, and no reason has been provided by carers.

Pupils who are planning to or have travelled abroad, particularly to countries prone to extremism or radicalisation, female genital mutilation and forced marriage may be particularly vulnerable. The school monitors these absences and checks the wellbeing of these pupils.

The school is vigilant to any changes of behaviour and in the case of radicalisation and forced marriage should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to escalate to the local social care team. Any staff members who are suspicious that FGM may have or be about to be undertaken must report this to the Police, and then the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead

Students, particularly teenagers and LAC pupils who are regularly absent or go missing from schools and care homes are vulnerable to child sexual exploitation (CSE), therefore the school will monitor and report any concerns to social care.