



MISSING PUPIL POLICY

Approved and signed by the Learning and Standards Committee by virtual meeting

14.06.21

Renewal date: June 2023

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

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

This policy applies to all staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents at Discovery Multi Academy Trust schools. It should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy and Attendance Policy. This policy is a requirement of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education (DfE)), 2020.

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Headteacher (CEO) has a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy. This policy is provided to all staff e.g. at induction.

Parents may request a copy from their child's school, the central office, or they can review the policy on the Trust/school websites.

The Trustees delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the Trust's schools to the CEO, via the scheme of delegation to the Heads of School. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the Trust's academies, by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the CEO, Head of School and Senior Leadership Team. Academies are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent.

Any member of staff responsible for a class or group of pupils at the beginning of the day must take the register, record any absences and return it to the school office promptly, to ensure that any follow-up action can be taken and that accurate 'live' records are kept.

Any member of staff who realises a pupil is missing during the day or sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be has a duty to inform the relevant member of staff without delay.

2. PROCEDURE FOR PUPILS WHO DO NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL AT THE EXPECTED START TIME OF THE DAY (AM OR PM)

Following receipt of the electronic register, the administrator will identify those children who have not arrived in time for registration (given a 'U' mark on the register).

For the pupil concerned, the school office shall make phone calls to parents and carers to identify the child's whereabouts and/or confirm a reason for absence. If the office is unable to make contact with the pupil concerned, the office will notify an area of the senior leadership team promptly, and give the pupil a 'U' mark until reason for absence is obtained, or the

pupil arrives at school. Admin staff should make appropriate notes using the 'Note' function on SIMS.

In some cases, in the interests of safeguarding, it may be necessary for a member of the Senior Leadership Team to make a visit to a pupil's home to confirm their whereabouts, if particular concerns have been raised.

3. PROCEDURE FOR PUPIL MISSING DURING THE DAY

If a member of staff or volunteer notes that a pupil is missing from class / PE /other activity, he / she should contact the school office immediately.

The school office will then:

- check the child's attendance for that day and inform the most senior member of staff
- contact the class teacher to check whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment
- check the school's signing in/out system
- contact other in-school facilities in case the pupil is there

If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed. An appropriate member of the senior team will conduct an initial search of the school site and the vicinity using assistance from the school office and the site manager, as available or required. The CEO will be kept informed by the Head of School.

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 class. 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/carers in such circumstances.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head of School will contact the pupil's parents/carers at this point, if required, and the situation must be reported to the CEO along with the relevant details. All decisions on contacting parents/carers should be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If the initial search is unsuccessful, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head of School will contact the police after consultation with the parents/carers (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 Trust's Safeguarding Policy and procedures as to whether the school should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.

4. PROCEDURE FOR PUPILS MISSING DURING A SCHOOL TRIP OR DURING/FOLLOWING A JOURNEY

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

- Inform the most senior available member of staff immediately
- check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey
- check with other pupils and accompanying parent and 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 where the pupil was staying, if the trip was residential
- contact hospitals and the Police and the parents/carers

5. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE POLICE

When a Trust 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 distinguishing physical features
- 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 or their friends or classmates
- an appropriate contact name/details at the school

The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the school in question should be necessary.

6. MISSING PUPIL RECORDING AND REPORTING TO GOVERNANCE

The Trust schools 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 or any other party for them 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/ Behaviourwatch.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the LAB member with responsibility for safeguarding to enable any appropriate action or review by LAB/Trustees to take place.

7. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

The Trust schools shall inform the local authority and CEO (within which the pupil resides when not at the school) of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where he / she:

- has been taken out of school by parents/carers and is being educated outside the school system e.g. home education or abroad;
- has ceased to attend the school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school;
- has been permanently excluded; or
- has been withdrawn from the school and the school has been unable to confirm the name of the pupil's new school after reasonable efforts have been made to locate the child.

If a pupil has not returned for 10 consecutive days after an authorised absence, or is absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the roll after reasonable enquiries have been made. **This only applies when the school has made enquiries and cannot ascertain the child's whereabouts and not if, for example, the child has been absent due to illness.**

The applicable local authority must be notified as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. This will assist the local authority to fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education and follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation or radicalisation.

The Trust schools shall inform the applicable local authority of any pupil who:

- fails to attend the school regularly; or
- has an attendance level of below 50%; or
- has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the Trust and the local authority (or in the absence of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. Action should be taken in accordance with the Trust's Safeguarding Policy and Attendance Policy if any absence of a pupil from the school gives rise to a concern about the pupil's welfare.

This policy shall be reviewed every year as part of the Trust's annual review of safeguarding, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review, the Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 any of the Trust's schools and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.