



Kehelland Village School – Children who abscond or go missing from school during the school day policy.

Procedure and protocol. To be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy and our Relational Policy

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

Schools will have procedures for pupils who fail to register, if there are concerns about the level of attendance the Enforcement Guidance should be used.

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).

Our school has a range of strategies to ensure the safe and secure boundaries of the school site. We have a fenced site, padlocked gates, an intercom entry and exit system in the car park and front doors. However, there may still be an occasion when a child leaves the site or is missing from class after registering.

Parents drop children at school between 8.30 and 8.45. The gates are closed and locked at 8.45. The register is taken at 8.45. Children should be in class and there must be a staff member in class to welcome them. Staff on the gate or in the playground must be vigilant that children do not leave the playground unaccompanied. Parents are responsible for children if they are accompanied – not school. Only at the point where the parent leaves site, does the school become responsible for the child. Children going to the toilet, or running an errand should be monitored. Staff must not let children be out of class for longer than necessary, and during breaks and learning time must follow up children that have left for these reasons or similar reasons.

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1. 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.

2. 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 and their age. Additional vulnerability characteristics may include;
 - Children on a plan (Early Help, 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?
- Is there any known history of domestic abuse?
- 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?

3. Procedure

Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy will be informed.

Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupils' whereabouts before notifying the Police. 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. Staff must sweep the entire site, indoors and outdoors checking common hiding places. Boundaries/gates must be checked to ensure they are secure. A review of recent comings and goings or visitors must also be considered, to establish whether the child is still on site or they have absconded.

Staff will contact the police if the child has absconded. See Kehelland Village Schools Relational policy on what to do when it is known that a child has absconded from site.

School staff will contact home to inform the parent and try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if appropriate.

4. Notifying the Police

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.

This policy will be read in conjunction with our Relational and Safeguarding Policies.

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