



Upton Hall School

Safeguarding: Missing Pupil Procedure

Safeguarding: Missing Child Procedure

September 2023

1 Purpose

- 1.1. It is essential that the necessary steps are taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people, and this is seen as an utmost priority in our school. Any child going missing from a class is a safeguarding issue.
- 1.2. This procedure will be followed alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and any other relevant school policy or procedure.
- 1.3. All staff must understand what to do in the event that a young person was to be lost or go missing either from the school building, site or during an off-site visit.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the DSL and Headmistress to ensure that these procedures are understood and followed.
- 1.5. It is the responsibility of all staff to read these procedures and to act at all times accordingly.

2 Introduction

- 2.1. These procedures have been adopted in respect of any young person who goes missing from our premises or wanders off from our care, even if they remain on site.
- 2.2. These procedures will be used in respect of all cases in which it is found that a young person is lost or missing. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- 2.3. This policy enables schools to deal promptly and professionally in a "worst case scenario" of a missing young person. It emphasises the responsibility for attendance, registers and keeping young people safe. It outlines the procedures to follow should a young person go missing or become lost.
- 2.4. Due consideration will be given by the DSL as to whether a referral may be made to children's social care. For example, where the young person is in need of protection, early help or in need of other support.
- 2.5. Staff are responsible for completing the attendance registers, including at after school clubs and activities. The register must be completed accurately and promptly. The law requires schools to have an attendance register which is compliant with the regulations.

3 Steps to Keep Young People Safe

- 3.1. Our procedures will always be managed with common sense and sound judgement.
- 3.2. For pupils in Years 7-11 we must only release young people into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent/carer(s) in advance, and we must ensure that young people do not

leave the premises unsupervised. We must take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.

3.3. Parents can be assured that all young people remain safe in our school setting at all times, and whilst participating in any school educational visits. We ensure that proper precautions are taken to prevent young people going missing.

3.4. If any young person 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 Headmistress accordingly.

3.5. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their young person.

3.6. Particular care will be taken to register all young people on SIMS in each and every lesson. **As a minimum, any unexplained absences will be reported immediately to the DSL and school attendance office by the appropriate member of staff, so that swift and immediate action can be taken. In the absence or unavailability of the DSL and attendance officer, staff members should notify the deputy DSL. If the DSL, attendance officer and deputy DSL are all absent, then staff members should notify any other member of SLT.** In the case of incidents occurring while young people are learning outside the classroom on school visits, the visit leader will assume such responsibility, as agreed with the Educational Visits Coordinator.

As soon as a young person is reported missing from a lesson, a search of the school premises will be undertaken. This search will be co-ordinated by the DSL, supported by staff in the school office and any other member of staff available at the time. The search of all of the obvious places – including toilets, empty rooms and the school grounds – should take no more than 15 minutes. At this point, if the young person has not been found, parents will be contacted. They will be advised of what has happened and will be asked to try to contact their daughter themselves by calling her mobile number. If after a further 15 minutes, there has been no contact with the young person and she has not been found in school, the DSL will call the SSPO and the police.

The information required by the police to assist in locating and returning the pupil to a safe environment is as follows:

- The young person's name/s; date of birth; status (for example looked after child); responsible authority;
- Where and when they went missing;
- Previous missing episodes (if any) and where they went;
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with;
- What the young person 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:

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 young person is found before the police have arrived then the police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 2 - if the young person 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.

Where a young person has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the pupil will be written and put in place.

3.7. No young person leaves our supervision and care without an appropriate adult. In order to achieve this aim, we operate the following procedures at our school:

Young people are supervised; visitors are recorded arriving and leaving following the school signing in procedure. Any pupil who needs to sign out for an appointment out of school must provide a letter from home requesting the time out. They must see the school attendance officer so that this absence can be authorised.