

# Missing Pupil Policy

Audience:	Parents School staff / Central Team / All REAch2 Employees Local Governing Bodies Cluster Boards Trustees
Ratified:	REAch2 Directors 11 September 2020
Other related policies:	Safeguarding and Child Protection
Policy owner:	Helen Beattie, Head of Safeguarding, REAch2
Review frequency:	Every 2 years



At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones.

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| <b>Integrity</b>      | We recognise that we lead by example and if we want children to grow up to behave appropriately and with integrity then we must model this behaviour            |
| <b>Responsibility</b> | We act judiciously with sensitivity and care. We don't make excuses, but mindfully answer for actions and continually seek to make improvements                 |
| <b>Inclusion</b>      | We acknowledge and celebrate that all people are different and can play a role in the REAch2 family whatever their background or learning style                 |
| <b>Enjoyment</b>      | Providing learning that is relevant, motivating and engaging releases a child's curiosity and fun, so that a task can be tackled and their goals achieved       |
| <b>Inspiration</b>    | Inspiration breathes life into our schools. Introducing children to influential experiences of people and place, motivates them to live their lives to the full |
| <b>Learning</b>       | Children and adults will flourish in their learning and through learning discover a future that is worth pursuing   |
| <b>Leadership</b>     | REAch2 aspires for high quality leadership by seeking out talent, developing potential and spotting the possible in people as well as the actual                |

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## Policy Overview

### **Overarching Principles**

Through the operation of this policy we aim to protect the health and safety of our pupils, and ensure that school staff know what to do if a pupil goes missing. This policy applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents. The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team have appropriate discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

For the purposes of this policy, 'missing pupil' refers to a pupil who has been registered as present at school and is missing during the school day without explanation or authorisation. It does not refer to pupils who are not attending school and/or those children who are missing in education (known as CME) For information related to the school's processes for attendance and CME, please see the Attendance Policy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governors 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 school by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. Schools 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 morning and afternoon sessions must take the register promptly and record any absences to ensure that accurate 'live' records are kept.

## Policy in Detail

### **Pupil missing from school**

If a member of staff notes that a pupil is missing from class or other in-school activity, they should contact the school office immediately.

The school office will then:

- check the child's timetable for that day
- check with classroom staff whether the pupil has reported sick or is known by them to be agreed to be elsewhere, or has been seen elsewhere
- contact other in-school facilities to check if the child is there, i.e. nurture room, SLT office, hall

If the child has not been located through the steps outlined above, a member of staff will conduct an initial search of the school and its vicinity using assistance from the school office as available or if required. As part of this process, the pupil's peers/classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts. If the pupil is subsequently found on site or in the vicinity, staff will make every effort to persuade the pupil to return. If the pupil refuses to do so, staff will stay with the pupil, continue to monitor their safety, and request that the Headteacher or, in their absence, a member of the Senior Leadership team, be informed, who will contact the child's parents.

If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the member of staff will immediately notify the Headteacher, or (in their absence) a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Any information about the pupil's last known whereabouts, including any suggestions as to where the pupil might be, based on information gained from speaking to staff and other pupils, will be shared with the school office, who will make a phone call to parents to inform them of the issue and to advise on the need for school to contact the Police. The Headteacher, or member of the Senior Leadership Team, will subsequently contact the Police and provide them with relevant information about the child and the circumstances surrounding them going missing, as well as any other information reasonably requested.

### **Pupil missing out of school**

If a pupil is missing from an out of school activity, i.e. a school trip, the member of staff in charge will immediately check with other pupils and accompanying staff and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts. Where applicable, they will also contact the trip venue to check the child's whereabouts. If the pupil has still not been located, the Headteacher or (in their absence) a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be contacted immediately, and consideration will be given to contacting the Police.

### **Pupils missing on their way to school**

Pupils in Year 6, where parents have signed and agreed to consent, are allowed to travel to school independently. If a pupil for whom parental permission has been received to travel independently has not arrived at school at the expected time, the school office will check with parents or carers whether there were any delays or changes to the child's journey. If no such changes are known, the

Headteacher or (in their absence) a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be contacted immediately, and consideration will be given to contacting the Police.

### **Record keeping**

A full written record of any incident of a missing pupil will be made, which will be kept on the pupil's pastoral file. This will include, as a minimum:

- date and relevant times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing, when parents were contacted)
- action(s) taken to find the pupil
- whether the parents and/or Police were involved
- outcome or resolution of the incident
- any reasons given by the pupil or any other party for them being missing
- a record of the staff involved

Where applicable, any external professionals involved with the pupil, i.e. Social Care, should also be informed of the incident and of the steps taken to safeguard the pupil.

For pupils identified as 'at risk' of going missing from school, i.e. repeated attempts to abscond, an individual plan and risk assessment will be put in place by school together with parents in order to help keep the pupil safe and minimise the risk of the pupil going missing. This will be reviewed on a regular basis, but no less than half termly.

After each incident of a pupil going missing, the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will undertake a full review of school procedures, with a written record of any necessary actions to minimise the risk of recurrence. At the earliest available opportunity, the Headteacher will also inform the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding on the Local Governing Body, to enable appropriate action and review by Governors to take place.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed by REAch2 Academy Trust Directors every 2 years as per the REAch2 policy cycle or sooner if required.

