



# **White Meadows Primary Academy**

## **Missing Pupils Policy**

Date Completed: September 2018

Review Date: September 2019

## **1 Policy statement**

- 1.1 Through the operation of this policy we aim to:
  - 1.1.1 protect the health and safety of pupils at the Academy;
  - 1.1.2 ensure that Academy staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.
- 1.2 This policy:
  - 1.2.1 applies to staff (including volunteers and students), pupils and parents at White Meadows Primary Academy
  - 1.2.2 should be read with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;  
and
  - 1.2.3 is a mandatory requirement of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Department for Education (DfE)), 2018.
- 1.3 The procedures in this policy may be adapted as necessary. The Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.
- 1.4 This policy is provided to all staff and is available to parents and pupils from the Academy or review the policy on the Academy website.

## **2 Responsibility**

- 2.1 The Trustees delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the Academy to the Headteacher via the scheme of delegation to the Executive. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the Academy by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. Academies are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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 class teacher or the Academy without delay.

## **3 Academy procedure for an absent child**

- 3.1 A child's safeguarding risk will be assessed using any safeguarding information and/or thresholds known to the Academy. For example, assessments will be based on concerns such as: is there a risk of forced marriage, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, radicalisation, honour-based violence? If the judgement is that the child is at risk of harm, the Academy will contact, the police or social care immediately. In such cases, the school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child.

If a pupil is absent, a designated member of staff will endeavor to contact the parent or carer on the first day of absence and continue to make every effort to locate the pupil.

The Academy will follow the procedure below.

**Day 1 - Phone call**

Response From Parent	Next Step From School
A staff member telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence.	<p>If there is no answer, school send a text message. Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours.</p> <p>The academy may complete a home visit or request a police 'safe and well' check if the vulnerability is considered high.</p>
The parent/ carer answer the call, the child is safe with them.	Ask for reason for absence and record on your school's attendance management system.
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is home safe.	<p>The school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child</p> <p>The academy may complete a home visit or request a police 'safe and well' check if the vulnerability is considered high.</p>
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned	<p>Academy to advise the parent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing</li> <li>- Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searing for the child</li> <li>- Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centers near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment</li> <li>- Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing</li> </ul> <p>Academy will make a referral to children's services</p>

*If the judgement on Day One is that there is reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm the school will contact **MASH** immediately on: **01403 229900**.*

*If the judgement on Day One is that there is no reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm, the Academy continues to make enquiries and informs the West Sussex Children Missing Education Team on Day Ten that the child is missing education.*

### **Day 2 - Follow up phone call**

A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or preferably a mobile phone.

### **Day 3 – Write/email parents**

The Academy will write or email to the parent in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. The parents/carers will be given 3 working days to make contact and if the Academy is aware that English may not be the parent's first language, the letter will be, wherever possible, copied into a language that may be more accessible.

### **Day 5/6 - Home visit**

The Academy will arrange a visit to the home address either by themselves or through requesting a police 'safe and well' check dependent on vulnerabilities identified through a risk assessment.

Once the Academy has completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier) and the child has still not been seen and the parents/carers have not made contact with either, the Academy will report the child as missing from education, following **White Meadows 'Missing in Education Policy 2018/19'**.

If the Academy become aware of any child who is not receiving an education we will contact: **West Sussex CME Team** – Call – **03302 228200**, email – **pei@westsussex.gov.uk**  
Or refer online: **<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/report-a-child-missing-education>**

However, if the Academy is at all concerned about a child's safety i.e.

- a serious concern about the safety of a child
- a concern that a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed
- worry that a child is living in circumstances where they are treated badly and not cared for properly we will **URGENTLY** contact: **MASH** immediately on: Daytime hours (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) **01403 229900**

Out of hours: (5pm to 9am Monday to Friday and 24 hour cover at weekends) **0330 222 6664**

## **4 Procedure for pupil missing during the day**

- 4.1 For pupils identified as 'at risk' of going missing from Academy premises, an individual plan and risk assessment will be put in place in order to help keep the pupil safe and minimize the risk of the pupil going missing.
- 4.2 If a member of staff or volunteer notes that a pupil is missing from wrap around care, class or other school activity, they should contact the school office immediately.
- 4.3 The school office will then:
  - check the child's timetable for that day
  - check with the class teacher/group leader whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment
  - check the list of activity lessons
  - contact the other in-school facilities in case the pupil is there
- 4.4 If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the member of staff/volunteer will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff/volunteer will conduct an initial search of the Academy and the vicinity using assistance from the school office/caretaker as

available or required. The Headteacher will be kept informed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- 4.5 As part of the initial search process, the pupil's fellow peers/classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.
- 4.6 If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the Academy staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the Academy. 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.
- 4.7 If the pupil is not found after the initial search, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ring the school office 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 will contact the pupil's parents/carers at this point and the situation must be reported to the Academy's Senior Leadership Team along with the relevant details. All decisions on contacting parents/carers should be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.8 If the initial search is unsuccessful, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the police after consultation with the parents/carers (where appropriate) and provide the police with the information listed in section 5, as well as any other information reasonably requested by the police. A decision will be taken in accordance with the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as to whether the Academy should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.

## **5 Procedure for pupils missing during an Academy trip or during or following a journey**

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

- 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, the Police and the parents/carers.

## **6 Information to be provided to the Police**

6.1 When the Academy 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 Academy.

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

## **7 Missing pupil incident book and reporting to governors**

7.1 The Academy 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.

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

7.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the governor with responsibility for safeguarding to enable any appropriate action or review by governors to take place.

## **8 Children missing from education**

8.1 The Academy shall inform the applicable local authority (within which the pupil resides when not at the Academy) of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

8.1.1 have been taken out of Academy by their parents/carers and is being educated outside the Academy system e.g. home education or abroad;

8.1.2 have ceased to attend the Academy and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the Academy;

8.1.3 have been permanently excluded;

8.1.4 have been withdrawn from the Academy and we are unable to confirm the name of their new school.

8.2 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:

8.2.1 fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and

8.2.2 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.

8.3 The Academy shall inform the applicable local authority of any pupil who:

8.3.1 fails to attend the Academy regularly; or

8.3.2 has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 Academy days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the Academy and the local authority (or in the absence of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

8.4 Academy attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. Action should be taken in accordance with the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures if any absence of a pupil from the Academy gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

## **9 Review**

9.1 This policy shall be reviewed every year as part of the Academy'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 the Academy and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.