

Earlscliffe (Sussex Summer Schools Ltd)

MISSING PUPIL POLICY

Introduction

The safety of all our pupils is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school is trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep pupils safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are good and are designed to ensure that every pupil is supervised, in ways appropriate to the age of the pupil, throughout the time when the pupil is in our care. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils.

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the school

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a pupil were found to be missing, we should carry out the following actions:

Within the school day (8.30 am – 5.00pm) should a pupil be missing the following procedure would be followed:

The member of staff will telephone the School Office (01303 253951), report the situation and indicate the pupil's last known whereabouts if known.

Administrative staff will check the day's absence list, the outings list, the signing-out list and then the building and gardens with the help of other members of staff.

The pupil's friends will be asked, and if possible the missing pupil will be telephoned on her/his mobile telephone.

The SLT will be informed, and the Head Teacher will inform parents, guardians and if appropriate the Police.

Further procedures will be followed in accordance with the Crisis Management Policy.

Procedure during Boarding Hours

Staff will check the house signing-out book, outing forms and diary.

Staff will check with other staff and search building and gardens.

The pupil's friends will be asked and if possible the pupil will be telephoned on his/her mobile phone.

If the pupil is not located, the Head of Pastoral Care will be informed.

After another search, staff will inform the Head Teacher.

A Plan of Action will be prepared in accordance with the procedures of the Crisis Management Policy.

The Head Teacher will inform parents, guardians and if appropriate the Police.

Actions to be Followed by Staff if a Pupil goes Missing on an Educational Visit

An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present.

A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity.

The remaining pupils will be kept occupied/supervised.

The SLT will be informed by landline or mobile telephone.

The Head Teacher will inform parents, guardians and if appropriate the Police.

The member of staff leading the outing should liaise with the venue manager and arrange a search.

Further procedures will be followed in accordance with the Crisis Management Policy.

Procedures to be followed by staff when a pupil is not collected on time

If a pupil is not collected within 30 minutes of the agreed collection time, and no message has been received, the contact numbers for the parent or carers will be called. If there is no answer, the school will begin to call the emergency numbers for this pupil. If the difficulty arises out of main school hours the senior member of staff on duty will take responsibility, or delegate this task. While the pupil remains on site, the pupil will be safely looked after and, if appropriate, taken to supper with the boarders.

If there is no response from the parents or carers within a reasonable time (one hour), the Head Teacher (or, SLT member) will be contacted and the Police contacted if appropriate. Parents are asked to remember that we shall undertake to look after the pupil safely throughout the time that the pupil remains in our care. A full written report will be made of the incident.

Missing Pupil Procedure (for Crisis Management Policy)

Were a pupil to go missing and efforts to locate the pupil prove unsuccessful, then the Head Teacher, or SLT member will inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.

The school will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any Local Children Safeguarding Board investigation.

The Head Teacher will inform ISI/Ofsted.

The Head Teacher will inform the school's insurers.

If the pupil is located but found injured, then a report would be made to the Head Teacher (or, on their behalf, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, failing that, another member of the SLT) who will then inform the Health and Safety Executive.

A full record of all activities taken up to the point at which the pupil is found will be made for the incident report. Procedures will all be reviewed in the light of the incident.

Actions to be Followed by Staff once the Pupil is Found

Staff will talk with, take care of and comfort the pupil.

Staff will speak with the other pupils to ensure that they understand why they should not leave the premises / separate from a group on an outing.

The Head Teacher (or, SLT member) will speak with the parents to report the incident, and she will then record in writing in a letter to the parents an account of the incident and a record of the meeting with the parents.

The Head Teacher (or, SLT member) will carry out a full investigation, involving, if appropriate, the Police and the Local Children Safeguarding Board.

Media questions will be referred to The Head Teacher (or, SLT member)

In line with statutory guidelines the pupil will be offered an independent return interview. This will be conducted by Earlscliffe's Independent person, Linda Harrold, at her Practice. This interview will take place with 72 hours of the pupil returning. If the Independent Person is not available, the school will make arrangements for an alternative Independent Person. While maintaining confidentiality the Independent Person will liaise with the school to address the reasons for the pupil going missing and help them feel safe and understand they have options to prevent further instances.

Written statements will be invited by all concerned.

The written report of the incident will record details of time, place, members of staff, the circumstances in which the pupil went missing, an outline of what was understood to have happened, the length of time during which the pupil was missing and an initial explanation of how the incident appeared to have arisen. All relevant procedures will be reviewed in the light of the incident.

If, following the independent return interview and a review of the written report and relevant statements, it is felt that the pupil might run away again then a pupil care plan will be put together and may involve the police, social services and the local authority.

Kent Police guidance is listed as follows:

Missing from educational establishment

Children in this context are defined as children of 'statutory school age' (under 16 years of age on the last Friday in June). Children missing from education may be considered under two broad categories:

- Missing from educational establishment;
- Regular non-attendance.

When children are missing from an educational establishment invariably the parents/guardians will be informed before the police. All educational establishments will have set procedures for these eventualities. Officers that attend these reports should enquire what the staff have already done to minimize a duplication of effort.

Regular non-attendance of children is reported by educational establishments to and dealt with by, the Attendance and Behaviour Service (Kent) or by the Educational Welfare Service (Medway). They have strategies to deal with these situations that include home visits.

If the authorities are unable to locate the child they will refer the matter to Social Services and report it to police.

For further guidance on the issues below and missing person investigations in general, refer to The Guidance on the Management Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons 2005 British Transport Police:

- Persons lost at sea;
- International Investigations;
- Death abroad and death in conflict;
- Mass disaster and missing persons;
- Non-Government organisations involved in missing persons issues;
- Legal powers;
- Lines of enquiry;
- Missingkids.com.

Kent local authority designated officer: GCSXsafeguardingunit@kent.gcsx.gov.uk or 03000 41 08 88