



## MISSING PUPIL POLICY

This policy addresses ISI Regulatory Requirements (Effective from February 2016), Part 3 - Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils, paragraph 15 and should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This procedure is to be used when searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any pupil missing from St. Saviour's School Ikoyi. The procedure includes the requirement to record any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

NB: A child going missing from School or from home is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow this procedure for dealing with children who go missing:

Staff should act to identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation. Consequently the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in their absence, the Deputy Head Pastoral should always be informed when a pupil is found to be missing. The DSL or the Deputy Head Pastoral will always apply the locally agreed procedure in acting to safeguard any child who is missing from School. In particular, the matter will be referred to other agencies, including children's social care services and or the police in cases where a pupil has gone missing on repeated occasions, or where a single instance of truancy or running away gives rise to concerns of abuse or neglect or other risk of harm, or where there is evidence of a crime.

### 2. MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE

If a pupil goes missing from St. Saviour's School Ikoyi, their class teacher, or the School secretary ("Responsible Person") will make every effort to contact them and get them back into School, including contacting the pupil's parents. If they cannot be traced within an hour of their being reported missing, a member of the Senior Management team (usually the DSL, Deputy Head Pastoral) will make a risk assessment judgement of the situation (see below). They will make a decision as to whether to inform the police immediately; or whether a longer timescale should be created and what the Responsible Person and any other member of staff should do during any such time extension. This might include key check-points for a subsequent further action and re-assessment, and a cut-off point after which the police must be contacted. The Responsible Person will also keep the DSL (or, in their absence the Deputy Head Teacher Pastoral) informed of the situation as it develops.

### 3. MAKING THE RISK ASSESSMENT JUDGEMENT

A number of contextual factors will be taken into account, including:

- Possible threat factors: time of day; darkness; weather conditions; known local concerns;



- Proximity of School to home, from which the pupil would not have been absent without good reason, or which are worth waiting until before considering them to be missing;
- Individual pupil circumstances: age, judgement, known personal, pastoral or disciplinary issues, mood and/or communications prior to going missing, previous instances of going missing;
- Any reassurances/likelihood as to their whereabouts;
- Any parental indication of concern.

Specifically:

- In the case of a pupil about whom there are pre-existing welfare concerns, then the time-frame must be compressed and the police must be contacted by the one hour point (see below);
- If the pupil is young and staff have received no assurance as to their whereabouts, then the police should be contacted at the one hour point.

All staff should remember that:

- Early contact with the police may help to save a child's life or save them from significant harm;
- Failing to act within a reasonably responsive time frame could prove costly;

Staff must feel confident in making sensible judgements as to the whereabouts of the pupil, as a normal parent would – but always erring on the side of caution, and believing that 'sooner is better than later'.

#### 4. CONTACTING THE POLICE

Generally, before the police are called, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead and or the Deputy Head Pastoral and the pupil's parents should be informed. However, where attempts to contact the DSL, the Deputy Head Pastoral and or the parents are unsuccessful, this should not delay making contact with the police.

When contacting the police to report a missing child, call 08034183517. Pass to the police all pertinent details as they request. Ask for their direct contact number, so that you can make swift contact should the situation change. Where the School contacts the police during the day or night, 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 physical peculiarities;
- 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 such as "I'm going to run away..."
- Any suspicion or evidence of a crime.



The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the School should be necessary – except if the pupil turns up, when the School will notify the police of their return.

## **5. RECORD KEEPING**

Depending on the incident, the DSL will keep a record of the incident either on the Child Protection file; As such, as soon as possible following the conclusion of the incident, the member of staff responsible for leading the School's response should provide to the DSL a written record of:

- The pupil's name;
- Relevant dates and times;
- The decisions and actions taken to find the pupil and the reasons for them;
- Whether the police or social services were informed;
- Outcome or resolution of the incident;
- Any reason given by the pupil for going missing;
- Any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident;
- A record of the staff involved;
- Any other salient information.

## **6. FOLLOW-UP TO A MISSING CHILD INCIDENT**

Once a pupil returns from being missing, they will be provided with support and the opportunity to discuss the incident with the DSL, the Deputy Head Pastoral or perhaps the School Medical nurse. They may also be provided with the contact details for external support services. Any residual concerns about a pupil's welfare resulting from an incident will be acted upon and, where appropriate, Children's Social Care Services and or the police will be informed, in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

## **7. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

The School has an admission register and an attendance register and all pupils are placed on both registers. The School will delete the child from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of School by their parents and are being educated outside the School system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend School and no longer live within reasonable distance of the School;
- Have been certified by a medical professional as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend School before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the School after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;



- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the Headmaster does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the School at the end of that period; or, have been permanently excluded.

## 8. CHILDREN WHO FAIL TO ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY

The Class Teacher will inform the Head Teacher as appropriate, immediately if a single absence raises child protection concerns (see above), or a pupil has ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness).

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Member of staff responsible for the policy:	Mr Craig Heaton, Head Teacher