



United Learning
The best in everyone™

Dunottar School

Missing/Absent and Uncollected Pupils Policy

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Introduction

The welfare of all our children at Dunottar (“the School”) is our paramount responsibility. Children being absent from education, i.e. not present without authorisation or explanation, for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college’s response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children’s social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Every adult who works at Dunottar School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy applies to all members of our school community and Dunottar School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

In line with our Provision of Information policy, this document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the main school office and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy
- Staff code of conduct

Dunottar School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school’s Equal Opportunity Policy document.

Part 1: Missing/Absent Child Policy

This policy covers:

- Information for parents.
- Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school.
- Duty to report.
- Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School.
- Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing.
- Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found.

Information for parents

All safeguarding policies are reviewed regularly (at least once a year as a minimum) by the School's Local Governing Body in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. This policy is ratified annually by the United Learning Group Board in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Where reasonably possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil. This is to give the School additional options to make contact with parents and/or a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of all pupils, what to do if a child goes missing and are required to read Part 1 of KCSIE, or Annex A of KCSIE if their role does not require them to work directly with children.

In addition, all pupils and parents will be made aware of:

- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school.
- Arrangements when arriving at school and leaving the premises at the end of the day.
- Arrangements for registration in both morning and afternoon. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact the parent if the child fails to arrive at school without an explanation.
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building, and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the School.

Actions to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School.

If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Headmaster and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. The DSL will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. If the

DSL believes the pupil is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate) without delay.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

Duty to Report

Dunottar School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance. Dunottar School will inform the local authority (and the local authority where the child is normally resident) of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 school days after an authorised absence or has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is not unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the School and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is, the School may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The School will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

The School also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

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

The School's procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

A pupil may be identified as missing when:

- An absence at morning registration is not confirmed by the School Secretary calling home.
- comparing pupils in a class with the day's absence records on ISAMS.
- reconciling the afternoon registration.
- a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil is received.
- a report from a member of staff who is meant to be teaching the pupil is received.

If a pupil was found to be missing the School will carry out the following actions without delay:

Stage One:

Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the School Secretary (if unavailable then please contact school reception) who will:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts.
- Contact the School Nurse/first aider to check for any known medical emergency.

- Contact the learning resource center to check they are not working in there.
- Contact the class teacher of any timetabled class at which the missing pupil should be present.
- Check all lists of trips out of School.
- Check the electronic register at Reception.
- Contact the estates team who will conduct a search of the school site.
- Inform the Headmaster.
- Check if CCTV is available.

Stage Two:

At this stage the School Secretary will:

- Open a written record.
- Inform SLT members including the DSL or DDSL.
- Contact the parents/guardians and ask for further information and explain what has happened.
- Request parents come to the school at once.
- Post a 'missing' notice, sent by email, to all staff with the name of the pupil, date, photograph and time of first noted absence.
- Advise all teachers due to teach or tutor the pupil later that day that they must immediately inform the office if the pupil appears.

Stage Three:

If the above actions fail:

- A search of the rest of the School premises and grounds and local roads will be made on foot, or by car, by available staff and parents as appropriate.
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her.
- If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice will be used as a useful tool in locating missing pupils.
- On completion of this and any subsequent searches made over the day parents will continue to be informed of progress.
- At their discretion, the Headmaster in consultation with the Designated Safeguard Lead, will arrange for the police to be informed and, where appropriate, Surrey Children's Services to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom.

- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.

If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The SLT and parents will be directly informed by the School Office.
- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- A notice cancelling the emergency situation will be posted via an email sent to all relevant staff.
- The written log kept by the School Office will be signed off.
- If deemed necessary, the DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom.
 - TEL: 0300 470 9100
 - EMAIL: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk
- The school will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- If the pupil is injured, the School will make a report under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the School, in consultation with Children Services, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A record will be kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from School without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation. In addition, a full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found will be made. If appropriate, these procedures will be adjusted.

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present.
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity.
- Immediately inform the Headmaster or duty SLT member by phone.
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Ask the Headmaster or DSL to ring the pupil's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to either the venue or the School (whichever is the more practicable) at once.
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.
- Immediately contact the Police.

- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department (TEL: 0300 470 9100 EMAIL: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk Out of hours emergency team TEL: 01483 517898).
- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The School's insurers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.
- If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment, a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The School will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil.
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the Local Authority, police and United Learning Safeguarding Lead, if necessary).
- The Headmaster will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LCSB OR local safeguarding partners).
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate).
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and pupils, when the pupil was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the pupil was missing and how they appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

After the Incident

- The senior member of staff involved will sensitively discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.
- If the incident got to stage 2 The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file.
- The incident report will detail:
 1. The date and time of the report
 2. What staff/children were in the group/class

3. When the child was last seen in the group/class
 4. What has taken place in the group/class/ since then and the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and, if appropriate, procedures (including risk assessments and training) may be updated.

This will enable the school to identify pupils who go missing on repeat occasions.

Part 2: Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

Introduction

The School undertakes to look after all pupils safely throughout the time that they remain under our care, until such a time as s/he has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise a pupil's safety.

Dunottar School is committed to taking the necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils and we undertake to look after safely any pupil who is not collected from school at the appointed time.

The school will make every reasonable attempt to contact the parents (or other nominated carer) but if there is no response from any of the contact or emergency numbers provided to the school, the school may well have to contact the relevant Social care Duty Officer, on the numbers located in this policy, who will be responsible for making emergency supervision arrangements for the pupil. This may involve contacting the Police.

The school is sympathetic to the parent/guardian of a pupil who, where the circumstances are exceptional, is not collected at the appointed time. However, Dunottar School reserves the right to charge a fee for late collection to cover the additional time worked by our staff.

Procedures if a pupil is not collected on time

These procedures are intended to ensure that pupils at Dunottar School are looked after safely in the event a pupil is not collected at the appointed time. Initial procedures may vary according to the age and maturity of the pupil and the time of day, but under no circumstances will a member of staff go to look for a parent or take the pupil home with them.

- Parents of pupils are required to provide contact details which are recorded on iSAMS.
- This includes home and mobile telephone numbers of parents and other emergency contacts.
- Parents are regularly reminded to update their contact information.
- Pupils who are uncollected report to Reception or a member of staff.

If a pupil is not collected staff should follow these procedures:

- All reasonable attempts are made by the staff to contact the parents/carers using contact details from iSAMS.

- If contact is made with the parent/carer, the pupil stays at school with a member of staff until the pupil is collected. If before 5:30pm, this will be at After School Club.
- Staff may agree with parents on speaking to them that an uncollected pupil can travel home independently. This permission should be recorded. Staff may make a judgement as to whether they think this appropriate given the age of the pupil and the circumstances and may choose to use the school's preferred taxi company, either Road Runners (01737 760076) or Belfry (01737 766111) to send the pupil home.
- If no contact can be made, after an hour, staff liaise with a member of SLT and contact Surrey Children's services (on 0300 470 9100 / cspa@surreycc.gov.uk or the out of hours emergency team on 01483 517898 / edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk) and inform ISI.
- Up until the point the pupil is collected or handed into the care of Social Services they will be cared for by staff.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded.

Pupils leaving site at the end of the day

- Pupils taking the late bus will wait inside the school grounds for the bus.
- Pupils waiting to be picked up by car must wait by the pedestrian gate and should not wait on 'the island' outside the front of school.
- Pupils must return into school if parents have not arrived to pick them up after 15 minutes waiting.

The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents.

Major Incidents

In the event of a major incident with the potential to affect the ability of parents to collect pupils at the appointed time, the Headmaster will endeavor to make arrangements to keep the school open and provide emergency supervision.

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