

# Missing Pupil Policy

Audience:	Parents REAch2 staff Local Governing Bodies Cluster Boards Trustees
Ratified:	REAch2 Trust Board July 2023
Other related policies:	Safeguarding and Child Protection Attendance Behaviour Health and Safety
Policy owner:	Helen Beattie, Head of Safeguarding
Review:	Every 3 years

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



## Leadership

Finding the leader in all of us.



## Inclusion

Realising the greatness in our difference.



## Learning

Creating exceptional opportunities for learning.



## Enjoyment

Loving what we do.



## Inspiration

Feeling the power of the possible.



## Integrity

Being courageously true to our purpose.



## Responsibility

Unwavering commitment to seeing things through.

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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, or a child who is expected to be attending but has not arrived at school. 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.

### 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, inclusion room (**delete/amend as applicable**)

If the child has not been located through the steps outlined above, the following process should be followed:

- Inform Headteacher or member of SLT, and any other relevant staff.
- Headteacher or member of SLT organises search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to.
- If the pupil is not found, then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the school and check the perimeter of the grounds.

**(Delete/amend as appropriate for your setting)**

As part of this process, the pupil's peers, classmates and siblings (where applicable) 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 update the Headteacher, or (in their absence) a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The following process will then be followed:

- School office must phone the police when area has been fully checked if the child is not found.
- School office to immediately contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation and that the Police have been informed. **Always keep parents updated.**
- Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the school perimeter. This decision will be based on staff's knowledge of the child and on the levels of risk, any active risk assessment and on what action is in the child's best interests. **Liase with the police at all times.**
- Any staff who leave school grounds must take a school mobile phone, a walkie-talkie or personal mobile to contact school. Staff should where possible leave the site accompanied by another member of staff.
- Once a pupil has been found then the lead SLT member will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.

- A written report must be filed on the incident and added to CPOMS/MyConcern (see below for more details)
- Member of SLT must brief police and parents, and contact their DDoE and Safeguarding Governor to inform them of the incident.

### **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. The procedure outlined above as per child missing in school will be followed.

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

Pupils in **Year 6 (delete/amend as applicable)** are allowed to travel to school independently, with parental permission. 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 file on **CPOMS / MyConcern**. 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 DDoE and the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding on the Local Governing Body, to enable appropriate action

and review by Governors to take place. As deemed necessary by the DDoE, the REAch2 Safeguarding Lead will also be informed, alongside other relevant members of the Trust.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by REAch2 Academy Trust Directors every 3 years as per the REAch2 policy cycle or sooner if required.

The following school policies and practice guidelines are to be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Attendance policy
- Behaviour policy, incl any individual pupil risk assessments
- Health and Safety policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

The Missing Pupil Policy will be reviewed **every 3 years** or sooner, taking into account any legislative changes.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.