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## SHOREHAM ACADEMY

# Children Missing in Education Policy

Updated: Sept 2023  
Review: Sept 2025

## **Aims and objectives of the policy**

The welfare of children at Shoreham Academy is of paramount importance. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This policy is written with reference to KCSIE 2023, Children Missing in Education September 2016 and Prevent Duty in Education.

## **Information for Parents**

The school completes an admission register and a daily attendance register; all students are on both registers. A student is added to the admission register as soon as it has been confirmed that the child will attend the school. If the child fails to attend on the agreed or notified date of starting, the school will consider notifying the local authority to prevent the child from going missing in education. The admission register records the full name of the parent /carer with whom the student lives, the address and the date when there is any change to these arrangements.

## **Steps to be followed if a child goes missing from school**

### **a. Child missing at morning registration or not attending school**

If a child is absent from school, the school will contact a parent or guardian to ascertain the reason for absence. Where there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures, as contained in the safeguarding policy.

If a child is to be removed from the school's admission register at a non-standard transition point, the Local Authority in which the child is resident, will be notified. Reasons for removal may include moving out of the area, Elective Home Education or being enrolled in a new school.

When a child remains absent for 10 school days after an authorised period of leave or after 20 days of unauthorised leave, the school will notify the local authority who will make reasonable enquiries regarding the student's whereabouts. The local authority will also be notified if a student fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days (continuous). It is the schools aim to complete a home visit on the 10<sup>th</sup> day if we have not seen a student in 10 consecutive days.

When a child leaves to join another school, contact will be made with that school to confirm that the child has been admitted onto their student roll. If the child has not joined that school then clarification will be sought to identify where that child is now being educated.

### **b. Child missing after registration**

Our procedures at Shoreham Academy are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child is identified as missing, we carry out the following actions:

- i. Arrange immediately for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school bounds, both inside and out.
- ii. Check registers in order to confirm that all the other students are present and ensure the safety of the remaining children without causing undue panic.
- iii. Inform the Senior Leadership Team of the child's absence.
- iv. Calmly ask all of the adults and children if they can reliably say when they last remember seeing the child.
- v. Check the CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.
- vi. Site team to check toilets
- vii. Put out a tannoy request for missing student

If the child is still missing, the following steps will be taken:

- i. Inform the Senior Leadership and safeguarding teams.
- ii. As soon as it is ascertained that the child is no longer on the premises, inform the child's parent or carer of the situation, what steps have been set in motion and ask them to contact their child (phone missing student's mobile phone)
- iii. Arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds.
- iv. If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff may set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her.
- v. Within a rolling hour, the pastoral or safeguarding team to notify the Police, giving a full description of the child and requesting an immediate and full search of the area.
- vi. The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- vii. Inform the Chair of Governors.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Steps to be followed when the child is found:

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- A senior member of staff would speak to the parent/carer to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- A senior member of staff would ensure that a full investigation is undertaken.
- Possible sanctions would be set if the child was proved to have truanted

#### **Steps to be followed if a child goes missing on an external excursion**

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- Contact the venue/site manager if applicable and arrange an additional and wider search by adults with local knowledge.
- The remaining children would be taken back to school, if appropriate.
- Inform the Emergency Contact for the trip by mobile phone.

- Ask the Emergency Contact to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. They may ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once.
- Contact the Police.
- The school would contact the designated Trip Advisor for West Sussex.
- Inform the Chair of Governors.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Steps to be followed once a child is found when on an off-site excursion:

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- A senior member of staff would speak to the parent/carer to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Principal would ensure that a full investigation is undertaken.
- If on an off-site activity, media queries should be referred to the Principal with support from the West Sussex Trip Advisor.
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The report should be detailed covering: time; place; numbers of staff and children; when the child was last seen; what appeared to have happened; the purpose of the outing; the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing; lessons for the future.

### **Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time**

If a child is not collected within a reasonable period after the arranged collection time, the school will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, the school will call the emergency numbers on record for the student.

Shoreham Academy undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care. If no contact has been made with a parent/carer and the child has not been collected by 5.00 pm, depending on the Pastoral Status of the child, appropriate liaison with Social Services and/or the police will be undertaken.

Please note there are many reasons why a child may be missing in education. All incidences will be investigated as appropriate and treated as individual cases.