

Woolton High School

Policy in the event of a pupil absconding from school 2019-20

Introduction

Woolton High School is a child safe school that will do everything within reason to ensure that the safety and well-being of pupils is met at all times. In the event of a pupil going missing from Woolton High School, the procedures set out in this policy must be followed.

Implementation

If the child cannot be found on the grounds, or is known to have left the school premises, then a member of the SMT/Safeguarding Team should be informed.

If the pupil who has gone missing remains missing for a period of twenty minutes (or less, dependent on age / perceived level of vulnerability), the pupil's parent/carer should then be informed by telephone. If the pupil is a 'Looked After Child' by the Authority, the member of staff who has been informed should then notify their social worker/duty team and the police (709 6010). The member of staff should be able to inform the police about the following details:-

- Particulars of child (i.e. name, d.o.b., home address, etc)
- Description of child and what s/he was wearing.
- Details of any health considerations of the child.
- Any relevant antecedents as to why the child may have run away and, possible destinations to which the child might be heading.

If the pupil who goes missing is not looked after by the Local Authority, then school is duty bound to ensure that his parent / carer / adult with parental responsibility is informed, then they may decide to contact the police themselves.

In the event that the pupil who has gone missing is not 'Looked after' by the Local Authority, but deemed to be at serious risk to themselves or others (see below for description of 'at risk') then that pupil should be reported to the police.

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In the event of a pupil being seen leaving the school grounds, any member of staff that is present should try to encourage that child to return to school. Should that fail, the member of staff should return to the school office so that school's procedures for notifying parents can be implemented.

Pupils considered at risk and in need of being reported to the police after missing from school:

- All pupils who are looked after by the Local Authority (CLA)
- Pupils who are known to have a child protection plan
- Pupils who are known to self-harm
- Pupils who have not taken prescribed medication (i.e. Ritalin/concerta)
- Any other pupils who are considered to be at risk of harm to themselves or others
- Pupils vulnerable to exploitation

Pupils who do not fall into any of these categories should not be reported to the police, as school has been directed by Merseyside Police to report only those pupils who go missing that fall into the above 'at risk' groups. However, pupils not considered 'at risk' should be reported to parents who have the duty to inform police if required.

When any pupil goes missing from school, the incident should be recorded in the 'pupils who have gone missing' file in the school admin office along with a police log number and the time that they went missing.

If a pupil goes missing from school, but returns before the end of the school day, school reserve the right to decide if that pupil's behaviour is appropriate to access school arranged transport. If school decides that any pupil's behaviour is not appropriate for travelling via school arranged transport, then parents/carers will be notified of this.

This policy was ratified on 26th September 2019

This policy will be reviewed in September 2020