



GUILDFORD HIGH SCHOOL

6-10 MISSING/ABSENT AND UNCOLLECTED PUPILS

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PART 1: MISSING/ABSENT PUPIL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all our pupils at Guildford High School (“the School”) is our paramount responsibility. Pupils being absent from education 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’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 Guildford High 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 the most recent update of 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.

Guildford High School will always consider the wider circumstances around a pupil 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 should be read in conjunction with the School’s Safeguarding Policy and the staff code of conduct. This policy was drawn up having had regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Early Years Statutory Framework, Department for Education’s guidance KCSIE and ‘*Children Missing Education*’.

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, Guildford High 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:

- 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, including onsite supervision including of the playground 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 pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Head / Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The Head / Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. If the Head / Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 pupil (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

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance. The 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 without permission.

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 no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is 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.

The School will report to ISI within 14 days any incident of a missing EYFS pupil as is required under the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS) 2021, for registered providers.

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.

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

- Use the missingpupil@guildfordhigh.co.uk email to alert SLT, HoY, reception staff, nurse, music department. All staff to keep in touch via iPads and email.
- Check school premises including cloakrooms, toilets, gardens, Wellbeing Hub, SEN hub
- Reception will advise if a pupil has signed out or is absent due to sickness
- Ascertain when the pupil was last seen on the school premises by talking to staff who have taught them earlier in the day
- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know of their whereabouts

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- A fire drill might be held in order to ensure that the pupil is on site.
- Ask either the Head or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once.
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with her, in case the pupil has set off to walk home. Staff may also drive to the pupil's home if they live nearby. Staff will keep in touch with SLT via mobile.
- The Head/DSL of the School will immediately notify the Police.
- The DSL will contact/refer to Surrey Children's Services on the Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA) line 0300 470 9100 or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 123 1650 to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom. This may include contacting the police.
- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The Head will inform the Head of Independent Schools, Chair of Governors without delay.
- Inform the School's insurers.
- 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's 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 Head and the DSL by mobile phone.
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to school/accommodation as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Ask the Head 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 the venue/the School at once (where possible or if within school holidays, to remain in contact with the Head).
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.
- Immediately contact the Police.
- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department (C-SPA: 0300 470 9100)
- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The Head will inform the Head of Independent Schools without delay.
- 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. If the incident requires a follow up this will be done through contact with parents and appropriate sanctions will be carried out.

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 Head 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 Head will organise a full investigation (if appropriate involving the local safeguarding partners).
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (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 she appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

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.

Senior School pupils in Years 7-11 are expected to leave the school promptly at the end of the school day, unless they are involved in teacher-led activities e.g. sport, or an event rehearsal (drama or pantomime). Pupils are permitted to work in the school library only until 17:50 as the school closes at 18:00. All Sixth Formers must vacate the premises by 18:00.

Junior School pupils in Reception and Year 1 are collected from the classroom door by their named adults at the end of their school day at 15.05. Year 2 are collected from their classroom doors at 15.40. Years 3 - 6 are collected from the Junior School entrance or from the pick-up bay from 15:40 – 16:00. All pupils are the responsibility of their Form Teacher until they are collected by their named adult. If pupils are not collected by their parents as agreed, the girls are put into Homework Club or After School Care and their parents are contacted. The pupil can then remain in After School Care until it closes at 18:00.

The school is sympathetic to the parent/guardian of the pupil who, where circumstances are exceptional, is not collected by 18:00.

PROCEDURES IF A PUPIL IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. If there is no answer, the Teacher will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

- Parents will be contacted – if no response then the emergency contact will be called to ascertain the situation and ETA of the parents.
- Any Senior or Junior pupil can wait at their appropriate Reception until the caretaking team have finished locking up. If contact has been made with parents and they are on their way, any Senior pupil will then go to wait at the Sports Centre. Either the caretaker or reception staff will walk the pupil to the Sports Centre. Junior School pupils will wait in school with a member of staff.
- If there is no response from any of the contact numbers, and the pupil has not been picked up by the time the Sports Centre closes at 21:00, Sports Centre Reception must call the DSL or Head, or in her absence, one of the Deputy DSLs, who will make a decision whether to contact the Social Services Emergency Duty Team who can be contacted on 01483 517898 and it is they who will be responsible for making emergency supervision arrangements for the pupil. This may involve contacting the police.
- If a pupil can go home safely with a friend, this will be arranged and a message left informing the parent.
- Children’s social care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police.
- In the event of a pupil being picked up late by their parent following a school trip, the teacher in charge should alert the relevant HoY so that it can be noted and where necessary followed up. In the event of a pupil not being collected after a trip, after 30 minutes if no contact can be made with parents, the Head will be contacted to decide the next steps, which may involve contacting Social Services Out Of Hours Team or the police being called. A written report of the incident will be made to the Head and where appropriate ISI informed.

FAILURE TO COLLECT AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT OR DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of a major incident or inclement weather with the potential to affect the ability of parents to collect pupils at the appointed time, the Head will make arrangements to keep the school open and provide emergency supervision for pupils who have not been collected from school. The Head, together with SLT, will ensure that enough staff stay on site to ensure adequate ratios for supervision, at all levels, including EYFS. The school’s Emergency Action Plan will apply. Decisions to contact Social Services will be made at a time commensurate with the scale of the incident and the number of pupils affected and their age.

If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures detailed in staff code of conduct and School’s Safeguarding Policy.

RECORDS

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.

This policy has been approved and reviewed by Anna Lise Gordon, Safeguarding Governor.

Date of next review: June 2026