



5.1 App3

MISSING CHILD POLICY

This policy is written with reference to the DfE documents:

- Children Missing in Education (Sept 2016)
- [Advice on School Attendance](#) (Sept 2022)

Aims

The welfare of every child at The Downs is the responsibility of every member of staff throughout the school. The aim of this policy and its procedures is to ensure all the children at The Downs are safe and receive a suitable education.

Objectives

- To promote good attendance
- To prevent persistent or avoidable absence
- To ensure every pupil has access to a full-time education
- To act early to address patterns of absence
- To communicate effectively with parents and the LA
- To act collectively in the case of a child going missing during the school day

Admissions and Attendance Registers

All the children in the school are registered in both the Admissions and Attendance Register from at least the first day of their attendance at The Downs.

The Admissions Register is held by the Registrar. It is monitored by the Head.

The Attendance Register is held in the School Office. It is monitored by the Deputy Head Academic.

Amendments to original entries to **both** registers are archived or kept for further note. The reason for amendment is made alongside the date, name and position of the person who made the change.

Both registers are stored for three years.

Both the registers are evaluated, usually termly by the Education Committee.

Admissions Register

The school Admission's Register is managed the Registrar and their team. Alongside the register the Registrar keeps a paper trail of communication with the Local Authority.

The Registrar is kept well informed of any ISI updates or statutory changes by the Head. The register is monitored by the Education Committee.

The Registrar works closely with the LA concerning children joining and leaving the school.

The Admission's Register takes note in full of each child's details;

1. Name in full
2. Sex
3. Name and address of both parents – as far as practical – and note of with whom child lives
4. Changes of address and in which case note of whom the child will normally live in the future. Date of change
5. Telephone number of at least one parent in case of emergencies
6. Day, month, year of birth
7. Date, Month and year of admission
8. Date, Month and year of readmission (where appropriate)
9. Name and address of school last attended – if any
10. Destination school and first date of attendance

Local Education Authority

Good, effective communication with the LA (North Somerset) is essential to ensure children are safe. The school notifies the LA when children are removed and join the school at non-standard times, which is after the beginning of the academic year.

In regard to deletion (removal) from the register, the school notifies the LA as soon the grounds are met and before the child's name is deleted.

In regard to non-standard admissions, notice is made to the LA within five days of entry.

In the case of a child leaving The Downs without the school knowing of their destination, the DSL is informed and the matter becomes a safeguarding issue which would be reported to the LA.

Attendance Register

The school Attendance Register is managed by the School Secretary and Receptionist who are kept well informed of any ISI updates or statutory changes by the Assistant Head. The register is monitored by the Education Committee.

If a child has unauthorised absence for 10 consecutive days or has an irregular pattern of attendance the LA will be informed.

The Attendance Register takes full note of each child's attendance and is completed at the start of each morning and afternoon.

- 8.35am whole school
- 1.35pm Pre-Prep, 2.15pm Prep (12noon in Prep School on Wednesday)

Registration is recorded electronically (or by hand on a Wednesday or if the registration system is down) and submitted to the School Office. The receptionists check that all absentees are accounted for - parents may have phoned in reporting illness etc. (see Daily Attendance Register). Parents are telephoned by 10.00am for those children not accounted for.

The Attendance Register illustrates if a child is

1. / - Present
2. Absent *There are 2 codes for this. M for a medical appointment or I for illness.*
3. Attending approved activity outside of school this could be P for Sporting activity or V Educational Visit
4. Y - Unable to attend for exceptional circumstances
5. Taking authorised absence, H (agreed family holiday) C (other authorised absence)
6. O - Taking unauthorised absence
7. B - Educated offsite
8. H - Holiday (Authorised)
9. N – Pupil not present in registration, no reason given.

A standard code to reflect each type of attendance is used by the school office staff.

- **Actions taken if a child goes missing after registration.**

In the event of the absence of a pupil who was registered present in the morning or afternoon, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be informed and they will co-ordinate the search. A further check will be made of the classroom in which that pupil is expected and other ad hoc areas such as ICT, sports facilities, music, dance and speech and drama rooms. If that is unsuccessful a wider school search will be organised:

A search will be made of the school grounds and buildings and discreet questioning will take place of other children to establish when and where the missing child was last seen. Those involved are likely to be members of the Leadership Group, Matrons etc. Mobiles phones or walkie-talkies will be used as a means to communicate between the groups. A time and a place of conclusion will be previously agreed. A comprehensive search should not take more than 45 minutes. The procedure will be stopped at any stage if the child is found.

If the child remains absent after the search, the fire bell will be rung to enable

a full school registration to take place.

If after the 'fire registration' the child is not found, The Head (or whoever is in charge of the school) will contact the Police and the child's parents. The DSL will inform the North Somerset Safeguarding Lead.

From this stage, the Crisis Management Policy will apply (see Health and Safety manual). A written record will be made in the Pupil Management File. This should state the details and timings, the outcome and the reasons why the child was missing. This will be signed and dated by the Head and a member of the Leadership Group.

- Actions to be followed when a child is found.

The most appropriate member of staff will be allocated to talk to and comfort the child. A talk/assembly will be delivered to the children to ensure they understand why they need to tell someone where they are to keep safe. Information will be delivered to parents and an investigation will follow including statements from staff. Points should be noted for the future to ensure this risk is minimised.

- Actions to be followed when a child is not collected at the end of the day.

Contact parent or main carer by telephone, if neither is available use any other emergency numbers held on SIMS for that child. During this time the child will be cared for and kept safe. Inform the Head or a member of the Leadership team.

At their discretion and relative to the time of absence, the Head or in their absence, a member of the Leadership team to contact Social services and the police. The school will make a written report of the timeline of events. The school will continue to look after the child until either one of the designated people collects the child or Social Care take the child into their care. The DSL will keep a record of any such events for future reference. If a pupil is injured a report made under RIDDOR is sent to the Health and Safety Executive.

- Actions to be followed if a child goes missing on a school trip.

After a regular head count check shows that a child is missing an adult will search the immediate area. The Head will be informed who will contact the parents who may go to the venue or the school. The venue manager will be asked to search their setting.

As necessary the Police will be contacted, also the DSL to inform the Local Children's Safeguarding Board. At such time the other children will return to school. The Chairman of Governors will be informed and the school's insurers will be informed. If a child is injured a report made under RIDDOR is sent to

the Health and Safety Executive.

- Actions to be followed when the above child is found

The most appropriate member of staff to talk to and comfort the child.

A talk/assembly delivered to the children to ensure they understand why they need to stay with their group and group leader and keep safe. Information will be delivered to parents and an investigation will follow including statements from staff. Points should be noted for the future to ensure this risk is minimised. Media inquiries should be referred to the Head.

- Missing Children and Safeguarding:

The school is aware that a child who runs away or goes missing from an education setting can be a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. We have in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. Alongside informing the Social Services, a risk assessment maybe undertaken in connection with high levels of absence.

This policy and associated procedures is monitored by a member of the Leadership Team. Monitoring is generally ongoing but at least termly. Evaluation is made by the Education Committee each term.

See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

| This policy was adopted on | Signed on behalf of the School | Date for review |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 14/12/23 | <i>O Elliott</i> | 19/12/24 |