



Sandbach High School

and Sixth Form College

Our Academy, Our Future

MISSING STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Rational

The welfare and security of students in our school is paramount and all possible and practical policy and procedures have been implemented to ensure this remains a priority. It is important that in the unlikely event of a student going missing, staff quickly follow agreed procedures. This will ensure that the student is located as soon as possible and that the correct people are informed. A student going missing is a rare occurrence but complacency is a hazard which must be avoided at all costs. The purpose of this policy is thus to locate a missing student, return them to safety, inform the relevant parties of the situation and invoke a review of the incidents.

Systems in place to minimise the risk

1. The attendance register is taken at the start of the morning session.
2. Parents/carers are requested to contact school if students are absent through ill health or will be late.
3. Late comers sign into school via main reception and will be entered onto the system.
4. Students who need to be absent at some time during the school day for medical appointments bring letters from home and sign out again in main reception.
5. Where students are to be absent for school for visits or other authorised activities lists of students involved are left with main reception so that these absences can be recorded.
6. Students out of lesson for other reasons e.g. toilet visit have their planners signed.
7. Subject teachers take registers each lesson and attendance is monitored by form tutors, achievement co-ordinators and deputy head.
8. An annual risk assessment is completed of the safety and security which includes a review of the security of students on school premises.

Procedure

In the event of a student being found to be missing it is vital that prompt action is taken.

1. Subject teacher identifies when registering the class that a student is missing and attempts to identify the last known whereabouts of the student as quickly as possible from fellow students.

2. A check should be made with main reception and then if the student is still not located then the following procedures are to be followed:

- The relevant Achievement Co-ordinator and the Headteacher/ Deputy Head should be informed.

- A systematic search of the premises will be carried out to see if the student can be located in the surrounding/ immediate area e.g. toilets, learning resource centre. At the same time known associates will be quizzed to see if they have any knowledge of the whereabouts of the missing student. Attempts will be made to contact missing student by their mobile phone if the number is available.

- In the event the student is found the parent/ carer should be advised of the incident and a review undertaken.

- Contact parent/ carer of the student. Once contacted the parents/ carers should be advised to stay at home or ensure someone remains in the home in case the student arrives there. Parent/carer to attempt to make contact by phone or contact friends not at school. Advise the parents/ carer that emergency services may now need to be contacted and that staff are searching the route that the student may take home as well as local parks etc. Parents should be asked for information of anywhere else the student may head for e.g. friend or grandparent.

- Staff searching must take a mobile phone and keep in regular contact with the school at all times/ If the member of staff following the students route home, arrives there with out finding the student, they must contact the school immediately and await instruction.

- At this point if the students has not been located then the Headteacher/ Deputy will inform the police and the schools critical incident team will be alerted.

- Once the police arrive formal responsibility for the search will pass to them, but school staff and any students with information regarding the missing student should make themselves available to assist further with the incident.

- When a police search is underway it is advisable to inform the Council's Critical Incidents Team.

Record of Events and Subsequent Action

The following details will be noted in order to help any search and subsequent investigation.

1. Date time and location of disappearance.
2. Who was responsible for the care of the student at that time.
3. What was the student wearing e.g. trousers/ skirt, blouse/ sweater.
4. Does the student have any distinguishing features.
5. Circumstances surrounding the disappearance.
6. Time parents/ carers and other agencies contacted.
7. When and where the student was found and the reasons why they were missing.
8. If the student was missing through truancy then the student will be seen with their parents to ascertain why the truancy took place. At this stage it may in the light of findings it may be necessary to discipline the student.
9. If the student was missing for other reasons as soon as is practical after the incident the teacher in charge with the assistance of the health and safety officer will write a report which the school leadership team can use as part of an incident review. The review will aim to look for improvements to the procedures implemented and seek to avoid any further occurrence of the incident.

10. If the student was hurt in anyway then emotions and reactions must be dealt with professionally and in a caring and understanding way. Should any staff be approached by parents or the press regarding the situation they should be referred to the nominated press officer.