



MISSING CHILDREN POLICY

09/26

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MISSING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

At Castle Farm CC all staff should be aware of the safeguarding responsibilities for **children who are absent or go missing** from the setting, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise at a school

A child is missing education when all the following apply:

- They are between the compulsory school age, 5 to 16 years old.
- Not registered on a school register.
- Not attending an alternate education provision.
- Not receiving suitable education otherwise e.g. Elective Home Education (EHE).

At Castle Farm CC we adhere to the following procedures and processes to ensure there is an appropriate safeguarding response to children who are missing:

- an attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each day.
- attendance (positive attendance, lateness and absences) is reported to the home school/commissioner within 30 minutes of the child's planned arrival.
- we hold at least two emergency contact numbers for each of the children who attend our setting wherever possible.
- **Day one of unexplained absence** -On the first day of absence, Castle Farm should make a telephone call to parent child resides with to seek reasons for absence and reassurance from the parent that the child is safe at home.
- If the child is absent and there is no response from the parent, this will be passed on to the school/Commissioner immediately.
- if a child absconds from Castle Farm CC, the home school/commissioner and parent/carers will be informed immediately.
- staff will alert the safeguarding lead to any concerns raised regarding children who are absent.
- children **will not be given permission to leave the AP site** during the session, unless, for example, it is for a pre-arranged appointment or trip
- any absence concerns will be discussed with the commissioner without delay.
- If a Student is absent for 10 school days without permission, Castle Farm is required to inform the Local Authority that the child is 'missing education', which then initiates enquiries to ensure the child is safe and receiving education

Children Leaving CFCC Site

It is important to remember that children go missing for a whole variety of reasons, and being absent without leave can be indicative of unhappiness, distress and even abuse. Therefore, each missing child is an individual case and has to be handled in

a way which is most beneficial to the child. It is essential that the young person missing is given the opportunity to speak to someone from the staff or the independent listener. At Castle Farm Countryside Classroom (CFCC) we have a number of protocols to minimise the risk of a child leaving site in the first instance.

All children are accounted for at any given point of the day be it lessons, activities or lunchtimes.

A child is classified as 'missing' when we do not have clear knowledge of where the child is and the decision has been made to call the police. However, this policy covers our practice and processes regarding all children who leave site without authority. Once it is certain that a child has left the site or care of supporting adult, management should be notified and a Left Site Without Authority form being completed. The supporting member will inform the other staff and with agreement telephone parents and the police. As a matter of course, staff should only pursue a child if it does not leave the other children inadequately supervised, in accordance with the behaviour management policy document. Crucially, staff should be familiar with pupils' risk assessments in the event there is specific guidance regarding how to respond to a pupil we have seen leaving site. The decisions regarding how long to follow a child will be dependent on their age and vulnerability.

- Upon suspecting a Young Person has gone missing from site, staff member will report immediately to the session leader.
 - Within the first 5 minutes, a full site search will be undertaken. This should be extensive and include 'hiding holes and the immediate vicinity off site. It is very important this is done calmly and without fuss. Other children may not be used in the on-site search.
 - Where possible, staff will be dispatched in a vehicle to check local roads
 - Site search should be thorough, however after a maximum of 30-minutes of searching, Police should be called by a senior member of staff, unless it has otherwise been agreed between school and parents/carers to wait longer.
- If at any point the child is located off-site by staff in a vehicle, and it is unsafe to put the child in the vehicle, then staff should continue to follow and keep the pupil in sight. The session leader should be called at the earliest opportunity so that Police can be kept updated as to the child's whereabouts. Options at this point are:

Continue to follow and try to persuade to return to the vehicle

Call Police for support /help in supporting the Young Person to return.

Missing Child/Young Person Detained by Police:

1. If missing child/young person is found/detained by the Police, then confidential preliminary discussion will take place between the most appropriate officer, at the appropriate place and the young person, the purpose of which will be to ascertain why they went missing
2. If the child/young person indicates that they are being abused, then the duty inspector will inform the duty social worker and child protection procedures will commence in line with LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) guidelines.
3. If there appears no cause for concern, the young person will be returned to their place of residence.

The family or appropriate adult should be informed as soon as is practically possible.

When a child returns of his own volition or is found and persuaded to do so by staff, the Police and the family or appropriate adult must be informed. The return of the child must be handled with sensitivity. Food and drink should be offered before the incident is investigated further. There is no fixed sanction relating to missing child incidents. Each case will be viewed individually

INCIDENT REPORT LEAVING SITE WITHOUT AUTHORITY

This form must ONLY be completed for students who leave site without authority

Learner's name _____

Reporting member of staff _____

Day and date of incident _____
Time (24hr clock) _____

Year group _____

Other staff present _____

Details of events leading to the student leaving site without authority

Parents informed Yes ☐ Time _____ By _____

No ☐ Reason _____

Police informed Yes ☐ Time _____ By _____
No ☐ Reason _____

Director ☐ Session leader ☐ Informed by _____

How were matter resolved/consequences applied?

Time and date of return

Management Tick Details

- Talked through
- Reparation
- Consequences
- Parents called/to be called in
- One to one supervision
- Internal exclusion
- Exclusion
- Police involvement Wellbeing Check completed

Any additional information you wish to addPrint Name

Sign

Date