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| **ST ANDREW’S COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT** |
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**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

Safeguarding Policy

Attendance Policy

Education of Students with Health Needs

**Introduction**

This policy has regard to the DfE guidance ‘Children Missing Education’ (September 2016).

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

St Andrew’s College understands the importance of regular school attendance, both in terms of academic achievement, and the welfare and safety of its students. Problems with attendance can often be a warning sign of wider problems related to physical or mental health, or can signify that a student is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm.

Where students’ non-attendance reaches a certain threshold, they may be classed as ‘Children missing education.’ This means they are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

For this reason, efficient attendance monitoring is vital. Efforts must be made to assist students with poor attendance to access education. And communication between staff, parents and the Local Authority must be maintained in order to identify students who go missing from education.

Additionally, as St Andrew’s College provides boarding for the majority of its students, and is therefore responsible for their care on a full-time basis during the academic year, it is imperative that action is taken to swiftly locate a missing student. When deciding on the appropriate course of action, particular consideration should be given to the student’s age (if they are under 18 or under 16) and the time of day (i.e. during the school day or after curfew).

This policy establishes procedures related to:

1. The Admissions Register
2. Attendance Monitoring
3. Unexplained Absences
4. The Missing Pupil Procedure
5. Reporting to the Local Authority and Deletions from the Admissions Register
6. **The Admissions Register**

The college uses registration forms to obtain student and parent contact details pre-enrolment. These details are input to the college’s Engage database. When students enroll, they complete a second form to provide these details again, which are cross-referenced with those already held on Engage.

The details which must be held for each student are:

* Name in full
* Sex
* Date of birth
* Name and address of each parent or legal guardian
* **Two emergency contact numbers** (normally each parent’s mobile telephone. Where a student does not have two parents, an alternative must be sought, e.g. a grandparent, sibling aged over 21, or guardian)
* Name and address of last school attended, if any
* An indication of boarding or day attendance

The majority of students live in college accommodation during term-time. For students in their own accommodation, the address and details of who they are living with must be held on Engage.

Students and parents are informed that they must inform the college if their contact details change. Tutors must also check students’ contact details regularly.

1. **Attendance Monitoring**

All teachers are required to take an attendance register at the beginning of each lesson and input the data to Engage. The attendance data held on Engage must show whether students are:

* Present
* Absent
* Attending an approved educational activity outside school (such as work experience or a sporting activity). All such activities must have prior approval from the Principal
* Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (such as unavoidable closure of school site)
* Taking authorised absence (such as sickness, hospital appointment, observing a religious day) - absences can only be authorised by the Principal, or the Attendance Officer acting on behalf of the Principal.
* Taking unauthorised absence (no reason established for absence – this may be corrected later if a reason is established)

The Attendance Officer will check the attendance data every morning and cross-reference with the self-reporting absence form that students are required to complete if they are going to be absent.

In the case of each unauthorised absence, the Attendance Officer will attempt to contact the student in question. If the student is deemed to be safe but is absent due to an unauthorised reason, this will remain on their attendance record. If it is not possible to establish the student’s safety and whereabouts, the procedure for unexplained absences must be followed (detailed below).

The Attendance Officer will identify students who have regular absences and will work with the Principal, Assistant Principal and Head of Pastoral Care to establish the need for behavioural sanctions and/or pastoral support to help the student to improve their attendance.

Please consult the ‘Attendance Policy’ for further details.

Information on when to report student absence to the Local Authority is detailed in section 5 of this policy.

1. **Unexplained Absences**

If a student has an unauthorised absence and cannot be contacted, the house manager or homestay host should be contacted. If the student is under 16, this must occur on the day of their first absence. If they are 16 or over, the following day is acceptable.

If it is not possible to locate the student or obtain a reason for their absence, this will be considered as an **unexplained absence.**

Likewise, if a student living in homestay or hall of residence does not return to their accommodation by the curfew time, and is not contactable by mobile phone, this is also considered an **unexplained absence.**

When an unexplained absence occurs, the **Missing Pupil Procedure** must be followed.

1. **Missing Pupil Procedure**

All students and staff should report all unexplained absences of any student to the Principal. If the Principal is not available, it should be reported to a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). This will trigger the following procedure:

a) Internal enquiries will be carried out. The Principal / SMT will attempt to contact the student again by mobile phone. If they still cannot be contacted this way, the Principal / SMT will speak to the student’s friends and other members of staff to build a picture of the student's recent movements to help locate the student. Guidance on appropriate questions to ask is set out in Appendix A of this policy. If appropriate, the Principal / SMT will arrange a search of the premises.

b) If the student cannot be located within 60 minutes, the Principal / SMT will report the absence to the Directors. If the student’s parents/agent have not yet been contacted, they should be contacted now to ascertain when they last had contact with the student and if they have information pertaining to their whereabouts.

c) If the student cannot be located within a further 60 minutes, the Principal / SMT will contact the Police to identify if the Police have any information on the student’s location (for example, if the student has been involved in an accident). Local hospitals should be contacted to find out if the pupil has been admitted.

d) If these enquiries do not yield additional information about the student, the Police should be officially informed that the student is missing. Consideration should be given as to whether it is necessary to inform the Police at this stage if a student is aged over 18. For a student aged over 18, SMT should discuss and consider waiting at least 24 hours before informing the Police. Exceptions may include but are not limited to: if the student is known to have mental health problems or requires medication that they have not taken with them.

e) The student’s parents / agent should be informed that the student has been reported as missing to the Police. The College should discuss any further steps taken with them.

f) If the Police take over responsibility for the search for the student, all relevant information about the student will be passed to them. Information to consider sharing with Police is listed in Appendix A.

If the Principal is not on site, he should be advised that the student is missing and kept updated.

Once the incident is resolved, a full written account of the incident must be produced by the person in charge of the incident on the day. The report is to be written on the same day and sent to the Directors. The report form is to be found in Appendix B of this policy.

Once the incident is resolved, the Principal will review relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments and implement any necessary changes.

1. **Reporting to the Local Authority and Deletions from the Admissions Register**

St Andrew’s College has an obligation to inform the Local Authority if a student of compulsory school age is absent without leave for more than 10 consecutive school days.

Where a student of compulsory school age 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 student is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause) or has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, the college and Local Authority must jointly make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the student is.

If, following such enquiries, the child’s whereabouts remain unknown, the college may delete the student's name from the Admissions Register. In this case, the Local Authority must be informed as soon as the student is to be deleted.

The college is also obliged to inform the Local Authority if a pupil of compulsory school age is going to be deleted from the Admissions Register for the following reasons:

* When the child has been taken out of school to be home educated
* When the family has apparently moved away
* When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend
* When the child is in custody for more than four months
* When the child has been permanently excluded
* When the college has added or removed a pupil at non-standard transitions, I.e. where a compulsory school-aged child leaves a school before completing the school’s final year, or joins a school after the beginning of the school’s first year

The college must inform the Local Authority as soon as the grounds for deletion have been met, and before deleting the child’s name. Non-standard admissions must be notified to the Local Authority within 5 days of entry onto the Admissions Register.

In relation to the above, as the majority of our students are temporarily resident in the UK for the express purpose of attending the course, and were resident overseas prior to admission at St Andrew’s College: where an overseas pupil has been deleted from the register and is known by the college to be returning to their home country, the college does not need to inform the Local Authority, but should record the circumstances of the deletion on the school’s database. If it is not possible to ascertain where the student is or what has happened to them, it must be reported to the Local Authority.

Contact details for the Local Authority can be found in Appendix C of this policy.

**Review:** This policy shall be reviewed every year by the Principal and updates will be made as necessary, considering any incidents that have occurred that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the College and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents, agents and pupils.

**Reviewed: July 2014, July 2015, July 2016, August 2017, July 2018, August 2019, July 2020 and April 2021.**

**Next Review: August 2021.**

**Appendix A**

**Questions to be asked in the case of an unexplained absence:**

1. When was the student last seen?
2. Who was he/she with?
3. Where might he/she have gone?
4. Is there a College activity that he/she might be on?
5. Has he/she been ill or injured and gone to the Doctors and or Hospital?
6. What emotional state did he/she appear to be in?
7. Has anything upset him/her recently?
8. Did he/she speak to anyone about leaving?
9. Who are his/her main friends at College?
10. Does he/she have a mobile phone and what is the number?
11. Is there any reason to believe he/she might have been abducted? (e.g. family custody dispute; very wealthy/prominent parents.)

**Other action to consider taking:**

* Check that he/she is not in a hospital.
* Check his/her room for indications of how he/she is dressed, where he/she might have gone.
* Check his/her desk and waste paper bins for scribbled notes.

**Police response:**

The Police treat all missing person reports as serious. Each risk is assessed, and the following are trigger factors to be considered:

* Student in an emotional or depressed state of mind;
* Unusual behaviour prior to disappearance;
* Student needs essential medicine or treatment;
* Suspicion of abduction;
* Suspicion of self-harm/suicide;
* Involvement in a violent confrontation prior to disappearance;
* Previously disappeared and suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing.

**Record keeping:**

The College will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing student including:

* the pupil's name
* relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the student was missing)
* the action taken to find the pupil
* whether the Police or Social Services were involved
* outcome or resolution of the incident
* any reasons given by the pupil for being missing
* any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident
* a record of the staff involved

A full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's file. Appendix B below will be completed as soon as practicable as each stage of the policy is reached. The responsibility for the maintenance of the form is with the College Principal.

**Appendix B**

**Missing Pupil Form**

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| **Pupils Name:** | **Student missing from:** |
| **Date:** | **Time when student went missing, approx.:** |  |
| **Circumstances of missing pupil:** |  |
| **Member of staff reporting missing pupil:** |  |
| **Missing student reported to:** |  | **Date & time:** |
| **Actions taken** (ensure the person taking the actions and dates and times are always noted as we may need a chronological order of events)**:**  |  |
| **Escalation process, staff member in charge:** |  | **Date & time:** |
| **Police & or Social Services informed, when and by whom:** |  |
| **Outcome of the incident (including reason for the pupil going missing):** |  |
| **Follow up action taken:** |  |
| **Parents / Agent informed:** | (Date, time and contact number used) |
| **Review of the incident, learning outcomes:** |  |
| **Staff involved:** |  |

**Appendix C**

**Contact Details for the Local Authority**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>

Education Safeguarding Team ECPSGeneral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Early Help Hub (EHH) Tel: 01480 376666

Customer Service Centre – social care referrals Tel: 0345 045 5203

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Tel: 01733 234724

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit Tel: 101