

# **PENRICE ACADEMY**

## **MISSING STUDENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Review Date: July 2018

### **RATIONALE**

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 RISK**

1. The attendance register is taken promptly at the beginning of registration and each subsequent lesson.
2. Parents are requested to contact the Academy if students are absent through ill health, medical appointments or if they will be late arriving.
3. Latecomers sign into school via the Attendance Office and will then be entered onto the system.
4. Students who need to leave the Academy for medical appointments during the school day bring letters from home and sign out via the Attendance Office.
5. Where students will be absent from the Academy for visits, trips or other authorised activities lists of students involved are left with Reception and the Attendance Office so that these absences can be recorded correctly.
6. Students out of lessons for other reasons, e.g. toilet visit, have a pass and their planners signed.

### **PROCEDURE**

**In the event of a student being found 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 'student missing from lesson' slip is completed and immediately sent to the Attendance Office.
3. The Attendance Officer, Angela Mitchell, will inform the relevant staff i.e. Behaviour Support (Matthew Potter), relevant Pastoral Manager, Leadership Team member on call and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
4. Attendance Support Officer, Christine Siebert, Behaviour Support (Matthew Potter) and Pastoral Managers will undertake a systematic search of the premises to see if the student can be located in the surrounding/immediate area i.e. toilets, The Core, Student Family Centre, Learning Inclusion Centre or the Medical Room.
5. In the event that the student is quickly found, then the usual Academy behaviour policy will be followed and relevant staff should ascertain why the student went missing. Vulnerable students who are assigned key workers e.g. SEND, CiC, CP should be supported by the relevant member of staff.

6. If an initial search (no more than 15 minutes) does not find the student the Attendance Officer (Angela Mitchell), should contact the parent/carer on the instruction of the Leadership Team member on call or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Once contacted the parent/carer should be advised to stay at home in case the student arrives there. The parent/carer should be asked to attempt to contact their child by phone. Parent/carers should be asked for information of anywhere else the student may head for, e.g. grandparents/neighbours.
7. Consideration will be given as to whether the search should be extended beyond the Academy buildings and grounds. This decision will be based on staff knowledge of the child, levels of risk and on what action is in the child's best interest, and will be taken by the Leadership Team member on call. Any staff who leave the school grounds should take a mobile phone to contact the school.
8. If at this point the student has still not been located, the Attendance Officer, (Angela Mitchell), should report the student missing via 101.

#### **Information to be provided to the Police**

When the school contacts the Police the following information should be provided:

- the student's name
- the student's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the student's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs the student may have
- the student's home address and telephone number
- a description of the clothing the student is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the student such as "I'm going to run away".

#### **Once a student has been found**

If an extensive search of the Academy premises has been initiated due to a student going missing the Head of Year will meet with the student and consider the following:

- whether the absence was deliberate or if a student has broken school rules in which case sanctions may apply
- whether the student is distressed about some element of school life and what action may need to be taken to resolve the situation
- whether there are safeguarding concerns, in which case the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

#### **Where a student attempts or is seen to be leaving school premises without authorisation the following procedure should be followed:**

1. a member of staff will alert reception who will then contact the Leadership Team member on call/the relevant Pastoral Manager/Behaviour Support (Matthew Potter)
2. a member of staff who knows the student well may follow the student to the perimeter fence, exit or gate and try to persuade the student to stay in school
3. an active pursuit may actually encourage a student to leave the site and may cause the student to panic. Therefore, if the student chooses to leave the site despite being asked not to do so, then parents and Police should be contacted as previously outlined.