

Wilby Church of England (VA) Primary School



Child Missing From Education

*Together we are inspired to learn within the family of God's love.
We encourage one another to reach our full potential within a Christian atmosphere.*

John 13:34

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you"

Wilby CE VA Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a fulltime education which maximises opportunities for each child to reach their true potential. This policy should be read alongside our School Attendance and Punctuality policy.

There are significant child protection implications when the whereabouts of a child is not known. The local authority has a duty to locate, track and monitor children missing from education and support them in returning to education.

Attendance

Children are expected to attend school every morning and afternoon for 190 days per year (380 attendance marks) unless there is a good reason for their absence. The school expects all children to have at least a 96% attendance rate.

It is a legal requirement for staff to complete the school register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The class teacher will complete the register indicating if a child is present with a black line (/ or \) or if a child is absent with a red circle. The School Bursar or School Administration Assistant will enter attendance information on the SIMS system daily.

Schools Procedure for Absence

Our school operates a First Day Calling System. This means that parents should contact school **before 8.30am** on the first day of absence to inform us if their child is going to be absent from school. There is an answerphone service for leaving messages. The Bursar will ensure that the class teacher is informed and that the register is marked with the appropriate code. Alternatively, parents can email bursar@wilby-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk.

If by 9.30am, the school has not been notified of the reason why a child is absent, we will follow the procedures set out by the Local Authority which can be found below or here <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/pupil-support-and-inclusion/attendance-and-behaviour/Pages/children.aspx>

Day 1 - Phone call

A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.

Response from parent	Next step from school
There is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers	Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them	Ask for reason for absence and record on your school's attendance management system
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe	The school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned	School to advise the parent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing• Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searching for the child• Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment• Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

Day 2 - Follow up phone call

A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or preferably a mobile phone.

Day 3 - Write/email parents

Write or email to the parent in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. Please give the parents/carers 3 working days to make contact and if you are aware that English may not be the parent's first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.

Day 5/6 - Home visit

Arrange a visit to the home address ensuring that risk assessments are in place

Once you have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier)

If the child has not been seen and the parents or carers have not made contact with either, schools must report the child as missing from education.

See Appendix 1 for Safeguarding Children Missing Education Process for Schools

Reporting to the Local Authority

To report a Child Missing from Education, we will complete the form available at

https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/report_a_child_missing_from_education#_ga=2.128215503.2103496008.1629643253-1892955921.1623094137

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Head Teacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters, including figures on Children Missing from Education, every term in Full Governors meetings.

This policy was developed through a period of consultation with the staff. It was reviewed and approved by the Governing Body on September 2021 and will be reviewed annually. The next review will take place in July 2022.

Appendix 1

Day One: The school identifies that a child is not in school. A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent/carer that the child is safe at home.

Result of Call	Action
There is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers	Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them	Ask for reason for absence and record
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe	The school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned	<p>School to advise the parent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing • Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searing for the child • Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment • Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

If the judgement on Day One is that there is reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm the school will contact Police and/or children's social care immediately.

If the judgement on Day One is that there is no reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm school continues to make enquiries and informs Education Inclusion & Partnership on Day Ten that the child is missing education .

School Risk Assessment for Child Missing Education

Assessing vulnerability requires a combination of professional knowledge and experience of child welfare issues and knowledge of local circumstances. Considering the following questions could assist the process. If in doubt always consult with managers or other services.

Criteria	Risk	Action
Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of crime?		Inform Police and/or children's social care immediately
Does the child have a formal child protection plan?		
Is the child in care i.e. looked after by the local authority?		
Is the planned or current LA children's social care or LA adults' social care services involved? e.g. section 47 enquiry about to start		
Is there a person present in or visiting the family who poses an on-going risk to children, or who is suspected of previously harming a child?		
Is the child at risk of sexual exploitation?		
Is the child at risk of radicalisation?		
Has there been LA children's social care or LA adults' social care or Criminal Justice System involvement in the past?		<p>Give consideration to the vulnerability of the child and following risk assessment inform one or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Safer School Officer • Children's Social Care • Local Authority Designated Officer • Education Welfare Service • School Nurse <p>Use other services to help with your risk assessment, including the above.</p>
Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. FGM or forced marriage.		
Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?		
Is there any known history of domestic violence?		
Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?		
Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?		
Has the child been a victim of bullying?		
Does the child need essential medical or health care?		
Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?		
Has the child gone missing with their family?		
Have the parents been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?		
Is there a history of poor attendance?		
Has there been any change in the child/family's financial circumstances?		
Age of the child		