

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Approved: 01.05..2017

Next Review/Update: 01.05.2018

The law defines a child as any person under the age of 18.

There are, however, a number of rights that a person acquires at the age of 16. A useful summary of these can be found at:

<http://www.mumsnet.com/teenagers/legal-rights-at-16>

Therefore, our missing child policy seeks to reflect two strands:

- A clear position with regard to children of Compulsory School Age (CSA) – in this regard, our policy is informed by the government’s paper Children Missing Education, Statutory Guidance September 2016.
- A more nuanced position with regard to our children aged 16-18; whereas the law does not recognise pupils aged 16-18 as full adults, there are a number of adult activities which the child is allowed to do at age 16.

a) Policy with regard to CSA children

CSA children are not permitted off site during school hours (8.45am – 3.30pm).

A register is taken during every lesson. The Attendance Officer (Ms. Bonfim) follows up recorded absences. If a pupil is deemed to be “missing” at any point during the school day, the Co-Principal or Vice Principal will be informed. The Co-Principal/Vice Principal will then contact parents, as appropriate.

b) Policy with regard to children aged 16-18

The location and nature of the college means that a certain amount of freedom should be given to our pupils aged 16-18.

Pupils aged 16-18 will, for instance, be allowed to leave the premises for break times in the morning and at lunch time.

As a matter of course, our Attendance Officer will contact parents if a child has not arrived at college and no explanation for absence has been given.

Definition of “missing” for children aged 16-18

We will decide that a child is missing if the following apply:

A child is more than fifteen minutes late for a lesson after a morning or lunch time break

And

Friends or family of the child have not given a good reason why the child should be late

If such circumstances apply, we will seek to contact the child through his/her mobile phone.

If this is unsuccessful, we will contact the child’s family to inform them of the situation.