



Missing Pupil Policy

Last Reviewed by Governing Body - January 2016

Next Review Date by Governing Body by January 2017

Policy Statement

The welfare of all of our children at our school is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Thus, any member of staff who suspects that a pupil may be missing should follow the procedure appropriate to their section of the school, which is outlined below.

The definition of missing" in this context is 'not present without authorisation or explanation'.

This policy is written in support of the schools aims and ethos, and applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting and boarders.

Shebbear College is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Missing Pupil Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010).

Shebbear College seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

This document is available in staff handbooks and copies are available on request from the school offices. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety

Procedures

Senior School

1. A pupil absent from either am or pm registration
 - a. Mark the pupil as absent even if another pupil says that they know where they are
 - b. The office staff will follow up any pupil recorded as absent by checking whether they have signed in or whether a parent has contacted school with a reason for their absence

If the pupil cannot be accounted for, then a phone call is made to parents to check on their whereabouts. If the pupil has been sent to school by the parent, then the procedure outlined below should be followed.

2. A pupil who goes missing during the course of the day
 - a. Alert staff on reception with the name and form of the pupil along with information about where that pupil should be (assuming you know that)
 - b. The local area within school should be searched, in particular, toilets, common rooms, bed room and changing rooms



- c. Enquiries should be made with their tutor, Head of School and Sister as to possible locations. Questions may be asked of their friends including the mobile phone number of the pupil. This may be phoned by an appropriate member of staff
- d. If the pupil still has not been located then either the Deputy Headteacher or the Head of Pastoral should be informed. They will then inform the Headteacher. One of these individuals or the Headteacher will contact:
 - The parents or carer of that pupil and then
 - The police or other appropriate emergency service.

Prep School (including EYFS)

1. Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
2. Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil
3. Alert staff on reception with the name and form of the pupil along with information about where that pupil should be (assuming you know that)
4. At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school Department, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide
5. Inform the Head of the Prep School
6. Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s) by reading to them
7. Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken

1. Inform the Headteacher and the DSL
2. The Head of Prep School to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once
3. The Head of the Prep School would notify the Police
4. The Head of the Prep School would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
5. If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
6. The DSL would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
7. The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
8. The Headteacher would inform the Chairman of Governors
9. The Insurers would be informed
10. [If the pupil is injured] A report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Action to Help Prevent Missing Pupil

The information below is taught and reinforced to all children in the school through form times and PSHE in order that they know the correct procedure:

- All pupils to know the bounds of the school and not to leave School premises without adult supervision
- If at any point a child finds themselves lost within the School premises, they are to go into a classroom and report to an adult immediately



Actions to be followed by Staff if a Child Goes Missing on an Outing

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- The remaining children would be taken back to school (if possible)
- Inform the Head of the Prep School / Headteacher by mobile phone
- Ask the Head of the Prep School to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to [the venue/ the school] at once [contact the venue Manager and arrange a search]

Contact the Police

- The DSL Officer would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- The Headteacher would inform the Chairman of Governors
- The Insurers would be informed
- [If the child is injured] A report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

Action to help prevent Missing Pupil on an Outing

Pupils who are involved in a visit's planning and are well prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Providing guidance and information is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected and why rules must be followed. Pupils should also be told about potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others. This is done age appropriately with all guidance and information to safeguard the pupils at all times.

Actions to be followed by Staff once the Pupil is Found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Head of the Prep School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Head of the Prep School will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future



Boarding On School Premises

A register of pupils boarding is taken by the boarding staff in each house via the official duty sheets at the following times Monday to Friday:

- Upon return to each boarding house upon completion of the school day
- At 1715hrs prior to Prep Time
- At 2100hrs prior to Bed Time
- In addition, it is the duty of the boarding staff to ensure that all pupils depart in time for breakfast each morning
- On Saturdays and Sundays, registers are taken at breakfast, lunch, supper and bed time.
- Signing in and out procedures and records are regularly made reference to at House meetings and the pupils are all well versed in using such procedures appropriately

All absences and sicknesses are notified to relevant boarding and academic staff, with the school Office also notified.

The school office is notified of any pupil marked present on the school register and not found to be present in the boarding house by 5.00pm. The Office will trace the pupil through school and refer back to boarding staff, unless boarding staff have been notified in advance that any pupil is participating in an after school fixture or activity.

In the event of a pupil, or group of pupils, being missing an immediate search of usually frequented areas will be affected by the staff currently responsible for the pupil/s.

If, after a thorough search of the premises, the pupil is not found the most senior member of staff is notified who will then inform the Head of Boarding and/or the Headteacher. They will notify the police, the pupil's parents and if appropriate social services.

In the meantime all available staff members will initiate a further search of the premises and the school locale.

Photos will be given to the police in order to help their efforts.

Further action will be taken in liaison with the police and social service authorities.

Off School Premises

- Pupils involved in off site visits may carry I.D cards detailing the school telephone number, the pupils name and the name of the staff member to be contacted.
- Pupils involved in the outing are recorded in line with the signing in / out procedures, located in each house.
- All staff on visits out should have access to a mobile telephone for emergency purposes.
- A count of the pupils is made at regular intervals and always before a mini-bus leaves a venue. If a pupil/s is/are discovered as missing then a search of the area is taken by the member of staff.

If the missing pupil is not located then the staff member must:

- Notify the police and provide them with as precise a description of the pupil/s as possible, the last known whereabouts of the pupil/s and any other details they may require



- Notify, if appropriate, staff at the venue that is being visited and ask them to initiate their lost child protocols
- Notify the most senior staff member at the school and act on any instructions.
- The senior staff member will notify the pupil's parents
- The Member of staff initiating the search must remain in situ until the police or assistance from school arrives, in case the missing pupil/s should return
- In such stressful circumstances it is important that staff remain as calm and collected as possible

A written record must be made of any incident of a boarder missing from school, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

It is important that following an incident of a boarder missing from school the issues that arise are addressed for example –

- Up to date risk assessments for the activity or the individual pupil involved.
- Talk through the incident with the pupil(s) involved emphasising the worry that was caused.
- Discuss the supervision during the incident.
- Formally record the reasons given by the boarder as to why they have gone missing.

If the pupil/boarder gives a reason for going missing that is linked to either bullying or inappropriate behaviour from a member of staff, it is important that this is both recorded and reported. Staff are reminded to read the school's anti-bullying and child protection policies.