

Missing Pupil Policy



Ellesmere College

1 Policy statement

1.1 **Policy aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

1.1.1 protect the health and safety of pupils at the College;

1.1.2 ensure that College staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

1.2 **Scope:** This policy:

1.2.1 applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents at the College;

1.2.2 should be read with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;

1.2.3 is a mandatory requirement of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023¹ Department for Education (DfE), and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ISI Sept 2022²

1.2.4 Children missing or absent from education is covered in the Child Protection Policy.

1.3 The procedures in this policy may be adapted as necessary. The Head and the Deputy Head have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

1.4 **Publication:** This policy is provided to all staff in the Staff Handbook. Parents may request a copy from the College or review the policy on the College website.

2 Responsibility

2.1 The Governors delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the College to the Head. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the College by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the Head and Senior Management Team. Schools are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent. Any member of staff who notices a pupil is missing or sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be has a duty to inform the relevant [Tutor/ Head of Section/Housemaster/Housemistress] without delay.

3 Procedure for pupil missing during the day

3.1 A pupil is deemed present once registered in the morning until the end of the school day at 5.30pm, or later, if part of an extracurricular activity.

3.2 If a member of staff or volunteer (Adult Responsible) notes that a pupil is missing from class / sport practice / other activity, the Adult Responsible should make their best effort to locate the pupil (but if this is not possible they should contact Reception who will take over on their behalf), by:

- checking the child's timetable for that day

¹ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

² National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022

- contacting the Sick Bay to check whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment
 - checking the list of music lessons
 - contacting the music department
 - contacting the Library in case the pupil is there
- 3.3 If the pupil cannot be found following the above the pupils HsM should be contacted and the time noted.
- 3.4 If the pupil cannot be found within 1 hour, the HsM will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DHP), or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DHA) in their absence. The HsM will conduct an initial search using assistance from Reception / Housemother / porters as available or required.
- 3.5 As part of the initial search process, friends and classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.
- 3.6 If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the College staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the College. If the pupil refuses to do so, staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider contacting the parents in such circumstances.
- 3.7 If the pupil is not found after the initial search, the HsM will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ring Reception to register the pupil as missing together with any suggestions as to where the pupil might be based on information gained from speaking to staff and other pupils. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will authorise the appropriate HsM to contact the pupil's parents at this point and the situation will be reported to the Head along with the relevant details. If the parents are abroad, there may need to be a delay in contacting them. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 3.8 If the initial search is unsuccessful, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate) and provide the police with the information listed in section 6, as well as any other information reasonably requested by the police. A decision will be taken in accordance with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as to whether the College should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.

4 Procedure for boarding pupil missing after school hours or during the night

- 4.1 When the Housemaster or Housemistress discovers that a boarding pupil is missing after school hours (5:30pm) or during the night, he / she will:
- check with other boarding pupils (if awake) and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts;
 - conduct an initial search of the House and immediate surroundings of the House;
 - If the pupil cannot be found within 1 hour, the HsM will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in his absence;
 - contact other available members of staff and prefects on site to conduct an initial search of the College site;

- if after 2 hours the pupils has not been found, where appropriate contact the parents to inform them that the pupil is missing. If parents are abroad this step may need to be delayed. The Head should also be informed. All decisions on contact with parents should be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- contact the Police after consultation with the parents (where possible / appropriate) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and provide the police with the information listed in section 6. A decision will be taken in accordance with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as to whether the College should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures. The Head will be kept informed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5 Procedure for pupils missing during a school trip or during or following a journey

5.1 If a pupil is missing from a school trip or has not arrived at the College following a journey, the member of staff in charge will:

- attempt to contact the pupil;
- check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey;
- check with other pupils and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts;
- contact the pupil's accommodation, if applicable;
- contact the venue or the people that the pupil had visited, if applicable;
- contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or College contact (who will contact DHP, DHA or the Head)
- Liaise with the College in all instances
- contact hospitals and the Police and the parents under the guidance of the College if possible

6 Information to be provided to the Police

6.1 When the College contacts the Police during the day or night, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing

- any relevant comments made by the pupil.

6.2 The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the College should be necessary.

7 Review

7.1 This policy shall be reviewed every year as part of the College's annual review of safeguarding, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take into account any incidents in the Missing Pupil Incident Book 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 and pupils.

8 Missing pupil incident book

8.1 The College keeps a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil including:

- the pupil's name
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing)
- the action taken to find the pupil
- whether the Police or children's social care 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.

8.2 A full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's file.

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| Authorised by | The Head |
| Date | September 2023 |

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| Reviewed by | DHA |
| Date | September 2023 |

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| Effective date of the policy | September 2023 |
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