

Missing, Absent and Uncollected Pupils

Contents

1 Policy statement.....	2
2 Information for Parents.....	2
3 Actions to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school.....	3
4 Duty to Report.....	3
5 Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the school, including boarders during day-time roll call	4
6 Actions to be followed by staff where a boarder is absent (at night or on the weekend) or fails to return from 'leave out' at the appointed time	6
7 Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing.....	7
8 Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found	7
Part 2.....	8
9 Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time	8
9.1 Introduction	8
9.2 Procedures if a pupil is not collected on time.....	8
10 Document Information	9

1 Policy statement

The welfare of all our children at Embley is our paramount responsibility. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the School's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE). Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy, the Attendance Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct. This policy was drawn up having had regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, the Early Years Statutory Framework], the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and Department for Education's guidance KCSIE and 'Children Missing Education'.

2 Information for Parents

All safeguarding policies are reviewed regularly (at least once a year as a minimum) by the School's Local Governing Body in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. This policy is ratified annually by the United Learning Group Board in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Where reasonably possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil. This is to give the School additional options to make contact with parents and/or a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of all pupils, what to do if a child goes missing and are required to read Part 1 of KCSIE, or Annex A of KCSIE if their role does not require them to work directly with children.

In addition, all pupils and parents will be made aware of:

- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school, including boarders

- Arrangements when arriving at school and leaving the premises at the end of the day
- Arrangements for registration in both morning and afternoon. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The school will always contact the parent if the child fails to arrive at school without an explanation.
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building, including onsite supervision including of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the School

3 Actions to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School.

If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead believes the pupil is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate) without delay.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

4 Duty to Report

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance. The School will inform the local authority (and the local authority where the child is normally resident) of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more without permission.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 school days after an authorised absence or has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the School and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is, the School may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The School will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

The School also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

The School will report to OFSTED within 14 days any incident of a missing EYFS pupil as is required under the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) 2021](#), for registered providers.

5 Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the school, including boarders during day-time roll call

The School's procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

If a pupil was found to be missing, or a boarder is absent from day-time roll call, the School will carry out the following actions without delay:

5.1 A pupil may be identified as missing (not present without authorisation or explanation):

- After an absence at morning registration is not confirmed by the office staff's call home.
- By comparing pupils in a class or after-school activity with the day's absence sheet.
- On reconciliation with the afternoon registration.
- By a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil.

5.2 Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the Prep School Office/ Missing Pupil Email Group for the Senior School. If the pupil's whereabouts is unknown the Senior School or Prep School Secretary will:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know of their whereabouts
- Check the absence list, register of previous lessons and sign out lists and the paper copy register in the Prep School Office.
- Check the timetables for peripatetic music lessons, golf lessons, counselling sessions.
- Check all lists of trips out of school.
- Check the surgery and with the school counsellor
- Check with the senior member of boarding staff on duty in school.

5.3 If the pupil is still found to be missing, the Prep School or Senior School Secretary will immediately:

- Inform the Head of Prep School and members of SLT who will initiate and oversee a search of the school site. In EYFS this will include one or more adults searching everywhere within the Nursery, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, toilets etc where a small child might hide.
- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present
- Carry out a thorough search of the boarding house.
- Try to call the pupil on their mobile phone if the number is known.
- Ask adults and pupils when they last remember seeing the pupil.
- Ask IT to track the location of the pupil's iPad.
- Inform Grounds staff and ask them to assist in the search.
- Check doors and CCTV for signs of exit.
- Post a 'missing' notice via a message sent by email to all staff with the name of the pupil, date and time of first noted absence and advise all teachers due to teach or tutor the pupil later that day that they must immediately inform the office if the pupil appears.
- Ensure the remaining pupils are sufficiently supervised and secure.
- If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice will be used as a useful tool in locating missing pupils.

5.4 If the site search fails:

- The Head of the Prep School/Member of SLT will inform the Headmaster and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Prep School or Senior School Secretary will open a written record of the incident which will log all specific actions taken.
- The Headmaster will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motions. They will be asked to come to the School.
- The Headmaster will immediately notify the Police.
- The Headmaster will arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department on 0300 555 1384 and the local authority designated officer on 01962 876364 to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom. This may include contacting the Police.
- Follow any specific local safeguarding procedures – <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>
- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- The Headmaster will inform the Director of Independent Schools and the Chair of UCST without delay
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured, the School will report it on our Accident Reporting & Management System (ARMS). The United Learning Health and Safety Manager will report any that are notifiable under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the School, in consultation with Children's Services, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A record will be kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from School without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation. In addition, a full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found will be made. If appropriate, these procedures will be adjusted.

5.6 If a pupil is missing from their registered after-school activity:

- The activity leader will email Missing Pupil in the Senior School or the Prep School Office in the Prep School, thereby also informing the Prep School or Senior School Secretary and Roz Johnson
- If the pupil is not identified as elsewhere on site, the Prep School or Senior School Secretary/Roz Johnson will telephone the parents to ascertain if the pupil has been collected early.
- If the pupil has not been collected early by parents, staff will follow actions as set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5.

5.7 If a pupil is missing from the school bus at the end of the school day:

- The bus driver will inform the Transport Manager.
- The Transport Manager will telephone parents to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil and if they have made alternative arrangements for returning home.

- If the parents do not know the whereabouts of the pupil, staff will follow actions as set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5.

6 Actions to be followed by staff where a boarder is absent (at night or on the weekend) or fails to return from 'leave out' at the appointed time

If a pupil is missing at bedtime or in the early hours, or they fail to return from 'leave out' at the appointed time, the School will carry out the following actions:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts
- Check the notes in the boarding diary (One Note) and the main register on the sign in/out table opposite the boarding office (including the trips list)
- Check the surgery
- Call the pupil's mobile telephone
- Carry out a thorough search of the boarding house and the school grounds
- Check exeat forms or any other information before contacting the senior member of staff on duty who will then deal with the matter if there is not a suitable explanation.
- Consult the senior member of boarding staff on duty in School (see duty rota)

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a boarder is missing without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the boarder's explanation.

If the boarder is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Headmaster and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ask the Headmaster to ring the boarder's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once, if viable.
- The Headmaster will immediately notify the Police
- The Headmaster will arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds and all boarding accommodation
- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children's Services Department on 0300 555 1384 and the local authority designated officer on 01962 876364 to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom. This may include contacting the police.
- Follow any specific local safeguarding procedures - <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>
- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Inform the Director of Independent Schools and the Chair of UCST without delay
- The School's insurers will be informed
- If the boarder is injured, the School will report it on our Accident Reporting & Management System (ARMS). The United Learning Health and Safety Manager will report any that are notifiable under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing boarder, the School, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

7 Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing

- The teacher in charge will carry out an immediate head count in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity
- The teacher in charge will determine from the relevant staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
- The teacher in charge will try to call the pupil on their mobile phone if the number is known.
- The teacher in charge will immediately inform the Headmaster and the DSL by mobile phone (who will also inform the Head of Boarding for a boarder).
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- The Headmaster will ring the pupil's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue / the School at once
- An adult will contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Staff will ensure the remaining pupils are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the immediate vicinity.
- The teacher in charge will immediately contact the Police
- The DSL will contact/refer Hampshire Children's Services Department on 0300 555 1384 and follow any local safeguarding procedures - <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>
- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- The Headmaster will inform the Director of Independent Schools and the Chair of UCST or Chair of ULT without delay
- The School's insurers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable
- If the child is injured, the School will report it on our Accident Reporting & Management System (ARMS). The United Learning Health and Safety Manager will report any that are notifiable under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The School will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

8 Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

5.5 If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- All staff will be informed by email by the Prep School Office/ Senior School Secretary.
- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- The written log will be signed off by the Head of the Prep School / Deputy Head.
- The Deputy Head Senior School/ the Head of Prep School will initiate a full inquiry and provide a written report to the Headmaster. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file.
- An outline report on missing pupil incidents will be made to the Local Governing Body at each of its meetings.
- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing

- The Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the Local Authority, police and United Learning Safeguarding Lead, if necessary)
- The Headmaster will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate)
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and pupils, when the pupil was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing (where relevant) the length of time that the pupil was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

Part 2

9 Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

9.1 Introduction

The School undertakes to look after all pupils safely throughout the time that they remain under our care, until such a time as s/he has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise a pupil's safety.

9.2 Procedures if a pupil is not collected on time

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. If there is no answer, the teacher will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

In the Senior School - any child still waiting to be picked up at 5.00pm or who misses the bus should go to Reception where they can wait until 5:30pm with a member of Reception staff. After this point, the pupil will sign in with the member of Boarding staff on duty and wait in Boarding.

- If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers when the premises are closing (5.30pm in the Senior School, 6.00pm in the Prep School), the DSL will contact/refer to the Hampshire Children's Services Department on 0300 555 1384 to seek advice and agree what actions should be taken and by whom. This may include contacting the police.
- Children's social care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police.
- The School will look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain under the School's care, until such a time as they have been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with children's social care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the child's safety.
- Follow any specific local safeguarding procedures - <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>

If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct and School's Safeguarding Policy.

9.3 Records

The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents.

10 Document Information

Version Number	1
Reason for Version Change	Two policies amalgamated
Date of Version Change	27 November 2025
Name of owner/author	Leah Goodey
Name of individual/department responsible	Leah Goodey, Deputy Head
United Learning Independent Schools/Academies/Both	United Learning Independent Schools
Target Audience	Public
Date Authorised	27 November 2025
Date issued	27 November 2025
Where available	United Learning Hub, Network, school website
Review Date	August 2026 or as events and legislation require