



Missing Pupils

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1 Policy statement

1.1 Embley is committed to ensuring that the whereabouts of all pupils are known at all times. On occasions when a member of staff identifies pupils as missing (i.e., not present without authorisation or explanation) from their expected location, immediate action is required, and the response is detailed in the procedure below.

1.2 Communications with parents and the appropriate services (particularly the police) are an integral part of the procedure and all instances of missing pupils will be reported to the Headmaster so that investigations may be made.

1.3 This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting.

1.4 Embley is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Missing Pupil Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

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

1.6 This document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the Senior or Prep School Office and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Attendance
- Child Protection (Safeguarding)
- Uncollected Child Policy

2 Responsibilities

2.1 It is the Headmaster's (Cliff Canning) responsibility in Senior School (along with the Senior School Deputy Head Pastoral) and Head of the Prep School (Sheina Wright), to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.

2.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that information about future pupil absence is passed to relevant members of staff. Any member of staff receiving notice from a parent that they intend to pick up their child early from school must inform the School Secretary.

2.3 It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a termly basis and know the procedures for handover of the child at the beginning and end of sessions. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that they advise the school on any occasion of their intention to collect their child early from school. Parents must also inform the school if their child will not need to use the school bus to return home.

2.3 It is the responsibility of LGB to ensure that they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

2.4 A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Embley staff should be alert to children going missing, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

2.5 Any concerns relating to the above issues should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance in line with our Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy. Failure to report children missing in education, when this is a requirement, would be non-compliance with the duty to have regard to KCSIE (Sept 2022).

3 Procedure for a Missing Pupil

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

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

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

- 3.2.1 Check the absence list, register of previous lessons and sign out lists and the paper copy register in the Prep School Office.
- 3.2.2 Check the timetables for peripatetic music lessons, golf lessons, counselling sessions.
- 3.2.3 Check all lists of trips out of school.

3.3 If the pupil is still found to be missing, the Prep School Office/ School Secretary will immediately:

- 3.3.1 Inform the Head of Prep School and members of SLT who will initiate and oversee a search of the school site.
- 3.3.2 Try to call the pupil on their mobile phone if the number is known.
- 3.3.3 Ask IT to track the location of the pupil's iPad.
- 3.3.4 Inform Grounds staff and ask them to assist in the search.
- 3.3.5 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.
- 3.3.6 Ensure the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure.

3.4 If the site search fails:

- 3.4.1 The Head of the Prep School/Member of SLT will inform the Headmaster
- 3.4.2 The School Secretary will open a written record of the incident which will log all specific actions taken.
- 3.4.3. The School Secretary will inform parents and the police.
- 3.4.4 A search of local roads will be made on foot, or by car, by available staff and parents as appropriate. ^[SEP]

- 3.4.5 On completion of this and any subsequent searches made over the day parents will continue to be informed of progress.
- 3.4.6 If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice will be used as a useful tool in locating missing pupils.
- 3.5 If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:
- 3.5.1 All staff will be informed by email by the Prep School Office/ School Secretary.
 - 3.5.2 The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
 - 3.5.3 The written log will be signed off by the Head of the Prep School / Deputy Head Pastoral.
 - 3.5.4 The Deputy Head Pastoral 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.
 - 3.5.5 An outline report on missing pupil incidents will be made to the Local Governing Body at each of its meetings.
- 3.6 If the incident happens on a trip:
- 3.6.1 All teachers on the trip will have mobile phones and will have left their contact details with the school.
 - 3.6.2 Alert class teacher and the teacher in charge of the overall trip **immediately**.
 - 3.6.3 Teacher leading the trip will determine from the relevant staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
 - 3.6.4 Ensure the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the immediate vicinity.
 - 3.6.5 If trip site is staffed, ask the site staff for support in search.
 - 3.6.6 If the child cannot be found within 15 minutes the police must be informed.
 - 3.6.7 If the child cannot be found within 15 minutes the Head of Prep School or Assistant Head (Pastoral) must be informed by phone.
 - 3.6.8 The Headmaster/Head of the Prep School will inform parents.
 - 3.6.9 Continue to search, widening the search area, keeping in touch via mobile phone.
 - 3.6.10 Head of Prep School or Assistant Head (Pastoral) to liaise with parents during and after the incident is resolved.
- 3.7 If a pupil is missing from their registered after-school activity:
- 3.7.1 The activity leader will email all teaching staff, thereby also informing the School Secretary and Roz Johnson
 - 3.7.2 If the pupil is not identified as elsewhere on site, the School Secretary/Roz Johnson will telephone the parents to ascertain if the pupil has been collected early.
 - 3.7.3 If the pupil has not been collected early by parents, staff will follow actions as set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5.
- 3.8 If a pupil is missing from the school bus at the end of the school day:
- 3.8.1 The bus driver will inform the Transport Manager.
 - 3.8.2 The Transport Manager will telephone parents to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil and if they have made alternative arrangements for returning home.
 - 3.8.3 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.

4 Procedure for Missing Boarders

4.1 All duty staff should be able to locate any boarder at any time.

4.2 If a child cannot be found during the evening or weekend:

4.2.1 Check for any notes in the online boarding diary (OneNote) and check the main register on the sign in/out table opposite the boarding office. Perhaps the pupil has been given permission to go out or has been taken out by a parent/guardian/friend.

4.2.2 Check the signing out clipboards on the sign/out table opposite the boarding office to check if they signed out/in and when/where they last signed out/in. If they have signed themselves out overnight, let the Head of Boarding know as this should not happen.

4.2.3 If they still can't be found, check with Matron that they are not sick.

4.2.4 A boarder may be identified as missing if their whereabouts cannot be confirmed visually, from information provided by the pupil or other trustworthy pupils with regard to their movements, the boarding diary, the sign in/out registers or telephonic contact with them or their parent/guardian. Staff discovering a discrepancy must:

4.2.4.1 Notify the Head of Boarding and any other boarding staff members on duty.

4.2.4.2 Notify the School Matron (if a weekday).

4.2.4.3 Attempt to ascertain whereabouts from friends and other staff (a whole senior school staff email can be sent out if they are missing during weekdays/school hours).

4.2.4.4 Attempt to contact the pupil on his/her mobile phone. Numbers are on a poster on the pinboard in the boarding office and an electronic copy is accessible via the Boarding Folder on Teams.

4.2.4.5 Arrange a check of the School grounds.

4.2.4.6 Contact staff who might previously have taught or seen the pupil that day (if a weekday).

4.2.4.7 Check the list of clubs, trips and activities out of School.

4.3 If a pupil is still missing, the duty member of staff should:

4.3.1 Inform the Heads of Boarding and the Headmaster or, in their absence, the Senior School Deputy Head and/or Assistant Head Pastoral.

4.3.2 Notify the boarding staff on duty with them and check for any known circumstances that might have led to the pupil being missing.

4.3.3 Inform Grounds staff and contact IT staff to help check CCTV to ascertain movements/their last known location (if during weekdays/school hours).

4.3.4 Contact back-up duty staff and request assistance as appropriate.

4.3.5 Contact their parents/guardians (with due regard for time zones).

4.3.6 A search of local roads, shops, potential haunts etc. should be made on foot or by car where appropriate (ensuring sufficient supervision of the rest of the boarders is maintained in house as well).

4.3.7 Send a whole school email with the name of the pupil, date and time of first noted absence and that they are still missing.

4.3.8 Open a written record of the incident on Well-being Manager via iSAMS and log all specific actions taken thus far.

4.3.9 If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice would be a useful tool in locating missing pupils. On completion of this and any subsequent searches made, the Headmaster and parents/guardians will continue to be informed of progress. The Headmaster (or in his absence, the Senior School Deputy Head) will then arrange for the Police to be informed if the pupil is still missing.

4.4 If the incident happens on a boarding trip off site:

4.4.1 The duty staff member leading the trip will have the boarding mobile with them, which contains all of the boarders' mobile numbers, as well as a weekend pack containing a paper copy of these contact numbers. The boarders are also each provided with an emergency contact card to use in the event that they become lost or need help from staff.

4.4.2 The trip leader will contact the missing boarder immediately via the boarding mobile.

4.4.3 If staff are able to make contact, ask for a description of the pupil's location, instruct them to stay where they are and agree to meet them there.

4.4.4 If the pupil does not answer their phone or cannot be contacted this way, the trip leader will send a text message requesting where they are and then begin contacting peers from the same trip who may have some information about the pupil's last whereabouts or any issues encountered.

4.4.5 If the trip site is staffed or there is a help desk/security in a shopping centre, for example, ask the site staff for support in the search.

4.4.6 If the child cannot be located within 15 minutes, contact the Heads of Boarding and/or SLT staff member on call that weekend and then the police must be informed.

4.4.7 Depending on the circumstances, you may also need to request additional staff back up to either assist with the search or to help with supervision of the other boarders in the meantime.

4.4.8 The Heads of Boarding or SLT member will inform parents/guardians.

4.4.9 Continue the search, widening the search area, keeping in touch via mobile phone and continuing to try to reach the missing pupil this way intermittently.

4.4.10 The Heads of Boarding and/or SLT member will liaise with parents/guardians during and after the incident is resolved.

4.5 If the pupil is found, or if the incident is otherwise resolved:

4.5.1 The Headmaster, Parents/guardians, and Senior School Deputy Head will be directly informed by the Boarding Staff/Office.

4.5.2 The Police will be informed if they have been involved.

4.5.3 The written log must be updated accordingly on Well-being Manager via iSAMS.

4.5.4 The Assistant Head (Pastoral) or Head of Boarding 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.

4.6 Please note: It is important to double check information passed to you by pupils. For example, if a child is not there at bedtime, the other pupils may well say 'that's OK; he always goes home on Wednesdays'. *Most likely it's true, but it is still important to check!*

4.7 Remember – YOU are liable unless you pass on your concerns.

4.8 Every single boarder must be accounted for every night. Make sure to check that you have said goodnight to everyone, especially Sixth Formers! It is good practice to switch off the main ceiling lights yourself at 'lights out'.

5 Procedure for a Missing Pupil from Early Years (EYFS)

5.1 Action to be taken upon discovering a missing pupil:

5.1.1 The teacher in charge will immediately inform the Head of Prep School (or the Deputy Head of Senior School in their absence) and the Office Staff.

5.1.2 The remaining children will be gathered together into one group, for an activity with a designated member of staff. The children will be sensitively asked whether they have seen the child who is missing, as will all adults who were with the child, so that it can be established who was last to see the missing child, when and where.

5.1.3 The teacher in charge of the class will then carry out a thorough search of all the rooms in the immediate vicinity and the outside perimeter of the Prep School.

5.1.4 A register will be taken of the remaining children in the class and sent immediately to the office.

5.1.5 The remaining staff will then search for the missing child.

5.1.6 Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.

5.1.7 The teacher in charge talks to staff to establish what happened.

5.1.8 Ground staff and Estate staff should be notified at this stage, should the child not be located.

5.1.9 If the child is not found by the time the register is returned to the office, the teacher in charge will update the Head of Prep School and Headmaster.

5.1.10 If the child is not found within 10 minutes from the initial report the parents are informed.

5.1.11 The Head of Prep School in consultation with the Headmaster, will arrange for the Police to be informed.

5.1.12 On completion of this and any subsequent searches made, the Headmaster and parents/guardians will continue to be informed of progress.

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

5.2.1 The Headmaster, Head of Prep School and parents/guardians, will be directly informed by the School.

5.2.2 The Police will be informed if they have been involved.

5.2.3 A notice cancelling the emergency situation will be posted on the Staff Room Notice Board and message sent to all staff by email.

5.2.4 The written log kept by the Prep School Office/Senior School Reception will be signed off.

5.2.5 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.

5.2.6 An outline report on missing pupil incidents will be made to the Local Governing Body at each of its meetings.

5.3 After the incident, the Head of Prep School will discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.

5.4 The Investigation

5.4.1 The Head of Prep School will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.

5.4.2 The incident report will detail:

- The date and time of the report
- What staff/children were in the group/class
- When the child was last seen in the group/class/boarding house
- What has taken place in the group/class/boarding house since then and the time it is estimated that the child went missing.

5.4.3 A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.

5.4.4 OFSTED is informed within 14 days in the case of an incident involving a missing EYFS pupil.

5.4.5 Review after the event of systems and procedures and look at risk assessments and training.

Document Information

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