



# FARLINGTON

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## MISSING CHILD POLICY

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**This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS**

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### Procedures

The welfare of pupils is paramount. The school endeavours to ensure that no child goes missing and has measures in place to minimise the likelihood of this happening and take the necessary action, should the situation arise.

- Formal registration is taken in the morning at 8.30am and at 2.10pm (1.30pm in Prep) for afternoon school.
- The staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the day and are aware of the location of the children in their care at all times.
- When on excursions outside the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- Staff undertake regular roll calls and head counts.

The above measures ensure that situations where a child could be lost are very limited. These are:

- Where a child wanders off on an off-site visit
- Where a child goes out of a door or gate left open on the school site
- Where a child is taken from the school site by an unapproved adult

The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am if a child has not arrived in school and the reason for absence is not known. This should ensure that staff become aware at the earliest opportunity of any child who may have gone missing on the way to school. In these circumstances, this policy will be followed.

School policies relating to health and safety and welfare, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring. However, should a child become lost, the following action will be taken:

### Lost at school

**In the Prep School (including EYFS)**, alert the Assistant Head (Prep) and the Head immediately, who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. A member of the school office staff will check the signing out book to establish whether the child has been legitimately collected from school.

**In Senior School**, alert Reception and the Head immediately, who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. A member of the school office staff will check the signing out book to establish whether the child has been legitimately collected from school.

Staff must be vigilant in respect of the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security.

Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, a member of staff should be sent to search each of the following zones, keeping a calm manner and maintaining contact via mobile phone:

- Zone 1 - Mansion House Ground Floor
- Zone 2 - Offices and Stable Block Rooms
- Zone 3 - Mansion House First Floor
- Zone 4 - Mansion House Second Floor
- Zone 5 - Design Foyer/Technology Courtyard
- Zone 6 - Trina Mawer Buildings
- Zone 7 - Boarders' Kitchen and The Learning Zone
- Zone 8 - Moberly Building
- Zone 9 - Simpson Building
- Zone 10 - Peto Building
- Zone 11 Sports Hall
- Zone 12 - Sixth Form Centre
- Zone 13 - Grounds

The Headteacher will consider calling a fire drill to see if the pupil who is not accounted for arrives at the roll call point.

In Boarding boarders are registered at every meal, at regular intervals throughout Saturday and Sunday, and at bed times. In the event of unexplained absence of a boarder outside normal school hours, a complete search of the Boarding Houses and those areas of the school to which the boarders have access will be undertaken. Duty staff may interview peers to ascertain the student's last known whereabouts. In daylight and if practical, fellow boarders will be asked to assist with a thorough search of the grounds. An attempt will be made to contact the missing student on their mobile telephone. The duty Housemistress will inform the Headmistress/duty member of SLT and the fire alarm will be sounded and a roll call taken. During daylight hours, CCTV footage will be consulted and, if the student can be seen to have left on foot, a check of the immediate vicinity (Nowhurst Lane, Strood Lane, the A281 to Broadbridge Heath, the footpath to Warnham) will ensue. After dark, or if the student is still not accounted for, parents and police will be informed.

**In all cases if the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes** then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from iSAMS) and their description. Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch via mobile phone. The child **must** be comforted and reassured when found.

#### **Lost whilst off-site (including on sports fixtures)**

If a child is lost on an outing, the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a roll call/headcount.

1. A member of staff (or the whole group if appropriate) should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management/security services of the organisation being visited and the School Office to let them know the situation.
3. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
4. If the child is not found after fifteen minutes the police will be called and the School will alert the parents.

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5. Staff will cooperate with the police and take any action as directed by them.

#### **Pupil removed from school premises by unapproved adult**

No child is allowed to leave the school site with an adult other than a parent without permission being received from a parent either by telephone or email. This rule must be rigorously enforced. In cases where a parent is legally denied access to their child all staff must be informed in writing of the circumstances together with a photo of the child and, if possible, the parent. If a child is seen (or believed) to be taken from the school site by an unapproved adult, the police and parents will be informed immediately.

#### **Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing include:**

- Information to staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Requirement for all visitors to register on arrival with the office, present evidence of identity on their first visit and obtain a visitor's badge and lanyard.
- Boundary security regularly checked by duty staff and maintenance teams.
- Supervision of children at all times
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue and the nature of the activity being undertaken
- Collection and non-collection policy for children
- Rigorous risk assessments for trips

#### **Following up an incident**

When the situation has been resolved the Headteacher and SLT will review the reasons for it happening. This will include:

- Reviewing the incident with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Assessing the effectiveness of risk assessment procedures.
- Taking written statements from and interviewing staff involved.
- Collecting information from any other relevant adult witnesses, including officials from the venue where a child has gone missing off-site.
- Discussion, as appropriate with pupils.
- Informing Bellevue Head Office to discuss the review and agree any further action.
- If the incident requires reporting to Ofsted, in respect of RIDDOR or any other official body, such action will be taken.
- The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.

SLT will issue advice to staff and pupils and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again.