THE PERSE
PREP SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

Prep School Missing Pupil Procedure

The Perse School

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Introduction

This policy is applicable to all pupils in the Prep School (the **School**). It has been drafted in compliance with *Keeping Children Safe In Education (September 2019)* and should be read in conjunction with the School's *safeguarding and child protection policy*, which is available on the School's website.

The School expects to be notified by parents or legal guardians of all pupil absences either in advance of the day or at the start of the day they are absent (details of this procedure are in the Parent Handbook). The School will follow up any unexplained absences as soon as is practicable using the procedures detailed below. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil.

It is important to distinguish between a pupil's absence from school for an unknown reason (Children Missing from Education) and a pupil's disappearance from a lesson or activity after arrival at school. Please also see the School's *safeguarding and child protection policy* for details of the procedures to follow for Children Missing from Education.

Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. Action should be taken in accordance with the School's *safeguarding and child protection policy*, if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

Responsibility

All staff have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

All members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the School by providing appropriate supervision under the guidance of the Head and Senior Management Team (SMT).

It is the duty of staff in charge of any pupil supervision to check why a pupil is absent, although during the school day this may be delegated if that member of staff is busy.

Procedures for Monitoring the Whereabouts of Pupils

To establish whether a pupil is missing it is a requirement to monitor the whereabouts of pupils. This includes use of the following procedures:

- Statutory registration: form teachers will register classes in both the morning (8:25-8:40am) and afternoon (1:25-1:40pm) via SIMS.
- In all school activities on site, staff should be aware of the pupils they should have in their care. This includes taking registers for extra-curricular clubs before and after school.

- In school activities off site, the list of pupils in attendance should be presented to Reception. This includes taking registers for extra-curricular clubs before and after school.

Absence Recording and Registration

- Form teachers, when notified, must record planned absences onto SIMS or ask the Prep Office to do so as soon as the School is notified and permission is granted by the Head/Deputy Head.
- Parents are expected to contact the School every day their child is absent unless previous permission has been granted. Such absences must be recorded on SIMS when notified to the School.
- Form teachers will register classes in both the morning and afternoon via SIMS.
- If a pupil is present, mark with: /. If a pupil is absent, mark with: N. The Receptionist will follow up all absences marked "Unknown reason: N" before 9:30 in the morning, and 2:10 in the afternoon.
- Musical activities in the morning have full and comprehensive paper registers to be taken and passed onto the Receptionist before the start of period 1. The Receptionist will input this data.
- Late pupils who miss registration must sign in at Reception.
- Off site, staff must make meeting times and locations clear to all pupils. Regular head counts must be undertaken, especially when moving from one location to another.
- On site after school, pupils are registered in after-school clubs. At the end of the session, pupils must be signed out by the person collecting them. Registers are also kept by those operating Late Stay.

When would a pupil be identified as missing?

A pupil may be identified as missing:

- If an absence from school is not confirmed by contacting the home contact.
- Off site, if there is a no show at a regular head count.
- On site, if a pupil does not show at a school activity. The member of staff should contact Reception.
- By a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil.

Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the School Reception in person, or on extension 3920 (external line 01223 403920).

Missing Pupil Procedures

1. **Pupils absent from School for an unknown reason:**
   - At 9.15am the Receptionist will produce a list of pupils unaccounted for – i.e. those pupils who are not marked as present but for whom the School has not received a message from home regarding absence through sickness etc. The Receptionist will then go to the

relevant classes to check on these pupils' attendance during P1. The same routine occurs after pm registration, with a check carried out if necessary during P6.

- If a pupil is found to be absent from school and no notification has been received from parents/guardians, the Receptionist will then ring home for confirmation of absence.
- Where the home contact is not immediately available, the Receptionist will continue to try all contact numbers. If no contact can be made having tried regularly (at least every 15 minutes) Reception will inform a member of SMT by no later than break time (10.15am) for follow up;
- Where the home contact has been spoken to and the pupil's absence is not confirmed with them, Reception will immediately contact a member of SMT (usually the Deputy Head or Assistant Head - Pastoral).

2. Pupils identified as missing during the school day:

On receiving notification of a discrepancy, Reception will:

- Check the sign out book to see if the pupil has signed in/out.
- Check the trips/visits lists (check: SharePoint/Staff/Educational Visits), and fixtures and calendar to see if the pupil can be located.
- Phone home if the pupil has not been registered at an after school club so that the School can ascertain if the parents have collected that pupil early for any reason.
- Contact a member of SMT who will make the necessary checks such as with the form teacher to assess whether the absence is expected.
- If the pupil is identified as missing on a trip off site, then the trip leader will contact the member of SMT who is on call. The procedures in step 3 below will then be followed.

3. Member of SMT managing the incident:

The member of SMT will manage the incident and, where appropriate, initiate and oversee a search of the site. That member of SMT will advise all teachers (via email) that they must immediately inform the Prep Office if the pupil appears. If the site search fails, not later than 1 hour after commencing searching, the member of SMT managing the incident will:

- Inform the Head and parents (parents will be kept informed of all progress).
- If appropriate, initiate a search of local area.
- At their discretion, and in consultation with the parents where possible (and usually not later than 2 hours of a search commencing), the Head (after agreement with the Head of the Upper or the Bursar) will arrange for the police and Children's Social Care to be informed and will decide at what point it is appropriate to inform the Chair of Governors. The Head will then make arrangements for dealing with media enquiries.

Any decision to contact Children's Social Care will be taken in accordance with the School's *safeguarding and child protection policy* and procedures.

4. **Resolution of the incident:**
   When the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved, the member of SMT managing the incident will:

   - Inform the Head and parents, directly.
   - Inform the police and Children's Social Care if they have been involved.

5. **Investigation:**
   Following resolution of the incident, the Head will initiate a full investigation, and require a written report from the member of SMT managing the incident. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file and in a central record of all such incidents. All incidents will be reported to the Head of the Upper School who will advise the Chair of Governors as appropriate.

Risk Assessment

Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

The Head has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.

Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who has been properly trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the particular assessment.

Record Keeping

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's *records management policy* and *records retention schedule*.

Records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which explain how the School will use the personal data of pupils and parents. The privacy notices are published on the School's website. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's *data protection policy for staff, governors and volunteers* and *information security and sharing data guidance* which are both contained in the *data protection and information security handbook*.

Policy Review

The Governors will undertake an annual review of this policy, its procedures and its operation as part of the School's annual review of safeguarding and update it as necessary.

Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	6th January 2020
Date of last review of this policy	3rd January 2019
Date for next review of this policy	January 2021
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Appendix

Questions that could be asked when interviewing during a missing pupil investigation

- When was the pupil last seen?
- Who was the pupil with?
- What were they wearing?
- What emotional state did the pupil appear to be in?
- Has anything upset the pupil recently?
- Did the pupil speak to anyone about leaving?
- Who are the pupil's main friends at School?
- Is there any reason to believe the pupil might have been abducted (e.g. custody dispute) or otherwise at risk?
- Does the pupil have family or family friends in the vicinity?

Information to be provided to the police/Children's Social Care

- the pupil's name;
- the pupil's age/date of birth;
- an up to date photograph if possible;
- the pupil's height and any other physical description that is not shown by the photograph;
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing;
- any physical disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have;
- the pupil's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians;
- the pupil's mobile phone number if known;
- any relevant background information on the pupil's school record or home situation;
- any relevant comments made by the pupil or other pupils.

Record keeping

The School will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil. This written record will be kept on the pupil file and in a central record of all such incidents. The written record will include:

- 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;
- any recommendations concerning future incidents.