



## MISSING STUDENT POLICY

This policy details the procedure required to attempt to locate the whereabouts of any students who School staff deem to be missing. It is clearly of the utmost importance that these procedures are followed rapidly once a student is identified as missing.

This Policy is governed by the following:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2023)
- National Minimum Standards for boarding schools ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) (DfE, September 2022)

Policy links: *Health and Safety Policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, First Aid Policy, Attendance & Lateness Policy.*

## Introduction:

This procedure is to be used for searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any student found to be missing from Kensington Park School Senior School, Kensington Park School Sixth Form or Kensington Park School Boarding on any given school day or school activity.

The procedure includes the requirement to record any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the student for being missing. NB A child going missing from school or from home is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow this procedure for dealing with children who go missing. All staff (including teaching staff and support staff, governors, and vetted volunteers where they are likely to be involved in teaching/supervision of pupils) will be made aware of this procedure during their induction and through ongoing training.

The Head of Sixth Form, Head of Senior School or Head of Boarding will lead the Missing Student Process alongside the DSL, DSO and/or DDSL as necessary. The HOSF, HOSS or HOB will always apply the locally agreed procedure in acting to safeguard any child who is missing from school (created in accordance with section B3 of London Child Protection Procedures: Practice Guidance – Part 6: Children Missing Education and Appendix 8 Safeguarding Children Missing Education Processes for Schools). The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (or in his/her absence, a Deputy DSL) should always be informed when a pupil is found to be missing.

In particular, the matter will be referred to other agencies, including children's social care services and/or the police, in cases where a pupil has gone missing on repeat occasions, or where a single instance of truancy or running away gives rise to concerns of abuse or neglect or other risk of harm, or where there is evidence of a crime. This policy details emergency actions in a case where a child is found to be missing from school or a school activity. It should be read in conjunction with the School's Attendance policy, which details the School's core attendance procedures and in addition, and its safeguarding and information-sharing obligations and processes to support children who are increasingly absent from education, or deemed more broadly to be 'missing education' (as defined by DfE statutory guidance, Children Missing Education) such as by no longer attending school.

## **1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Policy aims to:

- Protect the health and safety of all students at the School
- Ensure that School staff know how to respond if a student goes missing
- Highlight the steps required should a student with a 'Student Visa' go missing

## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities of all staff:

- It is the duty of any member of staff who notices a student is missing or sees a student in a place where the student should not be to inform the appropriate member of staff, as specified in the procedure section.

Responsibilities of the Head of Sixth Form, Head of Senior School or Head of Boarding

- Head of Sixth Form, Head of Senior School or Head of Boarding will lead the Missing Student Process alongside the appropriate Head of Year as necessary.

Responsibilities of the Students:

- Inform the School, via their Tutor, of their mobile phone numbers and any subsequent changes

## **3. MONITOR AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually and at other times in the intervening period as necessary.

## **4. MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURES**

### **a) Missing Day Students**

A member of staff may suspect a student is missing for various reasons, for example; failure to meet the criteria detailed in the attendance policy, failure to return to school after an exeat or a comment from another student.

- Contact the Reception and Head of Sixth Form/ Head of Senior School/Head of Boarding immediately
- Use the register to check and establish which student is missing
- Complete an initial search which may include all, or some of, the following checks:
  - Members of staff will be directed to check grounds and rooms to ensure the student has not hidden or been accidentally locked in/out anywhere on site, including the toilets
  - One appointed member of staff should leave the site to look around the immediate locality
  - Other parts of the campus and sites are to be contacted to check the

student has not joined another group after an activity or outing if appropriate

- The CCTV will be checked
- Student records checked on CPOMS
- If the initial search does not locate the student, then Reception/ a member of staff should contact all members of staff still on site who search their departments.
- In certain cases then staff should seek to contact the student's friends to ascertain whether there is any knowledge of the student's whereabouts.
- If the student remains missing, then the following procedure should be followed:
  - Head of Sixth Form/ Head of Senior School/Head of Boarding will make every attempt to contact parents (messages must be left on parents' answer phones at home and at work if there is no answer).
  - Police advice sought in situations where the absence is unusual or inexplicable.
  - Review the School CCTV
  - Student records checked on CPOMS
  - Attempt to establish whether student may have used public transport.

If the student cannot be traced within an hour of the student being reported missing, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will make a Risk Assessment Judgement of the situation and make a decision as to whether to inform the Police immediately; or whether a longer timescale should be created and what the Responsible Person and any other member of staff should do during any such time extension, including key check-points for a subsequent further action & re-assessment, and a cut-off point after which the police must be contacted. The Responsible Person will also keep the DSL (or, in their absence the Deputy DSL) informed of the situation as it develops.

## **b) Missing Boarding Students**

If a Boarding student is missing during the School day then the first step is to follow the procedures for Missing Day Students detailed above. The additional step is to ensure that the student is not at Boarding and therefore to check with the Boarding House.

If a boarder does not return to the boarding house within a reasonable period from when their return was anticipated, every effort will be made to communicate with them and to ascertain their whereabouts. Procedures for students who are missing during 'boarding time', or when they should be in the Boarding house during the day are as follows:

- Any student absent for registration is considered “Missing” until their whereabouts are determined. The duty staff member should follow the below procedure to locate the missing student;
  - Attempt to make contact with student via phone and/or Teams’
  - Check student’s room
  - Check student’s location and time stamp on Reach
  - Check Reach duty report and student’s pastoral log for any notes on their whereabouts
  - Contact student’s friends/roommates
  - Continue to call and text student at 15 minute intervals
  - Contact student’s parent/guardian
- If no contact has been made within the hour the Head of Boarding should be informed. They will then follow the below steps:
  - Inform the Headmaster/SLT/DSL
  - Attempt contact with student again and inform them of requirement to contact the police
  - Inform the police
  - If student is at KPS on a study visa UKVI must be informed at the time a police report is filed
  - Once the police are involved, PBH will follow their directions
  - Once the student is located the senior staff member should inform the student’s parent/guardian and the Headmaster/SLT

*Suggested Timeline:*

This is not a strict protocol, but a guideline for the Boarding Team on Duty on how to respond. The HOB should risk assess the situation and confirm a specific timeline for action the appropriate Head of School (HOSS / HOSF) and DSL on each separate occasion. In the case of a younger student, or a student about who there are specific additional welfare concerns, or where information otherwise indicates increased concern, swift action will be necessary and this will almost always involve contacting the police.

**0 mins** – Indicated Return Time / End of formal registration period

**0–30 mins** – ‘Late Return’ indicated. Try to establish whereabouts of the boarder by speaking to other boarders, House Staff and try to make contact with the student. Unless your investigation raises specific concerns, do not at this stage contact the Head of School or DSL.

**30 – 60 mins** – Boarding Staff should continue to seek to contact the student, as ‘late return’ has now become ‘not returned’. If unable to contact the pupil, the Boarding Staff should also seek to make contact with the pupil’s friends, parents, check for school trips, conduct a basic room check for notes/clothes missing, etc, seeking information as to the student’s whereabouts. If for any reason there has been a delay in the student’s absence being discovered, the timescale for action should be tightened accordingly – but there will still need to be a ‘seek contact’ phase, however compressed. If the parents are overseas, then an email may suffice. However, a phone call must be made if at any stage hereafter the situation indicates there are serious concerns for the student’s safety or welfare. It may be appropriate in the first instance to contact a student’s UK guardian.

**60mins** – the Boarding Staff should contact the Head of Boarding (and Head of School/ DSL/Deputy DSL), informing them of the student’s details and of the steps taken to locate them, and any information that search has yielded. In discussion, a Risk Assessment Judgement will be taken about the level of concern for the student; whether sensible/possible avenues for exploration remain; whether the Police should be contacted immediately; or whether a longer timescale should be created and what the Head of Boarding and any other member of staff should do during any such time extension, including key check-points for a subsequent further action & re-assessment, and a cut-off point after which the police must be contacted.

## **5. PROCEDURE IF A STUDENT IS FOUND TO BE MISSING WHILST ON A TRIP OR OUTING**

If a student is found to be missing while on a trip or an outing, then the member of staff supervising must contact:

- Head of Sixth Form/ Head of Senior School/Head of Boarding immediately
- The rest of the group should be kept together and the register re-checked
- The trip leader will organise the other members of staff present to look in the area for the student and ensure all other students are fully supervised and in ratio
- If the Student is still missing after a full search of the area Head of Sixth Form/ Head of Senior School will contact the police and the parents.
- If the outing is an overseas trip the British Embassy or Consulate should also be contacted.

## **6. ASSESSING THE RISK**

When assessing the timelines and appropriate actions of the above procedure a number of contextual factors should be taken into account:

- Possible threat factors: Time of day, time possibly missing, darkness, weather conditions, known local concerns;
- Individual student circumstances: age, judgement, known personal, pastoral or disciplinary issues, mood and/or communications prior to going missing, previous instances of going missing;
- Any parental indication of concern;
- In the case of a student about whom there are pre-existing welfare concerns then the time-frame must be compressed.

## **7. WHEN THE STUDENT HAS BEEN FOUND**

The action required when a student has been located will be dependent on the situation.

If the student is in the care of a parent or guardian, then confirmation must be sought from the parent or guardian, but the student can remain in their care. Otherwise attempts should be made to persuade the student to return to school. If the student refuses to return to school, the parents should be contacted and discussion should be held to decide upon the appropriate next steps. If a member of staff is with the student (e.g. they physically found them) they should remain with them until the situation has been resolved.

## **8. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE POLICE**

When the School contacts the Police the following information should be provided:

- The student's name
- The student's age and date of birth
- An up to date photograph if possible
- A physical description of the student
- Any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the student may have
- The student's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians
- A description of the clothing the student is thought to be wearing
- Any relevant comments made by the student

## **9. MISSING STUDENT INCIDENT REPORT**

In the event that a student is classified as 'Missing' then a written record of the incident must be submitted via CPOMs which should include the following information:

- The student's name
- Dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the student was missing)
- The actions taken
- Whether the Police or Social Services were involved and a summary of their actions
- Final outcome, or resolution, of the incident
- Reasons given by the student for being missing
- Any concerns about the handling of the incident
- A record of the staff involved

N.B. A student going missing from school or from home can be a potential indicator of significant student welfare issues including abuse or neglect. Further actions may be necessary and will be triggered by the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL), Head of Sixth Form/Head of Senior School/Head of Boarding (as a result of the logged CPOMs incident).

## **10. STUDENTS WITH A 'STUDENT VISA'**

As a sponsor for students under the Home Office Student Visa scheme, the School is aware of its responsibility to report promptly to the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) department of the Home Office in cases where such a student is found to have contravened the terms of their visa. Students must have an attendance rate of 80% in order to be compliant with the restrictions placed on them.

Any authorised absence must be noted and filed.

If a student misses ten consecutive "contacts" (defined as teaching days, which would be fewer than two full weeks) they need to be reported to the UKVI.

## **11. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) AWARENESS**

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse and violence against women. The School has a professional duty to share information and concerns with both the Local Authority and the Police.


In line with the School's Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy, staff will be explicitly questioning parents and carers in regards to any absence concerns that may relate to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), e.g. the student is taken out of the



country for a prolonged period (holiday of six weeks to two months or more), or the student is taking a long holiday to their country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.)


For further information on FGM please see the School's Policy on School Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

KPS Advisory  
Board Member

DocuSigned by:  
  
328FC4BF6826473...

14 January 2024

Acting Head

DocuSigned by:  
  
3F6C0B2D841749F...

18 December 2023