Document Control	
Document Title:	Missing/Absent & Uncollected Pupils
Date of Last Review:	November 2026
Next Review Due:	November 2027
Person Responsible:	Headteacher

Missing / Absent and Uncollected Pupils Policy

Contents

Part 1: Missing/Absent Child Policy 2

Introduction 2

Information for parents 2

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

Duty to Report 4

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School 4

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing 6

Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found 7

Part 2: Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time 8

Introduction 8

Procedures if a pupil is not collected on time 8

Records 8

Missing / Absent and Uncollected Pupils Policy

Part 1: Missing/Absent Child Policy

This policy covers:

1. Information for parents
2. Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school
3. Procedures to be followed if a child is missing from education
4. Duty to report
5. Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School
6. Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an outing
7. Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

Introduction

The welfare of all our children at Banstead Prep ("the School") 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 or college'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 and staff code of conduct. This policy was drawn up having had regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Early Years Statutory Framework and Department for Education's guidance KCSIE and '*Children Missing Education*'.

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.
- 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.

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 Head and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The Head or 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 Head or 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.

Procedures for pupils missing from education

Pupils whose absence from school gives rise to concern are potentially a Child Protection concern. Unauthorised absences of longer than ten days must be reported to the local authority. In practice, the Headteacher must be kept informed sooner than this if there are concerns about a pupil's attendance.

The school would have concerns about a pupil who was absent from school without explanation or authorisation and where the School Office or teaching staff had been unable to contact the parents/guardians for an explanation. The procedure, as outlined in the Attendance Policy, is for the School Office to contact parents via email or telephone to ascertain the reason for any unexplained absences. Usually, such matters are resolved promptly when the parent responds.

The School Office staff must pass on the names of any pupils whose absence is still unexplained to the Assistant Head – Pastoral, Deputy Head or Headteacher.

Should a pupil be missing from school without authorisation or explanation for more than two days, the Assistant Head – Pastoral or Deputy Head would call parents/guardians the following day if the pupil was still missing without explanation.

If they are unable to make contact, unless inappropriate to do so, the pupils' friends should be asked whether they have heard from the pupil and if so they should ask their friend to make contact with the school.

If after 48 hours, there has been no contact from parents or the pupil and the school is unable to ascertain the pupil's whereabouts through additional emergency contacts listed on the school's database, the Headteacher must be informed and a decision will be taken at that point about how to proceed. Legally the school must take action within 10 days and inform the local authority (2 days in the case of a pupil on a child protection plan) but in practice, it is very unusual for a pupil to be absent from Banstead Prep School without any explanation for any length of time, and so the school would give consideration to contacting external services before the ten-day period had expired.

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 ISI 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.

Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School

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 the School will carry out the following actions without delay:

- Registers must be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon teaching session, at the beginning of Games and Forest School, at the beginning of each out of hours extra-curricular activity and regularly during every off site activity. If for any reason the Form Teacher does not turn up for registration, after 5 minutes, a member of the form should get the nearest available teacher and ask them to register the form. This can be done digitally or on a paper register which is then passed on to the School Office, who will complete it in iSAMS.

- In the event that a pupil is recorded as present in the morning or afternoon register but is not present or accounted for in his/her lessons and his/her absence cannot be explained (e.g. he/she has not signed out, he/she has not been sent home by the School Office, nor had a music lesson),

staff must inform a member of Senior Leadership Team without delay and the Headteacher must be informed.

- **To alert Senior Leadership to the fact that a pupil is missing, staff can call where possible or send an e-mail to all relevant members of the SLT saying URGENT – MISSING PUPIL. The e-mail should state the pupil's name and year group and any other relevant details. Alternatively, staff should call the School Office to ask them to e-mail on their behalf, or else find a member of the relevant SLT.**

- The exact point and time of when and where the pupil was last seen and by which adult must be ascertained. The adult last responsible for the child must be questioned as to the whereabouts of the pupil.

- In the event that the pupil's absence cannot be explained and accounted for, a search of the building and area will be organised by the Senior Leadership Team, and the Headteacher must be informed. The search party will normally comprise of a member of Senior Leadership, the Form Teacher would usually be involved, and an appropriate number of teaching staff if necessary. If the pupil is believed to be off site, a search party will be sent to possible locations where the pupil might be. Members of the search party may wish to obtain relevant information from the missing pupil's friend e.g. mobile telephone number.

- Administrative staff will be required to maintain the central point, the School Office. All parties involved in searching for the pupil must liaise with and return to an agreed point to discuss progress.

- In the event that the pupil is not found the Site Manager may be asked by a member of the search party (at the request of SLT) to ring the fire bell. The search party will continue to search the premises whilst the rest of the school evacuates the building. If the evacuation fails to locate the missing pupil, the police will be called using 999 by administrative staff or by a member of the search party, we anticipate this would be within 30 minutes. The missing pupil's parents will be called by a senior member of staff.

- In the event that a pupil's absence cannot be explained or accounted for in any off-site activity, the search is organised and led by the activity leader, the organisation responsible for the area used, and the police are called using 999 immediately if the initial search proves unsuccessful. The Headteacher (or the member of SLT on call, who will liaise with the Headteacher) should be contacted as soon as the police have been informed.

- At whichever point the pupil is found he/she must be reassured and all adults involved in his/her care must be convinced of his/her wellbeing and safety. In the event of any concerns the child protection liaison officer or social services must be informed. It is important that the pupil understands the impact of his/her going missing – staff time, possibly police time, parental anxieties.

- In the case of an incident involving a pupil from our EYFS setting going missing, ISI must be informed within 14 days.

- Incidents involving missing pupils should be reviewed so that processes can be improved. An incident report should be written up and given to the Headteacher.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- Inform the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ask the Head to ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once
- The DSL / Head of the School will immediately notify the Police
- The Head will arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds
- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department T: 0300 123 1650 and the local authority designated officer LADO@surreycc.gov.uk, out of hours contact T:01483 517898 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.
- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- The Head will inform the Head of Independent Schools and Chair of UCST without delay
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured, the School will make a report under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the School, in consultation with Children 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.

Pupils who repeatedly go missing from Banstead Prep School premises or activities

Pupils who repeatedly go missing from school premises or activities will require special procedures. Teaching staff will be informed to keep a close eye on the pupil and to alert SLT the moment they have any cause for concern about the pupil's whereabouts. Staff may be told to inform the School Office as soon as they notice a particular pupil missing from their lesson.

Pupils who repeatedly go missing may well trigger a Child Protection concern as going missing can be a sign of considerable emotional distress. The reasons for the pupil going missing will be explored by the Assistant Head – Wellbeing and the Designated Safeguarding Leads kept informed if there is cause for concern.

There may also be sanctions for pupils who repeatedly go missing because of the staff time involved in finding them, and possibly also police time. Banstead Prep School has several exits and it is impossible to police them all. Banstead Prep School may in serious cases resort to the Exclusions and Expulsions procedure if a pupil is unable to reliably stay in school during the school day.

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

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present

- An adult will search the immediate vicinity
- Immediately inform the Head and the DSL by mobile phone
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- Ask the Head to 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 whichever is more appropriate to prevailing the circumstances, the venue or the School, at once
- If appropriate to the location of the missing incident contact the venue manager and arrange a search.
- Immediately contact the Police
- The DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department T: 0300 123 1650, or Out of Hours: 01483 517898
- Follow any specific local safeguarding procedures.
- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- The Head will inform the Head of Independent Schools and Chair of UCST without delay
- The School's insurers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable
- If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment, a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

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.

Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

- 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 Head 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 Head will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving the local safeguarding partners)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (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, 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.

Procedures to prevent pupils going missing during school activities off-site

- Pupils must always be supervised by an adult

- Pupils should be given a clear rendez-vous location in the event of them being separated from the group
- Risk assessments for educational visits and off-site activities should take supervision into account

Part 2: Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

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.

Procedures if a pupil is not collected on time

If a child is not collected at 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 or school office will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

- If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers when After School Care is closing, the DSL will contact/refer to their local Children Services Department T: 0300 123 1650, or Out of Hours: 01483 517898 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 as per the BPS Safe Collection Policy, 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.
- 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 School's Safeguarding Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct.

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.