



Durham High School

# Missing Child Policy

This policy applies to the Whole School  
and is published to parents and pupils

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Reviewed: September 2023

Next review: September 2024

*This policy should be read in conjunction with: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.*

## **Introduction**

The welfare of all of our pupils at Durham High School is our paramount responsibility.

Our 'Information for Parents' and 'A Practical Guide for Foundation Stage' describes:

- The arrangements for the beginning and end of the School day;
- The role of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the pupils whilst they are in School;
- The arrangements for registering the pupils, both morning and afternoon;
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building; and
- The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the School.

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

All procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a pupil is found to be missing during the School day, we would carry out the following actions immediately:

- A check to ensure the pupil is not in sick bay / toilets;
- A check with the School Office for further information which may have arisen as a result of a phone call to explain the absence;
- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present;
- Inform the Head of Pre-Prep and Prep Departments/ Form Teacher/ Head of Year/ Vice Principal, DSL and Acting Principal, as appropriate;
- Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil - all information must be noted;
- Occupy all of the other pupils in their classroom(s) - if young children, read to them;
- If Pre-Prep age group, at the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the Pre-Prep area, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide, and
- Check the doors and gates for signs of entry/exit.

A thorough search of the School premises will be organised and coordinated by members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The relevant staff will be kept informed at all times. As soon as it is identified that there is a genuine missing pupil situation the parents and police will be informed immediately. This will be done within 30 minutes of starting the original search at the latest.

A base will be made in the School Office from which the search will be coordinated, and will include the assistance of the grounds and maintenance staff via the two way radios. The SLT will decide on search areas for appropriate staff. This search should be concluded within half an hour of the initial report of absence. SLT will extract personal files on the child, and a recent photograph. The Acting Principal will then contact parents and Police as well as the Local Children Safeguarding Board to inform them of the situation.

The School would cooperate fully with any investigations. The Acting Principal will then inform the Chair of Governors, and Ofsted in the case of a pupil from the Pre-Prep Department.

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

- Carry out an immediate head count in order to ensure that all the other pupils are present.
- An adult should search the immediate vicinity.
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.
- Inform the Acting Principal who will inform the DSL.

- Ask the Acting Principal to ring the pupil's parents and police to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. This will be done within 30 minutes of starting the original search at the latest.
- Ask parents to come to the venue or the School at once.
- Take the remaining children back to School.
- The Principal will inform the Chair of Governors.
- The Principal will inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- The Principal will inform Ofsted if the pupil is part of the Pre-Prep Department.

The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.

Any media queries at any point should be referred to the Acting Principal.

### **Actions to be followed by staff once the pupil is found**

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil.
- Staff to inform the Acting Principal that the pupil has been found.
- The Principal will speak to the parents to update them on the outcome of events.
- The Principal will promise a full investigation (if appropriate, involving Social Services/Local Children Safeguarding Board).
- All staff concerned should provide written statements to aid the investigation; 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 she appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.
- A 'Missing Pupil Procedures Incident Form' will be completed and events will be reviewed in the light of health and safety issues; if appropriate, procedures would be adjusted. *(Incident Forms may be found in the Senior Department and Pre-Prep and Prep staffrooms.)*



## Missing Pupil Procedures Incident Form Durham High School

Please print all information clearly.

Date			
Name of missing pupil			
Age			
Address			
Contact telephone number			
Emergency telephone number			
Mobile number			
Form Teacher		Form	
Person reporting missing pupil			
Time pupil was first missed			
Place where pupil was last seen			
Apparent reason for disappearance, if known			
<b>Outcome</b> Pupil found by			
Date		Time	
Full details of location			
Visual assessment of pupil's health and mental state			
Reaction of parent/guardian			
Signature of person who found pupil <i>(Please print name below signature)</i>			