

# Missing Child Policy

**ISSR Part 3, Paragraph 14**

Review period:	Annual
Review by:	Vice Principal – Pastoral
Date reviewed:	August 2018
Next Review:	August 2019



## MISSING CHILD POLICY

St Joseph's College prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to each of its pupils, from EYFS across to Sixth Form, including Boarding. *The Governing body has ultimate responsibility for meeting all the College's regulatory requirements, which they delegate to the Principal, supported by the Senior Leadership team. In line with good practice and as part of the Governors' due diligence, the Board of Governors' reviews this policy annually.*

St Joseph's College, as an aware employer, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and young people as its number one priority. Robust recruitment, selection and induction procedures operate throughout the College and extend to organisations and services linked on its behalf.

### 1. Introduction

The College is committed to safeguarding children and young people; the safety and well-being of our pupils is therefore, a priority at all times. This policy sets out the procedures which are in place to prevent a child going missing and the procedures for dealing in the event of a child going missing whilst at the College, including in the EYFS, Boarding and also on trips and visits.

### 2. Responsibilities

#### Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to read this policy and to follow its guidelines and procedures. Staff must be ever vigilant and do everything possible at all times to safeguard and promote the safety and effective supervision of pupils, thereby minimising the risk of a child going missing.<sup>12</sup>

#### Parents

Parents must ensure that they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis. They must know and follow the recommended handover procedures at the start and end of the day, as well as the procedures for reporting their child's absence and collecting a child from College during the school day and at the end of trips, visits and matches. Parent must make contact with the College as a priority on the first morning of their child's absence.

#### Principal/SLT

The Principal and the SLT must liaise with the relevant agencies/authorities in the event of a child going missing, including the Police and the Local Children's Safeguarding Board.

#### Governing Body

The Governors must be aware of the procedures in this policy and challenge/support the College in its review of this policy.

#### Students

Students must register as appropriate and on time. They must not leave the campus during the school day without the appropriate authorisation. They must attend lessons as per their timetable.

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<sup>1</sup> ISSR Part 3 Paragraph 14

<sup>2</sup> NMS 15.6



## MISSING CHILD POLICY

### 3. Procedures for ensuring the safety and effective supervision of students and thereby minimising the risk of a child going missing in the Senior School

Pupils are not allowed off site during the school day. If they need to leave the site, they must sign out with permission from their parent which is checked by Reception staff, or a parent present. If a child arrives after registration they must sign in at main Reception. Upper Sixth students can leave the site one lunchtime a week, as a privilege and then only with permission from the Heads of Sixth Form. Boarders are not allowed back into the Boarding houses during the school day.

#### (i) Start of the day

- Staff on duty
- AM registers taken
- College minibus shuttle available for pupils to travel from train station
- Late arrivals marked in at and by Reception
- First day response calls made to absentees

#### (ii) During lessons

- Registers taken in the Senior School and unexplained absences followed up
- Staff notified of any pupils absent, in the sickbay, or with a peripatetic teacher via a note on lesson register on SIMS
- Senior School back entrance gates are locked during College teaching time until 3.15pm. Prep School gates are shut at 9.30am and open at 3.15pm
- Advance warning of trips/events/activities are given through Staff Bulletin/Briefing/Lists on staffroom noticeboards
- Only the College Nurse or SLT can confirm that a student is ill and needs to go home
- Students who are ill will not be allowed to return home/travel alone

#### (iii) During break and lunchtimes

- Staff on duty
- Most staff eat with students at lunchtime and have their break in the Refectories with students

#### (iv) End of School day

- Staff on duty around the site, including bus duties
- Senior School Library supervised until 6.00pm – pupils sign in and out
- Day pupils still on the premises at 6.00pm are taken to the Refectories, handed over to Boarding staff and then taken to Boarding if parents are unable to collect them.

#### (v) Visits

- All trips and visits are approved by SLT and consent is sought and required from parents
- All trips and visits are risk assessed
- Risk assessments are approved by a qualified EVC
- Only competent, experienced staff are permitted to lead trips
- Staff / pupil ratios are in line with LA guidelines
- Parents briefed before residential risk trips e.g. ski trip and exchanges
- EYFS trips always have a qualified paediatric first aider on the trip
- List of students' names are left at Reception in school/with the SLT contact and also taken to be used as registers on the trip
- Prep School students wear wrist bands with contact in case they get lost



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- (vi) **Boarding**
- All Boarding Houses have swipe card entry
  - A member of staff lives in each of the 2 main boarding houses.
  - A member of staff sleeps in each Boarding house overnight
  - Students are registered each morning before breakfast, in the evening after supper and at lights out
  - During Prep time, staff on duty check that each student is working either in the Study Room, or in their bedroom
  - Students are actively encouraged to report a missing student
  - No student is allowed to leave the College site during the evening or at weekend without permission from house parent/guardian/parent
  - Students who go into town, or to the local supermarket, must sign in and out and must go in a group of at least 3 students
  - Students must sign in and out if leaving the site
4. **Procedures to be followed in the event of a child going missing from the Senior School**
- The member of staff who suspects a child has gone missing will report this immediately to a member of SLT and the College's Senior DSL (a member of the Safeguarding team in their absence)
  - An immediate check will be made of signing out/late books and in places including the toilets, medical area/sick bay, Music department, Boarding, Chapel
  - Other children will then be asked the last time they saw the missing child
  - Grounds staff will then be alerted and instructed to search for the missing child
  - Friends of the missing child will then be asked to call the missing child's mobile phone
  - A tannoy announcement will be made on the instruction of SLT within the first half hour
  - A member of SLT may decide to sound the fire alarm to ensure the whereabouts of the missing child/establish that the child is not on site within the first hour
  - Parents will be contacted and informed by a member of SLT within one hour
  - The safety and care of other pupils are paramount, so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining must be adequately maintained whilst any search by staff is undertaken
  - If appropriate CCTV cameras will be checked (see Security Policy)
  - Specific staff will be instructed to drive around the locality/to the child's house/near transport links within one hour
  - The Principal or in her absence, the Vice Principal will decide at which point the Police need to be contacted. This will be dependent on factors such as the age, ability and knowledge of the pupil – contact will usually be made with the within 1 hour of a student going missing. A photo of the child and information regarding any medical or learning needs of the child should be made available to the Police
  - The DSL will inform the Local Safeguarding Board within 24 hours
  - The Chair of Governors will be informed within 2 hours
  - The College will contact and cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services or ISI
  - Once the incident is resolved, the SLT will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes. These will be examined and ratified at the College's Health & Safety Committee.
  - All incidents of children going missing will be recorded on the College's Accident/Incident Form, and in cases where either the police or children's services have been informed, ISI will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.



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5. Procedures in the event of a child going missing whilst on a school trip
- An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children are present and a mistake has not been made
  - A member of staff will then search the immediate vicinity
  - Staff will then call the child's mobile phone
  - Other children will be asked the last time they saw the missing child
  - Friends of the missing child will be asked to call the student's mobile phone usually within the first 5-10 minutes of the child being established as missing
  - Staff will contact and inform the venue Manager and arrange a search usually within the first 10-15 minutes
  - The remaining children will continue to be supervised appropriately at all times
  - A member of SLT will be informed by mobile phone usually within the first 15-12 minutes
  - Either the Principal or Assistant Principal Head of Prep School will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been and are being taken usually within the first 30 minutes
  - Contact will be made with the Police usually within the first hour
  - The DSL will inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board usually within 24 hours
  - The Chair of Governors will be informed usually within 2 hours
  - The College will contact and co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services or ISI
  - Once the incident is resolved, the SLT will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes. These will be examined and ratified at the College's Health & Safety Committee.
  - All incidents of children going missing will be recorded on the College's Accident/Incident Form, and in cases where either the police or children's services have been informed, ISI will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.
6. Procedures in the event of a child going missing in the Prep School, including EYFS <sup>3</sup>

### Statement of intent

Our setting has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will follow all relevant procedures to ensure the risks are minimised. Given the age of Prep School children, staff are very aware of the serious implications of a child of this age group going missing

### Methods

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. To minimise the likelihood of a child going missing registers are taken each morning and afternoon, first day absence calls are made for all classes from Reception to Year 6, members of staff also undertake periodic head counts at key times, e.g., at the start of a games lesson. If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session, the following procedure will be activated:

- The Teacher will immediately call the register to ensure that all other children are present.
- The member of staff in question will immediately inform both the Receptionist, Head (SLT) and Deputy Head of Prep School and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough

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<sup>3</sup> EYFS 3.73



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search of the entire premises and outdoor area will commence immediately. The Receptionist will radio the Grounds, Maintenance staff and Senior School Receptionist usually within 5 -10 minutes. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and are adequately supervised.

- If after 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the Head or Deputy Head of Prep will inform the child's parent/carer.
- While waiting for the parent/carer to arrive, the police will be contacted and no later than within 1 hour of the child going missing and searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children.
- The Head of Prep will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The staff will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the child has been located – all relevant stakeholders will need to be informed
- Once the incident is resolved, the Head of Prep and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes. These will be examined and ratified at the College's Health & Safety Committee.
- All incidents of children going missing from the setting will be recorded on the College's Accident/Incident Form, and in cases where either the police or children's services have been informed, ISI will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

### 7. Procedures in the event of a child going missing in Boarding<sup>4</sup>

#### During the evening, or during the day at the weekend

- The Assistant Principal Pastoral & Boarding will be informed immediately
- Signing in and out books will immediately be checked and all staff will confirm that no permission was given for the student to leave the premises
- An immediate search of all students' rooms, recreational, study and washing/toilet facilities and the areas surrounding the Boarding Houses and other appropriate locations (e.g. Sports Hall, wooded areas, fitness suite, Refs etc.) will be conducted.
- Staff and friends of the missing child will attempt to contact the child's mobile phone usually within the first 5-10 minutes
- A fire alarm will be sounded to confirm the missing child is not on site – all students will be made aware a child is missing to ensure that any student who has pertinent information comes forward usually within 20 – 30 minutes
- Adults and pupils will be asked calmly if they can recall when they last remember seeing the pupil
- At the same time, one or more adults will conduct an extensive search of the school grounds
- The SLT line-manager (Principal) will be contacted usually within 20 -30 minutes, who will advise on the next steps and if appropriate the International Liaison Officer

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<sup>4</sup> NMS 15.6





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- Parents will be contacted to establish if they have any knowledge of whereabouts of the child – this may need to be done via the College’s International Liaison Officer usually within 30 minutes and no later than 1 hour
- Police will be contacted usually within 1 hour of the child going missing
- The Boarding Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Children’s Services within 24 hours
- The College will contact and liaise fully with any ensuing investigation made by ISI, the Local Safeguarding Board, or the Police
- The incident will be recorded on the Boarding Serious Incidents’ Log and an Incident/Accident form will be completed
- Once the child has been located – all relevant stakeholders will need to be informed

### During the night after lights out

- The Assistant Principal Pastoral will immediately be informed
- Register and signing in/out books will immediately be double-checked
- Missing students’ friends will be asked to call the student’s mobile phone within 5-10 minutes
- All rooms, areas and facilities within Boarding will be searched usually within the first 20 minutes
- The fire alarm will be sounded usually within the first 20-30 minutes
- A search will be made within the vicinity and grounds of the College usually within the first 20-30 minutes
- The SLT line-manager will be contacted usually within the first 20 -30 minutes, who will advise on the next steps and who will if appropriate the International Liaison Officer
- Once the child has been located – all relevant stakeholders will need to be informed
- Once the incident is resolved, the SLT will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes. These will be examined and ratified at the College’s Health & Safety Committee
- The Boarding Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Children’s Services within 24 hours
- A College Accident/Incident Form will be completed and in cases where either the police or social services have been informed, ISI will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

### 8. Procedures in the event of a child going missing from a host/home stay family<sup>5</sup>

In the event of the above the host parent will immediately contact the on call member of staff in boarding. Contact will try to be immediately established with the child or the child’s friends to establish their whereabouts. If this is unsuccessful the Principal or their deputy will be informed and parents and police contacted in line with the timings above.

### 9. Action to be followed by Staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- 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 of the Prep/Senior School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Principal will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Principal (after discussion with the LSCB if appropriate)

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<sup>5</sup> NMS 20.6



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- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

## MISSING CHILD CHECKLIST

**Time**    **Actioned?**

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The missing child has been reported to the College's Senior DSL and Head of Year.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A check will be made of signing in/out books, sick bay, toilets, Boarding and Music.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other children will then be asked the last time they saw the missing child.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grounds staff will then be alerted and instructed to search for the missing child.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Friends of the missing child will then be asked to call the missing child's mobile phone.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A tannoy announcement (if needed) will be made on the instruction of SLT within the first half hour. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | SLT may sound the fire alarm (if needed) to ensure the whereabouts of the missing child.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents will be contacted and informed by a member of SLT within one hour .                          |

