



## Queen Mary's SCHOOL

### 14b MISSING CHILD POLICY

#### REPORTING

Registration is held every morning at 08:30 for Years 3-11 and at 08:45 for Reception and Years 1 and 2. If a child is absent and no valid reason has been provided, the School Office will contact the pupil's parent/guardian to check why the pupil is not at school.

Registers are taken at the start of each lesson in Years 7-11. In EYFS and in Years 1-6 an afternoon register is taken at 13:00, unless there has been a change of teacher, in which case a register is taken at the start of each lesson.

#### **If a pupil is found to be absent/unaccounted for the teacher/person should:**

During normal School hours 08:30 to 16:40 - inform the School Office immediately. The School Office will inform the Head / Deputy Head or, if they are off-site, a member of the Leadership Team. Parents and the police are to be contacted immediately by the Deputy Head or a member of the Leadership Team as soon as it has been established that the pupil is missing.

- **Out of School hours 16:40 to 08:30** - inform the Head and Deputy Head directly. If the Head or Deputy Head are out of school inform a member of the Leadership Team.

#### SEARCH

There should be, where possible, two members of the Leadership Team working together when dealing with an incident of a missing pupil.

The Deputy Head would normally be the Designated Lead person, supported by a member of the Leadership Team. If the Deputy Head is off-site then a member of the Leadership Team will become the Designated Lead.

The Designated Lead will be based in the School Office and coordinate the search and carry out the following:

- Record all key information, noting the time when the pupil was unaccounted for/ missing
- Initiate a search of the School by the staff - School telephones/walkie talkies to be issued to staff to facilitate contact with the Designated Lead or be contactable via own personal phones. The Designated Lead will allocate areas to be searched and all staff will be informed.
- Video footage to be checked
- Consider whether to phone/text the pupil's mobile, involve pupils in the search and/or question anyone in her group regarding the missing pupil
- Consider whether the child missing is also identified as a welfare and/ or safeguarding concern



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The following questions should be considered in all cases:

- Full description of the pupil who is missing
- When was she last seen?
- Who was she with?
- Where might she have gone?
- Has the pupil signed out?
- Is there a School activity that she might be on?
- Has the pupil been ill or injured and gone to the Health Hub?
- What emotional state did she appear to be in?
- Has anything upset the pupil recently?
- Did she speak to anyone about leaving?
- Who are the pupil's main friends at school?
- Does the pupil have a mobile phone and what is the number?
- Does the pupil have a special friend?
- Is there any reason to believe she might have been abducted (e.g. family custody dispute; very wealthy/ prominent parents).

Other actions to consider implementing:

- Check the pupil's dormitory, bags and locker for indications of how the pupil is dressed, where she might have gone.

### INFORMATION FOR POLICE

If police are involved and assume responsibility for the search, the School and the Designated Lead will act in accordance with police advice and may issue a public statement.

The police treat all missing person reports as serious. Each risk is assessed and the following are trigger factors to be considered:

- Pupil is in an emotional or depressed state of mind;
- Unusual behaviour prior to disappearance;
- Pupil needs essential medicine or treatment;
- Suspicion of self-harm/suicide;
- Involvement in a violent confrontation prior to disappearance;
- Previously disappeared and suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing
- Pupil has been identified as a safeguarding/welfare concern



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The Designated Lead will also provide the police with the following information:

- The name and address of our setting
- The next of kin of the missing pupil
- A detailed description of the pupil to include: age, gender, including as much clothing description as possible
- Circumstances of the incident, including anything that may have triggered the disappearance, i.e. how long they have been missing? Where they were last seen?
- Who is looking for the pupil? Where are they? Contact mobile number

The search should continue, maintaining contact with the rest of the staff via mobile telephones/walkie talkies until otherwise advised by the police.

### **FOLLOW UP ACTION**

The Designated Lead will produce a written report on the incident and a copy will be placed on the pupil's central file and tutor file. A copy of the incident should be circulated to appropriate staff.

Details to be included in the report:

- The pupil's name
- Relevant dates and times (e.g. when was first noticed that the pupil was missing)
- The action taken to find the pupil
- Whether the Police or Social Services 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
- The full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's file.

Once the incident is resolved the Leadership Team will review relevant policies, risk assessments and implement necessary changes.

If the pupil is located and is injured then the School H&S policy should be followed. All information is to be reported to the Designated Lead based in the School Office.



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### PROCEDURES WHEN A PUPIL IS NOT COLLECTED

#### Years 1-11

Parents/guardians will be telephoned, if they have not already contacted the School. If the School is unable to make contact with a parent/guardian, an alternative number will be rung, consistent with the consent given on iSAMS. If however, the parents' nominated adult is unable to collect the pupil, the pupil will be looked after by either the Boarding staff, After School Care staff or by one of the members of staff on duty. The Head or Deputy Head will be kept informed.

#### EYFS

Parents/guardians will be telephoned, if they have not already contacted the School. The child will be looked after in the Early Years' Department or in After School Care until the agreed person who is due to collect the child arrives. On the departure of the After School Care staff the child will be taken to the main school to be cared for by the Boarding staff or duty member of staff. Parents/guardians will be kept informed.

#### POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually and updates will be made as necessary, taking into account any incidents that have occurred that indicate possible concerns with supervision, or security at the School, including and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents or pupils. The reviewed draft will be considered by the Leadership Team who will implement the recommended changes in policy and procedures in a timely manner.

*'As an establishment with a Christian ethos, we have a care for all people involved with the school. Recognising that having a 'missing child' is a stressful situation for any member of staff, before anyone involved in the incident leaves to return home, a short 'hot-debrief' will take place, either in person or by phone call. Transport home, or other expressions of support, may be made.'*

Debbie Hannam-Walpole  
Deputy Head

Review Date: May 2021  
Next Review Date: May 2022