



# Missing Child Policy and policy for when a child is not collected

Scope:	Whole School including EYFS
Release date:	December 2023
Review date:	December 2024
Author:	Assistant Head Pastoral
Reviewer:	Head

## Linked Documents:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy  
Supervision of Pupils Policy  
Major Incident Policy (Internal)

## Acronyms:

DSL Designated Safeguarding Lead  
DDSL Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead  
SLT Senior Leadership Team

## Availability:

This policy will be provided to all staff via the Safeguarding folder on Google Drive. Parents may request a printed copy from the School or review the policy on the School website. It can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

## Policy Statement

The welfare of all of our pupils at Derby Grammar School is our paramount responsibility. Where staff have concerns that a child goes missing during school time, this policy should be followed. Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#). Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised appropriately when he or she is in our care.

## **Policy aims:**

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

Protect the health and safety of pupils at the School;  
Ensure that School staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

## **Scope:**

This policy applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents at Derby Grammar School. It should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The procedures in this policy may be adapted as necessary. The Head and the Senior Leadership Team have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

## **Responsibility**

The Governors delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the School to the Head. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the School by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the directions of the Head and Senior Leadership Team. Schools are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent. Any member of staff who notices a pupil is missing or sees a pupil in a place where the pupil should not be has a duty to inform a member of SLT and Reception without delay.

## **Procedure for pupil missing during the day**

Some of these procedures may run concurrently.

### **Senior School:**

A pupil may be reported missing after being present in School earlier in the day or following a phone call to parents to question a morning absence.

Staff alerted to a missing child will immediately inform members of SLT and Reception. The most senior member of staff present will coordinate the search from a central position, usually Reception. Notes will be made of circumstances and times when the pupil went missing as information becomes available.

Reception will then, with help from any available staff:

- Confirm with registering staff and classmates that the pupil was definitely absent
- Check whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment
- Contact the Music Department and Speech and Drama in case the pupil is there

If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the most senior member of staff present will notify the Assistant Head Pastoral, as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in their absence, a DDSL, and will conduct an initial search using assistance from Reception and available staff. The Head will be kept informed by the most senior member of staff present.

As part of the initial search process, the pupil's friends and their classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts. All relevant adults on the premises will be alerted, by the most appropriate means, of the situation (in person, by phone or via email).

All areas of the building will be searched by staff, coordinated by the most senior member of staff, usually from Reception.

If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the School staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the School. If the pupil refuses to do so, a senior member of staff will inform the pupil's parents and staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts.

If the pupil is not found after the initial search, the DSL, or, in their absence, a DDSL, will contact the pupil's parents at this point. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the Head.

If the initial search is unsuccessful, within 45 minutes of the alarm being raised, the DSL, or, in their absence, the DDSL, will contact the police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate) and provide the police with the information listed on pages 4 and 5 of the policy, as well as any other information reasonably requested by the police. A decision will be taken in accordance with the School's safeguarding and child protection policy as to whether the School should also contact Children's Social Care in line with local procedures.

A full record of the events will be kept and filed with the safeguarding file in the Assistant Head Pastoral's office. This record will be written by the DSL.

### **Primary**

In the Primary School, the most senior member of staff present will coordinate an immediate search of the area which should include: toilets, Reception, Infant School, Science Department, Music Department, Library and Speech and Drama.

- Gather all children in their classrooms and check the full register against present pupils.
- A member of staff should be placed at the end of the drive to ensure no one leaves.
- Classroom teachers should remain with their classes whilst all other adults are deployed to search the vicinity.
- Staff will call the Head or DSL to inform them and assistance will be provided.
- All adults on the premises will be alerted of the situation to support the search as directed.
- All areas of the building will be searched by staff.
- Police and parents will be contacted by the Head or DSL within 5 minutes of the alarm being raised that an EYFS pupil has gone missing, and within 30 minutes for other primary aged pupils.
- A senior member of staff will gather all relevant information on the missing child: DOB, where last seen and a basic description. A note will be made of circumstances and times when the pupil went missing.

### **Procedure for pupils missing during a school trip or during or following a journey**

If a pupil is missing from a school trip or has not arrived at the School following a journey, the member of staff in charge will:

#### **Senior School**

- Make a plan with all supervising staff – have specific times to meet and review. Do not rely completely on communication via mobile phones.
- Manage and brief the rest of the group, allocating a member of staff or more to the supervision of this group depending on its size.
- Ensure a system for communication between staff and base.
- Staff will alert the management of the venue (if there is one) and ensure that exit routes are manned and all venue staff are aware of the missing child.
- If possible, staff will ask for an intercom message to be broadcast in the venue to alert the pupil to seek appropriate help.
- All spare adults on the premises or with the trip, will be alerted of the situation and a search will be organised by the most senior member of staff.
- Contact will be made with the designated school contact who will inform parents when appropriate following discussion with the Head or DSL (if the Head is unavailable).

- Contact local emergency services and tour operator; notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.
- Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you will not allow students to phone home. Direct media to the Head.
- Record in writing – nature, date and time of incident; [location of incident](#); names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom).
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the Head.

## Primary

In the event of a child going missing during an off-site educational visit, the trip leader will take responsibility for managing and directing the situation. They will coordinate an immediate search of the area. They will:

- Gather all children in their groups and check the full register against present pupils.
- Staff will alert the management of the venue (if there is one) and ensure that exit routes are manned and all venue staff are aware of the missing child.
- If possible, staff will ask for an intercom message to be broadcast in the venue to alert the child to seek appropriate help.
- Appropriate adult/child ratios should be maintained whilst all other adults are deployed to search the vicinity.
- Staff will call the Head or DSL to inform them - SLT will also be informed.
- Communication should be maintained between the school and staff off-site.
- Police and parents will be contacted by the Head or DSL within 5 minutes of the alarm being raised that an EYFS pupil has gone missing, and within 30 minutes for other primary aged pupils.
- The most senior member of staff available will gather all relevant information on the missing child: DOB, where last seen and a basic description. A note will be made of circumstances and times when the pupil went missing.

## Information to be provided to the Police

When the School contacts the Police during the day or night, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any distinguishing physical features
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number and let it be known if the parents are aware at this stage.
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil.

The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the School should be necessary.

## **Review**

This policy shall be reviewed every year as part of the School's annual review of safeguarding, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review, the Head will take into account any incidents in the Missing Pupil Incident Book that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the School and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

## **Missing pupil incident book**

The School must keep a full written record, to be held centrally in the Assistant Head Pastoral's office with the safeguarding file of any incident of a missing pupil including:

- the pupil's name;
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing);
- the action taken to find the pupil;
- whether the Police or children's social care 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;
- a full written record of the incident will be kept of the pupil's file.

## **Procedures to be followed when a child is not collected on time**

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, the School will call the contact numbers for the parents or carers. If there is no answer, a member of the SLT 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 within a one-hour period/when the premises are closing, the Head or DSL will contact the Social Care Duty Officer. 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 make a full written report of the incident.

The School undertakes to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care, until such a time as he has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative car arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the police in order to prioritise the child's safety. 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. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.