

14b Missing Pupils Policy and Procedures

A copy of this policy is published in the following area:

The school's website

Reviewed: August 2018

Date for review: August 2019

Reviewed by : Emma Ellison, Deputy Head (Pastoral)

A. Aims

The procedures to be followed if a pupil is missing are designed to:

- protect the health and safety of all boarding and day pupils at the school;
- ensure that all school staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

NB. *It is important to distinguish between a pupil's absence from school for an unknown reason and a pupil's disappearance from a lesson or activity after arrival at school.*

If a pupil is absent from school without any note of explanation, Office Staff will follow this up by contacting parents to establish the reasons.

B. Responsibility

Truro School has a duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent. All members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the School by providing appropriate supervision under the guidance of the Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

To establish whether a pupil is missing it is a requirement to monitor the whereabouts of pupils. This includes the following procedures:

- during the School day, teachers must register pupils at morning and afternoon statutory registration along with all their timetabled lessons (see appendix for further details);
- for activities on Wednesday afternoons, staff in charge must register pupils;
- for boarders, house duty staff must ensure the signing in and out book is used correctly by pupils in boarding houses;
- for boarders, house duty staff must employ sufficient roll calls in the boarding house at appropriate times;
- for boarders, house duty staff must be aware of arrival times back at the house after a journey from friends or parents/guardians;
- on school trips, the staff in charge should ensure that scheduled meeting times and locations are specified and adhered to by pupils.

It is the duty of staff in charge of any pupil supervision to check why a pupil is absent, although during the School day this may be delegated if that member of staff is busy.

Summary of missing pupil procedures for school

- I. Establish that a pupil is suspected missing. Staff immediately inform the main office by telephone or via email enquiries@truroschoo.com
- II. If a pupil is suspected missing, **a search must be initiated**. This will include contacting the line manager and questioning pupils and staff and trying to contact the pupil by mobile phone if possible.
- III. If **after one hour of searching** a pupil cannot be found, the Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Housemaster/mistress will inform the parents. The School will then work with the family to try to locate the pupil.
- IV. If **after two hours of searching*** the pupil has still not been found, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the police and their missing person procedures will be followed. Parents/guardians and Housemaster/mistress will also be notified.

*For any school trip, the police will need to be informed after just one hour. This will be conducted by the Group Leader and SLT will be kept informed.

C. Procedures for staff checking missing pupils during the day

Staff taking registers in class and for Wednesday activities must mark any missing pupil absent (unless indicated otherwise on SIMS). Staff must not rely on the information of other pupils. It is the teacher's duty to check why a pupil is absent from their class, although this may be delegated to office staff if the teacher is busy. Once it has been established the student is missing staff should immediately inform the main office via phone or email, enquiries@truroschoo.com

The student will be searched for and the checks will include:

- the Medical Centre;
- Learning Support staff;
- visits/trips lists;
- the Music School;
- the relevant tutor;
- the relevant Head of Year;
- the SBA Sports Centre

C.1 Unexplained absence from statutory registration

If a **boarding pupil** is missing from morning registration up to morning break, the office staff will contact the Housemaster/mistress and a search of the House will be initiated. The Medical Centre will also be checked. If the pupil is not located, a whole School search is initiated.

If a **day pupil** is absent without explanation at morning registration, School Office staff will check if they appear late to registration during period one. They will also check for traffic problems or train delays which may help to explain the absence.

By 10.15am office staff check SIMs lesson registrations for updates, check the Medical Centre and any other appropriate staff. Following this, if there is a suspicion the pupil has been absent from school without explanation, office staff ring parents at home or work regarding the "unexplained absence". If a reason for absence is provided, SIMs is updated and the office staff will collate a paper absentee list, passing this on to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). If there is a suspicion that the pupil arrived at school and then went missing, see 3.2.

If a pupil has been in School for the morning and fails to attend **statutory afternoon registration** (2.00pm, or 12.40pm Wednesday), the staff in charge of the pupil must inform the school office via email.

C.2 Following up suspicion of a missing pupil

If there is a suspicion that a pupil has been in school but subsequently gone missing after arrival, Office Staff will inform:

- the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral);
- the Head of Year or tutor for day pupils;
- the Housemaster/mistress for boarders.

A whole School search will be initiated.

As part of the whole School search, the tutor, Head of Year, Housemaster/mistress or member of SLT leading the search should:

- question friends of the pupil;
- question friends and staff who have recently been in contact with the pupils about their emotional state;
- try to contact the pupil using their mobile phone number.

C.3 Informing parents/guardians after one hour of searching for a missing pupil

If **after one hour of searching** a day or boarding pupil cannot be found, the Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Housemaster/mistress will inform the parents. The School will then work with the family to try to locate the pupil.

C.4 Informing the police after two hours of searching for a missing pupil

If **after two hours of searching** the pupil has still not been found, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the police and their missing person procedures will be followed. Parents/guardians and Housemaster/mistress will also be notified.

D. Pupils from Boarding Houses

If a pupil is missing from the Boarding House outside School hours (8.45am – 3.45pm Monday to Friday), the member of staff on duty should:

- check the signing-out book in the house;
- check any paper work or emails which may have given the pupils permission to be out of the house;
- conduct an initial search of the house and immediate surroundings;
- ring other boarding houses for them to check their signing-in book and to search their house;
- ring the Medical Centre during their working hours;
- check other obvious ad nearby locations;
- if necessary, contact other available members of staff and prefects on site to conduct an initial search of the School site;
- question friends of the pupil;
- question friends and staff who have recently been in contact with the pupils about their emotional state;
- try to contact the pupil using their mobile phone number.

If there is no discernible reason for absence, the staff on duty will:

- immediately phone their Housemaster/mistress;
- immediately phone the Headmaster or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to inform that the boarder is missing.

D.1 Informing parents/guardians after one hour of searching

If **after one hour of searching** a pupil cannot be found, inform the Housemaster/mistress and Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral). The Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Housemaster/mistress will then inform the parents/guardians. The School will then work with the family to try to locate the pupil.

D.2 Informing the police after two hours of searching

If **after two hours of searching** the pupil has still not been found, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the police and their missing person procedures will be followed. Parents/guardians and Housemaster/mistress will also be notified.

E. Pupils missing during a return journey to the boarding house

For pupils returning to a boarding house after a holiday or a visit to parents/guardians or friends, the member of boarding staff on duty will

- attempt to contact the pupil by mobile phone;
- check with parents, guardians and friends regarding whereabouts or delays or changes to the journey;
- if **after one hour of searching** the pupils has not been found, inform the Housemaster/mistress and Headmaster or Deputy Head(Pastoral); the Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Housemaster/mistress will then inform the parents/guardians; The School will then work with the family to try to locate the pupil;
- if **after two hours of searching** the pupil has still not been found, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the police and their missing person procedures will be followed. Parents/guardians and Housemaster/mistress will also be notified.

F. Pupils missing on a school trip

On school trips, ensure that scheduled meeting times and locations are specified and adhered to by pupils. If a pupil is suspected as being missing, the member of staff in charge will:

- contact the Group Leader
- attempt to contact the pupil by mobile phone;
- interview friends about their possible whereabouts and conduct a search if possible;
- when it is clear the pupil is missing, inform the SLT contact person and Housemaster/mistress (if they are a boarder);
- if **after one hour of searching** the pupil has not been found, inform the SLT contact, Housemaster/mistress (if they are a boarder) and parents; the Group Leader will inform the police and their missing person procedures will be followed; Parents/guardians, Housemaster/mistress and SLT contact will be kept informed.

G. Procedures once a pupil has been found

- If the reason for absence is not deliberate intended, but due to some form of distress, sanctions will not apply.
- When the pupil has been located, the pupil must see the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) as soon as possible.

- The relevant Head of Year, tutor (and boarding Housemaster/mistress) must be kept informed.
- Each case will be discussed on its merits, but should the absence be deliberate and without good reason there will be a Saturday morning detention with Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- In the case of a longer term deliberate and unauthorised absence, the pupil could be suspended, at the discretion of the Headmaster.

H. Appendix

H.1 Information to be provided to the police

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

1. the pupil's name;
2. the pupil's age/date of birth;
3. an up to date photograph if possible;
4. the pupil's height and any other physical description that is not shown by the photograph;
5. a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing;
6. any physical disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have;
7. the pupil's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians;
8. any relevant comments made by the pupil.

H.2. Questions that could be asked when interviewing during a missing pupil investigation

1. When was the pupil last seen?
2. Who was the pupil with?
3. What emotional state did the pupil appear to be in?
4. Has anything upset the pupil recently?
5. Did the pupil speak to anyone about leaving?
6. Who are the pupil's main friends at School?
7. Does the pupil have a mobile phone and what is the number?
8. Is there any reason to believe the pupil might have been abducted (eg family custody dispute)?

H.3 Record keeping

The School will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil. This written record will be kept on file. The written record will include:

1. the pupil's name;
2. relevant dates and times (eg when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing)
3. the action taken to find the pupil;
4. whether the Police or Social Services were involved;
5. outcome or resolution of the incident;
6. any reasons given by the pupil for being missing;
7. any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident;
8. a record of the staff involved.

H.4 Registration during the normal school day 8.45am – 3.45pm

SIMS is used to register pupils for lessons. It is our aim to register all pupils at every lesson for which they are timetabled.

Compulsory statutory registration takes place:

- in the morning at registration;
- period 1 (to allow registration for any pupils that may be late);
- and in the afternoon at 2.00pm, just before period 5. On Wednesdays where we have afternoon activities, compulsory statutory registration in the afternoon is period 4 (ending at 12.40pm).

All 1st to 5th Year pupils that are given permission to leave school must still sign out at the School Reception before leaving the premises.

From 12.30pm to 2.00pm, Sixth Form pupils may depart the School premises with staff approval or for medical appointments or confirmed driving tests, but they must sign out with the Sixth Form Administrator. Upper Sixth pupils may also leave School for the day from 12.30pm, providing they have no more commitments and have signed out.