



## Missing Child Policy

RGS Worcester  
September 2024

# RGS Worcester

## Missing Child Policy

### 1. Introduction:

The School has a statutory duty of care to all of its pupils to provide a safe environment and to ensure their health, safety and welfare at all times.

This policy applies to the RGS Worcester and should be read in conjunction with the School's other policies including, but not limited to, the Safeguarding Policy, The Admissions and Attendance Register Policies and Procedures, Pupil Absence from School, Lockdown Policy, Children Missing Education, and Evacuation Procedure.

This policy is supported by a procedural flowchart to help assist staff when trying to locate a pupil during the school day and also after school hours from 1545 until 1800. (Please see Appendix 1 and 2)

### 2. Aims:

The aims of the Missing Child Policy are as follows:

- To ensure the safety of all pupils
- To ensure that we are able to find any child that goes missing either in School or on an activity outside of School as quickly as possible.
- To communicate effectively and to an appropriate timescale with everyone concerned.
- To follow up incidents and review procedure accordingly.

### 3. Missing Child Procedure (at School):

3.1 If the class teacher or member of staff involved, including peripatetic music teachers, have concerns about the whereabouts of a pupil they should immediately inform the Attendance Administrator. This should be done by either calling the internal extension 220, seeking assistance from another member of staff or sending a pupil with a message to the School Office in Whiteladies.

In addition, an email should be sent to The Attendance Administrator, [absence@rgsw.org.uk](mailto:absence@rgsw.org.uk) copying in the senior member of staff on Behavioural Management Unit (BMU) duty by using the address: [bmu@rgsw.org.uk](mailto:bmu@rgsw.org.uk)

Please note that the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL, and the pupil's Head of Section are BMU email recipients.

The Attendance Administrator will then immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is currently Sofia Nicholls, Assistant Head (DSL), the School Nurse(s) on duty, the Co-curricular Secretary, the School Receptionist, and the member of staff in charge of the BMU, for that session, so that they can assist in determining the pupil's whereabouts.

3.2 The IT department will be asked either by the DSL or by someone designated by her to try to trace, if possible, the pupil's iPad to see if this can assist with locating the pupil. (The IT department will ensure that any iPads loaned to pupils whose iPad is lost or being repaired are recorded as being in that pupil's possession so that they can try to trace the iPad if necessary and therefore possibly locate the pupil).

3.3 The Attendance Administrator, the School Nurse and the Co-curricular Secretary will then check with Learning Development, the Music lessons list, LAMDA lessons list, Counselling lists, DSL's secretary, Mrs Margaret Sturdy, Relevant School trip lists and BMU lists to ensure pupils are not in any of these sessions.

3.4 If the pupil is not with any of the above staff named in section 3.3, then the staff in Whiteladies that are available at the time will begin a search of the School grounds. In most instances the DSL will direct staff accordingly, but if she is unavailable, the Attendance Administrator and the School Nurse will contact the Deputy DSLs and in the meantime work with the member of staff on BMU duty to ensure that members of staff available at the time in Whiteladies are directed to the following areas:

- One member of staff to check Godfrey Brown Theatre and Toilets, Science Block Toilets. Then DT Block and Tom Savage Hall toilets and changing rooms. Then return to Whiteladies;
- One member of staff to check the toilet blocks in Main Block, Hillard and Perrin's Hall. Then return to Whiteladies;
- One member of staff to check Cobham Hall changing rooms and toilets, Alice Ottley toilets and changing rooms. Then return to Whiteladies;
- One member of staff to check Gordon House, including Toilets Blocks and Private Study area. Then return to Whiteladies;

In searching these areas staff will be walking across site and therefore checking these areas too and they should take with them their mobile phones and a school radio (walkie talkie) so that they can seek assistance as required.

3.4.1 A member of staff will then be instructed by the DSL or the DSL themselves will speak to the missing pupil's friends to try to ascertain any relevant information and get the missing pupil's mobile telephone number. The DSL, or the relevant Head of Section or Head of Year in consultation with the DSL, will then decide whether the telephone number should be called or a text sent via a friend in order to try to communicate with the missing pupil.

3.5 After 15 minutes, all staff involved in the search will meet back in Whiteladies School Office. If the search has been unsuccessful the DSL, (or her Deputy), the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Senior Deputy Head will be notified.

3.6 The DSL or a Deputy will brief the IT Department so that they can oversee the immediate retrieval of any CCTV footage that may assist us in locating the pupil.

3.7 The DSL or a Deputy will then liaise with the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Headmaster if the site search has failed to locate the pupil.

3.8 If there is a reason to believe the pupil has left the School (e.g. information provided by one of the missing pupil's friends), the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will make the decision to call the pupil's parents. If the parents cannot be contacted the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will try to contact any of the alternative contacts that the pupil's parents have provided the School with and the School may take the decision to seek advice from the Police.

3.9 If the parents are unable to locate or contact their child immediately, the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will advise them to contact the police.

#### **4. Missing Child Procedure (on a School trip):**

4.1 The member of staff in charge of the group from which the child goes missing will alert the members of staff accompanying the trip and/or other party leader.

4.2 The members of staff in charge of all the other groups will check no other pupils are missing and the Party Leader will gather the whole group together at a predetermined assembly point.

4.3 The Party Leader will inform the Emergency SLT Contact and Security at the venue. The Party Leader and Security will liaise and organise a thorough search for the missing pupil.

4.4 The Emergency SLT contact will inform the DSL or the member of staff who is responsible for DSL duties during the holidays (a rota is drawn up and distributed to key members of staff beforehand)

4.5 The DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will contact the missing pupil's parents. If the parents cannot be contacted the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will try to contact any of the alternative contacts that the pupil's parents have provided the School with and the School may take the decision to seek advice from the Police.

4.6 If the parents are unable to locate or contact their child immediately, the DSL, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), the Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster will advise them to contact the Police.

4.7 In the event of an emergency or that Senior Staff cannot be contacted, the party leader will need to decide when to contact parents and/or the Police or any other appropriate emergency service.

#### **5. Communicating Outcome:**

As soon as the missing child has been located, the DSL must be made aware and they will then ensure that parents and all staff dealing with the matter are also made aware.

#### **6. Reporting:**

6.1 Whether the incident occurs at School or on a trip, the member of staff directly involved will, once the pupil has been found, write a report detailing:

- The date and time when the pupil was reported as missing
- Which staff were present
- When and where the pupil was last seen
- What was taking place at the time

6.2 A copy of this report needs to be forwarded to the Director of Finance and Operations for inclusion in the Accident Book.

6.3 The Headmaster will inform the Chairman of Governors if appropriate.

6.4 Any resulting Child Protection issues must be referred to the DSL.

#### **7. Reintegration and Follow-up:**

The pupil will return to school when all agencies supporting the pupil and their family have been consulted and agree that it is in the best interests of the pupil to do so. A member of the Pastoral Team, normally the DSL or Deputy DSL, will oversee reintegration for the pupil, seek advice and guidance from any external agencies and liaise with the pupil's parents.

The member of staff overseeing reintegration will take time to speak to the pupil, on more than one occasion if required, in order to try to fully understand why they went missing and what the School can do to support the pupil. Such support could include, but is not limited to, offering sessions with the school counsellor, a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Children's social care. In some circumstances issuing a sanction may also be appropriate.

## **8. Staff Training:**

The Heads of Section and the DSL will remind staff at staff meetings of the procedures at the start of each academic year. The DSL and the HR Manager, Mrs Penny Anstey, are to ensure new staff are familiar with the Policy during induction. Detailed arrangements for the supervision of pupils and for action on a missing pupil are included in the Staff Handbook. Members of staff are reminded on a weekly basis about procedure for reporting missing children and particularly those who are on the Watch List.

## **9. Review:**

Mrs Sofia Nicholls, who is DSL and The Assistant Head (DSL), and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be responsible for the review of this policy annually and for evaluating the effectiveness of all procedures concerning supervision of pupils based on any incidents reported and in the light of any new legislation.

Sponsor – Assistant Head (Pastoral) and DSL

Created by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and DSL on 22 May 2016 and endorsed by the Chairman of Governors on 23 May 2016.

Reviewed, Amended and Endorsed: August 2016, August 2017, August 2018, August 2019 (no amendment required) and August 2020 (updated to use term 'The Attendance Administrator' rather than named personnel).

Reviewed: September 2021 (Senior Deputy Head), July 2022 (DSL), February, April and June 2023 (DSL), June 2024 (DSL), and September 2024 (Senior Deputy Head)