

Missing Pupil Policy



Westbury House School

September 2025

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1 **Aims**

- 1.1 This is the missing pupil policy of Westbury House School.
- 1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:
 - 1.2.1 to set out the School's policies and procedures in place to identify and respond to children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions
 - 1.2.2 to ensure that School staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing; and
 - 1.2.3 to actively promote the well-being of pupils.

2 **Scope and application**

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**).
- 2.2 This policy applies at all times when the pupil is, or is intended to be, in the care of the School.

3 **Regulatory framework**

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2 *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE, September 2025);
 - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.4 Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); and
 - 3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006.
- 3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
 - 3.2.1 **Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025) (KCSIE)**
 - 3.2.2 **Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, July 2018. Last Updated December 2023)**
 - 3.2.3 **Children missing education (DfE, September 2016. Last Updated September 2025)**
 - 3.2.4 **School attendance: guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE, May 2022. Last Updated August 2024).**
 - 3.2.5 **Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, May 2022. Last Updated August 2024)**
- 3.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
 - 3.3.1 safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
 - 3.3.2 risk assessment policy for pupil welfare.

4 **Publication and availability**

- 4.1 This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 4.2 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the school secretary during the School day.
- 4.3 This policy can be made available in large print if required.

5 **Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks**

- 5.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.
- 5.2 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Head	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	SLT	As required, and at least termly
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by the GDPR	School Secretary	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SLT	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Proprietor	Annually

6 **Procedures for pupil missing during the school day**

- 6.1 Anyone who suspects or believes that a pupil is missing during the School day should contact Reception immediately.
- 6.2 Reception will:
 - 6.2.1 check the child's timetable for that day
 - 6.2.2 check whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment

- 6.2.3 check the list of music lessons
- 6.2.4 contact the music department
- 6.2.5 contact the Library in case the pupil is there
- 6.2.6 contact the pupil's parent(s) or guardian(s)
- 6.3 If the pupil cannot be located following the above investigation, Reception will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (**DSL**).
- 6.4 The DSL will be responsible for carrying out further searches or enquiries, assisted by members of staff as requested.
- 6.5 As part of the initial search process, the pupil's friends and classmates will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.
- 6.6 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, staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts. Staff should consider contacting the parents in such circumstances.
- 6.7 If the pupil is not found after the initial search, the DSL will ring Reception to register the pupil as missing. The DSL will record any suggestions as to where the pupil might be based on information gained from speaking to staff and other pupils.
- 6.8 The DSL will contact the pupil's parents at this point and the situation must be reported to the School's Senior Management Team along with the relevant details. If the parents are abroad, there may need to be a delay in contacting them. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the DSL.
- 6.9 If the initial search is unsuccessful, the DSL will contact the police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate).
- 6.10 A decision will be taken in accordance with the School's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures as to whether the School should also contact children's social care.
- 7 Procedure for pupils missing during a school trip or during or following a journey**
 - 7.1 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:
 - 7.1.1 complete an immediate head count to ensure that all other pupils are present
 - 7.1.2 attempt to contact the pupil
 - 7.1.3 search the immediate vicinity
 - 7.1.4 check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey
 - 7.1.5 check with other pupils and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts
 - 7.1.6 contact the pupil's accommodation, if applicable
 - 7.1.7 contact the venue supervisor or the people that the pupil had visited, if applicable

7.1.8 contact hospitals and the police and the parents

7.1.9 notify the Head and/or the DSL.

7.2 A decision will be taken in accordance with the School's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures as to whether the School should also contact children's social care.

8 Information to be provided to the police

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

8.1.1 the pupil's name

8.1.2 the pupil's age

8.1.3 an up to date photograph if possible

8.1.4 the pupil's height, physical description and distinguishing marks, if any

8.1.5 any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have

8.1.6 the pupil's home address and telephone number

8.1.7 a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing

8.1.8 any relevant comments made by the pupil.

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

9 Training

9.1 The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

9.2 The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.

9.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

10 Risk assessment

10.1 Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

10.2 The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

10.3 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.

- 10.4 Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the SLT who have been properly trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the particular assessment.

11 Record keeping

- 11.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

- 11.2 The School keeps centrally a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil. The following information is included in the incident report:

11.2.1 the pupil's name

11.2.2 relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing) and whether the incident was a single occurrence or part of a repeating pattern

11.2.3 the action taken to find the pupil

11.2.4 whether the police or children's social care were involved

11.2.5 outcome or resolution of the incident

11.2.6 any reasons given by the pupil for being missing

11.2.7 any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident

11.2.8 a record of the staff involved.

- 11.3 A full written record of the incident will be kept on the pupil's file.

- 11.4 After an incident report is submitted, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the School will conduct a full review. Their review will examine:

11.4.1 how the incident happened

11.4.2 if the School's missing pupil policy was followed; and

11.4.3 what measures should be put in place to ensure that this incident is not repeated.

- 11.5 The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which explain how the School will use personal data about pupils and parents. The privacy notices are published on the School's website. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's data protection policy and information security policy.

12 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	January 2021
Date of last review of this policy	September 2025
Date for next review of this policy	Autumn 2026

Policy owner (SMT)	Head
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Proprietor