



# Missing Persons Policy

## Version control

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## **AIM**

The aim of this policy is to state the procedures to be followed by school staff in the event a pupil is not where they are expected to be and is suspected of being missing. The key priority is to safely locate the pupil. Staff are encouraged to use dynamic risk assessment alongside this policy together with the steps outlined below.

This policy applies to both Cranleigh School and Cranleigh Prep School with protocols below to reflect the specific operational needs and context of each school.

## **PROTOCOL FOR PUPILS AGED 13-18**

All pupils are required to remain in bounds at all times unless they have received permission from their Housemaster or Housemistress or following school arrangements such as for school trips or published permissions for visits to Cranleigh village. Day pupils may also leave bounds to return home according to the published permissions and they should always sign out before doing so. Houses undertake routine callovers during the day to monitor pupil presence.

### **Absence from callovers**

If a pupil is absent from a callover (or the evening check-in) staff should first seek to determine if there is a legitimate reason for the absence (e.g. they may be elsewhere on site at a school event; ill; absent with permission for a university, hospital or home visit; or away for some other approved purpose) and house notes should be checked to see if this is the case. If the reason for absence is not known by the Housemistress/ Housemaster or recorded (e.g. on iSAMS or by parental email) then the absence should be considered unauthorised. In the case of unauthorised absence, the following action should be taken and the pupil located.

### **First stage**

The House Staff on duty should check the boarding House to try and locate the pupil. They may enlist the help of senior pupils to undertake this search. If they are still unable to find the pupil, the Matron on duty and the Housemaster/Housemistress, or in their absence, the Deputy Housemaster/ Housemistress, should be made aware of the situation.

### **Second stage**

The Matron and/or Housemaster/Housemistress will assume responsibility for the search from this point. Records should be rechecked, including any absence lists and trip lists, and enquiries made of the Medical Centre to see if there is a legitimate reason for the absence. They may enlist the help of pupils to check areas such as TASC, Art & Design workshops, the school gym etc.

### **Third stage**

If these searches fail to locate the pupil, the Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head of Safeguarding must be informed immediately. The Housemistress/Housemaster may wish to conduct more extensive enquiries by contacting other Houses or other pupils and consider an all-staff email to raise the alarm. Parents or Guardians should also be contacted in case the pupil has gone home. Attempts should be made to contact the pupil by mobile phone/social media messaging and consideration should be given that pupils may have a different number to one school holds on record so close friends or family may be able to contact them more readily. Pupils may also have social media that is accessible to friends or family that has geolocation or mapping (e.g. Snap Maps) which could prove useful to the search. Following this it may become necessary to search the grounds or other locations in the vicinity of the School. Other possible contacts (e.g. girl/boyfriends) should be approached. The study area of the missing person should be searched for any clues as to the absence.

## **Fourth stage**

If the pupil has still not been located the Head should be informed and the Police contacted to initiate a missing persons' enquiry. The Housemaster / Housemistress or Deputy Head leading the search will need a record of the search procedures conducted to that point, including timings, and a description of the pupil given to police along with details of the last verified sighting of the pupil. Consideration should be given to using CCTV footage to aid with the search if it is available.

## **Follow-up and records**

Housemasters/Housemistresses should keep a record of the actions taken at each stage, along with timings. After the pupil is found they should subsequently record the incident on the individual's file on the Pastoral Module in whatever detail seems appropriate in the circumstances.

Housemistresses/Housemasters should always follow-up unauthorised absences and consideration should be given to additional pastoral support needed by the pupil and/or disciplinary procedures based on the judgement of the Housemistress/Housemaster in consultation with the Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Safeguarding.

## **PROTOCOL FOR PUPILS AGED 5-13**

### **Introduction**

There are regular registrations during the day. If a pupil is absent, there may be some satisfactory explanation, e.g. he/she may be ill; absent with permission, hospital or home visit, or away for some other approved purpose. In the case of unauthorised absence, the following action should be taken.

### **First stage**

The tutor/teacher should make preliminary enquiries with other pupils to discover whether any reason for the absence is known. These should be checked with the staff that are implicated. An enquiry should also be made of the Form Tutor, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Matron, the office staff and a check made of notices on the Common Room boards.

### **Second stage**

If the First Stage is not successful in locating the child, the Prep Head should be informed and all staff should be emailed, marked as urgent, and 'free' teachers should report to the CPS Office. More extensive enquiries should be made:

- Staff should ascertain if there is any particular cause for concern. For example, the child had troubles at home, had spoken of running away, etc.
- Parents or Guardians should also be contacted in case the pupil has gone home. If no answer is obtained, the School should leave a voicemail to explain the situation clearly and ask parents or guardians to call the CPS Office. It may be necessary to search the grounds, the premises (including toilets and Boarding House) or other locations in the vicinity of the School. Other possible contacts should be approached. The Senior School should be contacted, particularly if the pupil has an older brother or sister – housemasters/housemistresses, TASC and the Director of Operations.
- If the lost child is in **Key Stage 1**, entrance gates should be closed to prevent accidental exit and staff will search the School with due regard to the age of the missing child, who may be

less able to respond clearly. Pupils in Key Stage 1 will have been told to return to their Form Room if lost.

### **THIRD STAGE**

If none of these approaches is successful, the Police should quickly be alerted and formally asked to initiate a missing person's enquiry.

### **FOURTH STAGE**

When the person is found, it will be necessary to consider whether the absence is best considered as a disciplinary matter or dealt with in another manner. It may be appropriate to seek the advice of the School Doctor. The Prep Head should also be consulted.

### **RECORDS**

At each stage the Deputy Head (Pastoral) is recommended to keep a brief note of the action taken (and in his/her absence the Deputy Head, (Academic); he/she should subsequently record the incident in whatever detail seems appropriate to the circumstances with a brief note of the action taken at each stage. A copy of any notes should be sent to the Head's PA for inclusion on the pupil's file.