



## **Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation**

### **Missing Pupil Policy**

#### **1. Policy Aim**

- 1.1 To ensure the quickest and safest completion of locating any pupil missing or suspected of being missing.
- 1.2 The Foundation commits in this policy to observing the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate on any grounds.

#### **2. Policy Statement**

The welfare of all of the pupils at Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation is of paramount importance. Every adult who works or volunteers at the Foundation is aware that they have a responsibility for helping to keep all our pupils safe at all times.

#### **3 Relationship to Guidelines, Procedures, other Policies and Legal Requirements**

- 3.1 Every possible action will be taken where concern is caused over the fact that a pupil is or may be missing.
- 3.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with:
  - Safeguarding Policy;
  - Behaviour Policy;
  - Educational Visits Policy;
  - Attendance Policy.

#### **4 Registration**

- 4.1 At Durham School, pupils are registered on SIMS in every lesson, but the statutory registration points for morning and afternoon attendance, and "out-of-hours" times for boarders, are as follows:

Time	Who	Staff Responsible	Format
<b>Monday to Friday</b>			
07.45	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
08.30	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Roll Call
09.05	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Period 1 Registration
14.25	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Period 5 Registration
18.30	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
20.30	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
21.00–22.30	Boarders	SHM	Registration at lights-out (varies according to age of pupils)
<b>Saturday and Sunday</b>			
10.50	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
14.00	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
16.50	Boarders	SHM	House Roll Call
21.00–22.45	Boarders	SHM	Registration at lights-out (varies according to age of pupils)

During the week, a list of absentees is recorded on SIMS and is checked and updated throughout the day by the School Attendance Officer and SHMs. At weekends, House Staff maintain a paper register.

- 4.2** At Chorister School, pupils are registered on SIMS at the statutory registration points for morning and afternoon attendance, as well as “out-of-hours” time for boarders. These are at the following times:

Time	Who	Staff Responsible	Format
<b>Monday to Friday</b>			
07.00	Boarders	SHM	Register taken at breakfast
07.40	Choristers	SHM	Register taken on arrival at rehearsal
08.30	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Registration with Form Tutors
09.05	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Period 1 Registration
13.40	All pupils	Teaching Staff	Period 5 Registration
16.00	Boarders and day pupils staying for activities	SHM/SMT	Signing-in register for boarders and day pupils staying for prep and/or clubs
18.30	Boarders	SHM	Tea time register
20.00–20.45	Boarders	SHM	Registration at lights-out (varies according to age of pupils)
<b>Saturday and Sunday</b>			
07.40	Boarders	House Staff	Register taken at breakfast
08.00	Boarders	SHM	Signing in register
20.00–20.45	Boarders	SHM	Registration at lights-out (varies according to age of pupils)

During the week, a list of absentees is recorded on SIMS and is checked and updated throughout the day by the Admin Team. At weekends, House Staff maintain a paper register.

## **5. Contact Details**

**5.1** Contact details of parents/guardians are recorded in SIMS. Two sets of contact details are stored for each child wherever this is possible.

**5.2** At the start of each term, SHMs at Durham School should confirm that pupils can be contacted through Teams on their mobile phones. In line with our Safeguarding procedures, contacting pupils through Teams is preferable and staff should never store pupils' mobile phone numbers on their own devices.

## **6. Procedure**

A pupil may go missing in several scenarios, including:

- Failure to attend a roll call/registration;
- Failure to attend a lesson or other commitment without permission;
- Failure to report back in to the Duty Staff after leave-out;
- Missing from their room at night;
- Reporting by other pupils that 'X' has disappeared from the site or an off-site excursion.

In the last point, it may well be appropriate to contact the Police immediately if you consider the pupil to be at risk or if the other pupils are alarmed about the circumstances. In making such a decision, aspects such as the age and vulnerability of the pupil should be taken into account.

### **6.1 Missing Pupils During the School Day**

A pupil who has been registered as present at School but is subsequently found to be absent for no known reason is deemed to be a missing pupil. Once it has been ascertained that a pupil is missing, the procedure below should be followed.

In Durham School, in the absence of the SHM (Senior Housemaster/mistress), the DHM (Deputy Housemaster/mistress), Resident Tutor or member of staff on duty should carry out relevant procedures.

DS = Durham School; CS = Chorister School

- a. Staff should let the SHM/Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) know as soon as possible that there is a missing pupil. The SHM/Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will then coordinate the search.
- b. The SHM/Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will then contact teachers and pupils who have taught or been with the missing pupil prior to their disappearance to determine at what point in the day the pupil was last seen.

- c. If this initial search fails to locate the pupil, the SHM will inform the Deputy Head Pastoral to (DS) / the Deputy Head will (CS) arrange for a larger team of adults to search the immediate area.
- d. Attempts will be made to contact the pupil via Teams or their mobile phone.
- e. If the pupil is not found within 30 minutes, the Principal (DS) / Head Mistress (CS) will be informed and a fire drill/whole-school evacuation will be considered to identify if the pupil is on site.
- f. If the pupil is still not located, the SHM/Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will contact the pupil's parents to explain what has happened and the procedure that has been followed. Following this, the Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) may contact the Police at which point Police procedure will be followed.
- g. If the pupil's home is within walking distance, the Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will consider sending a member of staff to walk the route.
- h. The Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will inform the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and will cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- i. If stage (e) has been reached, and the pupil is subsequently located, this will be communicated to teaching and support staff by email or telephone.
- j. Others who may need to be informed depending on the outcome of searches are the Chair of Governors, Ofsted and the School Insurers.
- k. If the pupil is located but has been injured, a report will be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE if required.

## **6.2 Reporting Unexplained Absence of Boarders Out of the School Day**

- a. If a pupil is absent from Roll Call or Prep for any unexplained reason, the member of staff on duty will contact the SHM. The SHM will then coordinate the search for the missing pupil while the duty tutor will continue to supervise the other boarders. If the SHM cannot find the pupil, they will be deemed a missing pupil.
- b. If a pupil fails to check in at the appropriate time and, after a certain 'period of grace' (no more than 30 minutes) still cannot be located, that pupil will be deemed a missing pupil.
- c. If a pupil is found not to be in their room after lights out and cannot be located in the House, they are deemed to be a missing pupil.
- d. If a pupil is not able to be located during a fire drill/whole-school evacuation and cannot be located in the House (and the alarm is found to be false), then the pupil will be deemed to be a missing pupil.

## **6.3 Missing Boarders Out of the School Day**

Once a boarder is deemed to be missing, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. Check the sign-out book to see if the pupil has identified a departure time or destination.
- b. Check whether clothes/belongings have been taken.
- c. The SHM will then speak to pupils and friends of the missing pupil who may have been with the pupil prior to their disappearance to determine at what

point the pupil was last seen. The SHM should emphasise that it is too serious a concern to withhold information and reassure other pupils that the welfare and safety of the missing pupil is the priority.

- d. Attempt to contact the pupil by mobile phone and Teams; friends may have a different contact number or social media connection to the one in house records. If a reply is obtained, remain calm and sympathetic, never angry.

If the pupil cannot be found.

- e. Phone any friends' houses to which it is suspected the boarder may have gone.
- f. Search grounds or drive to a likely venue where it is possible they may be; this should be done promptly. If any search is undertaken, other staff, or responsible Sixth Form pupils may be used to help. One member of staff should act as a liaison point in the House at the end of a telephone number known to the other helpers. This member of staff should access the pupil's details on SIMS, and remain in contact with colleagues searching for the pupil by mobile phone.
- g. The SHM should telephone parents and/or guardians to explain the situation and to determine whether they are aware of anything pertinent.
- h. The Principal, or in his absence, the Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Headmistress, or in her absence, the Deputy Head (CS), must be informed at this stage.
- i. If routine checks amount to nothing, the Police should be contacted.
- j. The Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will contact the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and will co-operate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- k. Others who may need to be informed depending on the outcome of searches are the Chair of Governors, Ofsted and the School Insurers.
- l. If the pupil is located but has been injured, a report will be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE if required.

#### **6.4 Procedure to be Followed if a Pupil Goes Missing on a Trip or Visit**

If a pupil is found to be missing during a school trip or visit, the following procedure should be followed:

- a. An immediate head count should be carried out in order to ensure that all other pupils are present.
- b. Confirm with the members of the group when and where the missing pupil was last seen.
- c. Attempt to contact the pupil by mobile phone or Teams; friends may have a different contact number or social media connection to the one in school records.
- d. A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity.
- e. The Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) should be informed by telephone.

- f. The remaining pupils should be taken back to transport or, on a residential trip, the accommodation. If the trip is local, pupils should be taken back to school, whilst a member of staff remains 'on location'.
- g. If the trip is to an enclosed area (e.g., theatre, shopping centre), the venue manager should be contacted to arrange a search.
- h. The Deputy Head Pastoral will inform the Principal (DS) / Deputy Head will inform the Head Mistress (CS) and then will contact the pupil's parents as soon as possible and explain what has happened and the procedures that have been followed. Following this the Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will contact the Police, and the School will act in accordance with Police advice.
- i. The Deputy Head Pastoral (DS) / Deputy Head (CS) will inform the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- j. The School will co-operate with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- k. Others who may need to be informed depending on the outcome of searches are the Chair of Governors, Ofsted and the School Insurers.
- l. If the pupil is located but has been injured, a report will be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE if required.

## **7. Records and Review**

Full records of any missing pupil incident will be kept on CPOMS and, following the incident, the Deputy Head Pastoral will conduct a review of the effectiveness of procedures. Where appropriate, statements from individuals involved in a missing pupil incident will be stored with details of the incident on CPOMS.

## **8. Oversight**

This policy is overseen by the Education Committee of the Governing Body. It will be reviewed at least once in every three-year period, and also if a missing pupil incident occurs and prompts an extraordinary review.

**Policy written and reviewed by**  
**Jennifer M Burns, Deputy Head [Pastoral]**  
**August 2015**  
**June 2018**  
**June 2021**

**Policy reviewed by**  
**Harriet Thompson, Deputy Head Pastoral**  
**November 2021**  
**13 June 2024**  
**29 January 2026**