



## Child Missing Education and Attendance Policy

<b>Person responsible</b>	Pastoral Assistant Head
<b>Last update</b>	October 2018
<b>Frequency of Review</b>	Annual
<b>Date of last review by Governors</b>	November 2017
<b>Date of next review by Governors</b>	December 2018

## **Introduction**

**This policy applies to all children, including those in EYFS.**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

The safety and welfare of its children is the prime responsibility of the school and all at Bute House Preparatory School should do their utmost to ensure this. Making sure that all children are present, accounted for and safe is therefore a vital role of the staff at the school.

It may be very stressful and distressing if a child goes missing. It is important for the staff to stay calm and act in a rational and logical way. It is also important to act promptly. In the vast majority of cases, there will be nothing sinister involved, but as school staff, we have to be prepared for the worst.

**NB – A child going missing from school or from home is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow this procedure for dealing with children who go missing and refer to the Safeguarding Policy, if appropriate.**

## **Procedures to Ensure All Pupils are Present and Attendance Registers**

Parents are responsible for making sure their children come to and are delivered to the school safely.

An Attendance Register is completed electronically every morning (by 8.35am) in line with the standard set of codes provided by the DfE. Afternoon registration takes place at 1pm (LS), 1.30pm (MS) and 2pm (US).

The Attendance Register shows whether a child is:

present; • absent; • attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the 'proprietor' and supervised by a person approved by the proprietor or head, and including work experience or sporting activity); • unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it); • taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the Head or a person acting on the Head's behalf; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs); • taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established). A pupil may be marked in the attendance register as unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances where the school site, or part of it, is closed. If a child is absent for an unknown reason, that reason may be added later. If the reason is not established this is an unauthorised absence.

An additional Attendance Register is kept electronically as a back-up copy, not less than once a month.

Additional copies of the Attendance Registers are retained for three years after the end of that current school year.

## **Procedures for Lateness**

Any pupil arriving after morning registration at 8.35am will be marked late. If a child is not present for morning registration and no reason is known, the School Administrator will attempt to contact the parents or guardians of the child to find out the reason for the absence.

Some children in Year 6 will travel to school unaccompanied. Parents are asked to make sure the School is aware, if this is the case, and the School will follow up on any non-appearance in the same way.

- Lateness will be tracked by Phase Leaders, on a half termly basis, and a letter will be sent from the Pastoral Assistant Head, if persistent lateness occurs, or a pattern of lateness develops. The Head will write to parents if no improvement is seen.
- Staff record concerns about persistent lateness on the CPOMS system which is in place. Patterns can therefore be easily identified and followed up with the parents.
- If a child arrives after 9.30am without reason, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

## **Procedures in The Case of a Child Missing During the School Day**

1. If a member of staff is concerned that a child is missing, they should firstly check with the school office to see if there is any explanation for the absence.
2. The staff in the school office should then take measures to check whether the child is elsewhere in the school, either physically or by telephone. Staff should check specific rooms and toilet facilities. This should take a matter of minutes (up to five minutes).
3. If there are still concerns, then a member of SLT should be alerted and the child's primary and secondary contact should be phoned for further checks. It is at this point, if the child is still missing, that the police should be contacted by a member of SLT (by calling 101) to report a missing child. It should be noted that, in most cases, there is an explanation for a missing child, but it is still better to contact the police earlier rather than later. A missing child report form must be filled in by the appropriate member of staff and subsequently signed by a member of SLT.

As well as these formal measures, staff are expected to know their classes well enough to check if pupils are missing or unaccounted for. They should do informal checks on the class during the day, particularly if they are moving around, leaving the building or going on transport. If they are concerned, they should contact the School Administrator.

## **Procedures For Handing Over Children at the End of the School Day**

In the Lower School (Reception – EYFS, and Years 1 and 2), the children are handed over directly to the parent or carer, at the end of the school day. Once the child is handed over, they are the responsibility of the parent/carer. Staff will not hand a child over or let them go unless a known adult is collecting. Children are always fully supervised until they are collected.

The procedure above applies to all children in Years 3-6, where the children are dismissed in school, by their Form Teacher or Twin, to the parent/carer. A member of staff is on the main door to ensure no child goes astray.

### **Procedures for an Uncollected Child**

If a child is not collected at the end of the school day, the child will be handed over to the duty member of SLT and they will look after the child and make efforts to contact one of the parents or carers. No child may be left unsupervised.

If a child is not collected, staff will call the primary contact, followed by the secondary contact, before calling the 'Emergency contact' (usually a friend, neighbour or relative) that has been nominated by the parents, and arrange for the child to be collected. If contact cannot be made with the child's parents/carer or the emergency contact by 6pm, the School will contact Hammersmith & Fulham Family Services. The child will remain, fully supervised, in the care of staff until collected.

### **Procedures In the Case of a Child Missing During a Trip**

Particular care is taken on trips as it is when children may be at the greatest risk of going missing. Staff leading trips should assess the risk of children going missing and set appropriate staffing and control measures in place. This may include limiting the activities available, supervising visits to the toilets and regular head-counts of the groups. The Risk Assessment drawn up by the member of staff leading the outing or trip must contain details of the control measures to prevent children going missing and the procedures to be followed in the case of a child going missing.

If a child does go missing on a school outing or trip, the staff must act quickly and sensibly and follow this procedure:

1. Taking account of the number of staff on the outing, a member of staff must go and start looking, visiting the most recent places and checking toilets and facilities.
2. If this proves unsuccessful, then the help of the police (if available) or staff at the site being visited or, for example, London Transport should be sought.
3. After an initial search, the Group Leader must contact the police for assistance and then ask one of the staff to call the school and brief the DSL (or Deputy DSL) of the situation. If needed, extra staff from school may be asked to go to join the group.
4. Once the police and school have been informed, the parents should be called by the Group Leader. If this is not practicable due, for example, to poor signal in the case of the use of a mobile phone, the DSL, Deputy DSL, Deputy or Head will inform the parents. As a guide, if a child has not been found after five minutes of them being noticed as missing, then the police should be contacted.

### **Follow-up**

Where a child has gone missing at school or on an outing, a review of procedures must take place to reduce the chance of a similar situation happening again. The issue should also be

referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy, to ensure that any concern is recorded.

### **Children Missing from Education on Repeat Occasions**

Child absences are monitored by the School Administrator and the Pastoral Leadership Team. On a half-termly basis, Phase Leaders will flag up absences with each Form Teacher. The Pastoral Leadership Team will monitor attendance records in each phase.

- Pupils with an attendance record between 90 and 95% will be monitored and tracked on the 'Repeated Absence' spreadsheet which is monitored by the Pastoral Assistant Head.
- Any pupil with an attendance record lower than 90% requires an investigation and this may result in a letter to parents from the Pastoral Assistant Head and the Head will be informed.
- Once the parents have been contacted, the issue will be discussed. If appropriate, the issue would be discussed with the child too.
- The Head will become involved if repeated absences are noted on three, or more occasions.
- The School is aware of its responsibility to inform the local authority (Hammersmith and Fulham) of any child who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

### **Children Missing Education for Specific Known Reasons**

In the case of illness or other unusual circumstances, provision will be made for re-entry strategies to school. These children may display some school phobia, if there has been little or no interaction with the school during diagnosis and treatment. Staff should be aware the child may experience stress and feelings of being overwhelmed. They may wonder how they will be treated when they return to school, with some expecting special attention and others wishing to be treated the same as their peers. The children who have had little interaction with peers since diagnosis may feel sad, anxious, and have lowered self-esteem.

The Form Teacher, Phase Leader and Pastoral Assistant Head will all be involved in the re-entry process and will agree on a suitable arrangement, depending on the circumstances, to ensure that the child has a smooth transition back into the school environment.

### **Children Leaving the School Roll**

In accordance with the law, Bute House Preparatory School has an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register and all children are placed on both registers.

The school will inform the local authority (Hammersmith and Fulham) of any child who is going to be deleted from the Admissions Register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school ;
- have left the school outside of normal exit points (at Bute House this would be the end of Year 6) or mid-academic year.
- have been certified by a medical professional as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the Head does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or, have been permanently excluded.

It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

**Annex A**  
**Bute House Preparatory School**  
**Missing Child Report Form**

Date of incident: ..... Time of incident: .....

Pupil Name: ..... Form: .....

Pupil DOB: .....

Members of staff involved: .....

Outline of events leading to the child going missing: .....

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Outline of actions taken: .....

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Outcomes: .....

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Description of any injury (ies) sustained:

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Date parent/carer informed of incident: ..... Time: .....

By whom informed: .....

Outline of parent/carer response: .....

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Signature of staff completing report: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Head/Deputy Head: ..... Date: .....

Description of any follow-up

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This report must be sent to the Head and Bursar.