



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

Missing Child Procedures – Senior School

Policy Number: 1.2

Date: 1 September 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership and Management Teams of Sidcot School fully recognise their responsibilities to safeguard and protect the children in their care. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy sets out the procedure when a student has been discovered to be missing in the Senior School.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to the Senior School. A separate policy applies to the Junior School.

2.2 This policy is available on the School website, on the intranet and upon request in hard copy form free of charge. It may be made available in hard copy form upon request.

3. Procedure

3.1 Procedure for a student missing during the day

Immediately:

On finding that a student is missing, the staff responsible should:

- Send an email to lessonabsence@sidcot.org.uk
- Ask the Student's friends for any information they may have on the Student's whereabouts;
- Where possible, ask a Student's friend to try and contact the missing person using his/her mobile phone
- Send a message to the student via TEAMS asking them to make contact

If the missing Student is not located following the above process, there will be a search of the school buildings and school grounds by the Attendance Lead and other available staff.

3.2 After ½ hour (whether the above searches and actions are complete or not):

Phone through to the Head's Executive Assistant/Reception who will alert the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the member of SMT on duty (per the rota on Firefly which also details mobile phone number)

3.3 After 1 hour (or earlier if deemed appropriate):

- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the Head
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head in the absence of the Deputy Head (Pastoral) should ring the police and inform parents/guardians

3.4 After 2 hours (or earlier if deemed appropriate):

- The Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or member of SMT on Duty should inform the Chair of Governors or the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding that a student is missing.

3.5 Procedure for a boarder missing after school hours or during the night

Immediately:

On finding that a student is missing, the staff responsible should:

- Check with other boarders and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing boarder's whereabouts;
- Attempt to contact the Student using his / her mobile phone;
- Conduct an initial search of the House and immediate surroundings of the House using available staff and senior students.

3.6 After ½ hour (whether the above searches and actions are complete or not):

- Contact the Member of SMT on duty to inform them that the boarder is missing – the rota and emergency contacts are available on the rota on Firefly;
- Contact other available members of staff and office holders on site to conduct an initial search of the School site.

3.7 After 1 hour (or earlier if deemed appropriate):

- Where appropriate, contact the parents to inform them that the Student is missing. If the student's parents are abroad, this step may need to be delayed. All decisions on contact with parents should be made by the member of SMT on duty, as appropriate. The Head and Deputy Head (Pastoral) shall be informed if available;
- The member of SMT on duty, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head shall contact the Police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate).

4. Procedure for a Student missing during or following a journey

If a student is missing from a journey or has not arrived at the School following a journey, the member of staff in charge will:

- Attempt to contact the Student;
- Check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey;
- Check with other students and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing student's whereabouts;
- Contact the venue or the people that the student visited, if applicable; and contact hospitals and the Police.

5. When the Student is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved

The Head, parents/guardian, Deputy Head (Pastoral), SMT on Duty and any other members of staff involved in the search shall be informed.

- The Police will be informed, if they have been involved.
- The Governors will be informed, if they have been involved and / or the incident was concerning from a child protection perspective.

6. Follow up on return of boarder / day student to school

- The Houseparent (in respect of a boarding student) or the Head of Year (day student) or a member of staff chosen by the Student, will speak sensitively with the Student and decide on support and/or counselling. The Pastoral Team shall be notified if necessary.
- The Head and Deputy Head (Pastoral) to be kept informed of student welfare on their return.
- Follow up meeting with Houseparent or Head of Year, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding Lead to review student progress.
- A full report of the incident should be placed on the Student's file.

7. Safeguarding and Child Protection matters

7.1 A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow safeguarding procedures in cases where children go missing and there is a concern, particularly when children go missing on repeat occasions. They should act to identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse, risk of being drawn into terrorism, or sexual exploitation.

7.2 The procedures for notifying the Local Authority where appropriate, are outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

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:

- The Student's name
- The Student's age
- An up to date photograph if possible
- The Student's height and physical description
- Any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the Student may have
- The Student's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians
- A description of the clothing the Student is thought to be wearing.

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. Procedure during times of remote learning and school closure

In the event of a period of remote learning for the whole school closure, registers will continue to be taken twice daily. The school will follow up in the event of an unexpected absence.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), and the Board of Governors at the Annual Safeguarding Review or sooner if legislation or guidance dictates,

11. Related Policies

- 1.1 Critical Incident Management Policy.
- 1.2a Missing Child – Junior School Policy
- 1.4 Uncollected Child – Junior School Policy
- 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

12. Relevant Regulation and Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, September 2023
- The ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools – Commentary on the Regulations September 2022
- The Prevent Duty – Advice for Schools – June 2015

13. Document Change History

Date of change	Detail significant changes and any new legislation / guidance taken into account
18.06.2016 – adoption by the Board	Revision of procedures to reflect that SMT member of duty may be the most appropriate contact when a child is missing. Reference to Prevent Duty
08.10.2016	Reviewed and adopted by Board. References updated.
07.10.2017	Reviewed and adopted by Board. References updated.
06.10.2018	Reviewed and adopted by Board in accordance with revised Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance.
05.10.2019	Nomenclature amended Minor tweaks to procedure Reviewed and updated by Board of Governors at the Annual Safeguarding Review
20.01.2020	Paragraph 3.4 updated • The Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or member of SMT on Duty should inform the Chair of Governors <u>or the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding</u> that a student is missing
10.10.2020	Paragraph inserted regarding arrangements during period of remote learning.

	Reviewed and adopted by Board.
9.10.2021	Paragraph 3.1 inserted an action to contact the student by TEAMS. Reviewed and adopted by Board
1.9.2022	3.1 Procedure - changed to update in light of new attendance role and lesson absence email address 6 Follow up on return to school – Updates in light of new Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding Lead 9 Procedures during remote learning – removed reference to Covid 19
08.10.2022	Reviewed and approved by Board as part of Annual Safeguarding Review
14/08/2023	Reviewed, no major changes.
10/10/2023	Approved by Board as part of Annual Safeguarding Review
1 September 2024	Reviewed, no major changes.
1 September 2025	Reviewed, no major changes