



Missing Child Policy

HIGHFIELD SCHOOL MISSING OR UNCOLLECTED CHILD POLICY

What to do if a Child at Highfield goes Missing or is Uncollected

There are regular checks throughout the day:

1. **Breakfast:** All Boarders are checked downstairs
2. **8.20am and 1.55pm Registration:** Form Tutors in the morning and subject teachers in the afternoon check everyone is present. On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, children are registered by Year Group, before Games/Matches and 'Keys' Activities.
3. **Lessons:** If a member of a Form is unexpectedly absent, the member of staff should check Schoolbase and the Atrium Reception to see whether the child is elsewhere:- e.g. in the Health Centre, with the Matrons, having a Music Lesson or at a Learning Support Lesson. (In the case of a senior form, a 'messenger' can do this.)

Music or other Lessons: If a child does not arrive for a Music, LAMDA, Learning Support or OT Lesson, the teacher should go straight to the lesson the child would otherwise be in. (A messenger may be sent if it is a group lesson).

All teachers are expected to keep a register at the start of all academic lessons, and must raise the alert if a child is absent without explanation.

4. **Games:** Children who are "off games" should be in 6VL/Library having been registered by a staff member against an emailed list sent to SMT and all members of the Games panel prior to the games session.
5. **6.00pm or 6.20pm Boarders' Tea:** Everyone is ticked in at Tea – the person in charge of tea is responsible for ensuring everyone is accounted for.
6. **8.00-8.30pm:** Children are accounted for with the shower list.
7. **Bedtime:** Boarding and Lights Out Staff check all beds are full.
8. **Late Night:** Boarding Staff do absentee and fire list check before 11.00pm.

Lists to Check in Atrium

1. Learning Support Timetable
2. Music Timetable
3. LAMDA Timetable
4. Absentee List

Please also check the Weekly Diary and Signing out Sheet in Staff Room.

Procedure if a Child is Absent without Permission during the School day (8.00am – 6.30pm)

1. Inform the Deputy Head. The Deputy Head will inform the Headmaster. Be calm and thorough.
2. The Deputy Head will meet with the Matrons, Assistant Teachers and available Teaching Assistants, who will look throughout the school buildings, including showers, dormitories, lavatories and Chapel.
 - The search starts as soon as possible.
 - The Deputy Head assigns specific areas to be searched by each member of staff, in accordance with the School's Search Checklist (copies of this checklist are kept in the Deputy Head's Office and the Boarding Office).
 - It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head to ensure adequate numbers of staff are engaged in the search. NOTE: the urgency of the search may be heightened if the missing child is assessed to be at heightened 'risk of flight', or increased danger.
 - All staff engaged in the search will communicate using the walkie-talkies designated for this purpose – they are stored at the Atrium Reception.
3. The Deputy Head will alert The Estate and Facilities Manager, who will organise a search of the grounds. The Deputy Head will retain communication with members of the Estates Team using the School's walkie-talkies, communicating on channel 1.
4. If, after half an hour (or sooner if there is assessed to be a heightened level of risk), the child is not found, the Deputy Head or Headmaster will telephone the parents or guardians.
5. **If there is no answer, so we are unable to verify if the child is at home, then the Headmaster or Deputy Head will contact the Police. To contact Sussex Police at Midhurst phone 01730 812301. Sussex Police will liaise with the Police in Surrey and Hampshire, if necessary.**
6. Use the Duty Mobile Telephone (07774 500020), or a known listed number, to liaise with the school, home and Police if the search goes beyond the school grounds.

Procedure if a Child is Absent without Permission during the evening (6.30pm – 9.00pm)

1. Inform the Head of Boarding. The Head of Boarding will inform the member of SMT on duty. Be calm and thorough.
2. The Head of Boarding will meet with the Matrons, Assistant Teachers and the duty Boarding and Day Staff, who will look throughout the school buildings, including showers, dormitories, lavatories and Chapel.
 - The search starts as soon as possible.
 - The Head of Boarding assigns specific areas to be searched by each member of staff, in accordance with the School's Search Checklist (copies of this checklist are kept in the Deputy Head's Office and the Boarding Office).
 - It is the responsibility of the Head of Boarding to ensure adequate numbers of staff are engaged in the search. NOTE: the urgency of the search may be heightened if the missing child is assessed to be at heightened 'risk of flight', or increased danger.
3. All staff engaged in the search will communicate using the Boarding Staff Emergency WhatsApp group.

4. The Head of Boarding will organise a search of the grounds, engaging the help of agreed members of staff who live on site, all of whom have access to the Boarding Staff Emergency WhatsApp group. Members of staff on site will initially be alerted by telephone. At this stage the Head of Boarding will inform the Headmaster and / or Deputy Head.

Contact Details for staff living on site:

Baker, Andy	07789 363937
Barry, Hilary	01428 727637 / 07738 728393
Bryant, Michael	01428 724249 / 07769 718891
Burton-Russell, Ruth	07739 378506
Dunn, Richard & Emma	01420 587305 / 07813 120238
Evitt, Phillip	01428 725540
Mühlemann, John	07736 450080
Walker, Alex	07816 591652
Wilkes, Ian & Kerri	01428 724004 / 07909 521091

5. If, after half an hour (or sooner if there is assessed to be a heightened level of risk), the child is not found, the Deputy Head or Headmaster will telephone the parents or guardians.
6. **If there is no answer, so we are unable to verify if the child is at home, then the Headmaster or Deputy Head will contact the Police. To contact Sussex Police at Midhurst phone 01730 812301. Sussex Police will liaise with the Police in Surrey and Hampshire, if necessary.**
7. Use the Duty Mobile Telephone (07774 500020), or a known listed number, to liaise with the school, home and Police if the search goes beyond the school grounds.

Procedure if a Child is Absent without Permission overnight (8.30pm – 8.00am)

1. Inform the Head of Boarding, who will decide whether to initiate the Chain of Communication (see below)
2. The Boarding Staff will meet in the Boarding office and a search will be organised, to include a look throughout the school buildings, including showers, dormitories, lavatories and Chapel. The Head of Boarding will assign an appropriate number of staff to remain in the Boarding Houses.
 - The search starts as soon as possible.
 - The Head of Boarding assigns specific areas to be searched by each member of staff, in accordance with the School's Search Checklist (copies of this checklist are kept in the Deputy Head's Office and the Boarding Office).
 - It is the responsibility of the Head of Boarding to ensure adequate numbers of staff are engaged in the search. NOTE: the urgency of the search may be heightened if the missing child is assessed to be at heightened 'risk of flight', or increased danger.
3. All staff engaged in the search will communicate using the Boarding Staff Emergency WhatsApp group.
4. The Head of Boarding will contact the Headmaster and / or Deputy Head.
5. A decision whether to call the police will be made at the earliest opportunity and taking into account known individual risk factors, and the Head of Boarding, Headmaster and Deputy Head will work closely together to initiate the Crisis Management Plan.

6. **Unless in exceptional circumstances, if a child is not located following a thorough search of the school buildings, the police will be called before starting the search of the school grounds.**
7. The Head of Boarding will organise a search of the grounds, engaging the help of agreed members of staff who live on site, all of whom have access to the Boarding Staff Emergency WhatsApp group. At this stage the Head of Boarding will inform the Headmaster and / or Deputy Head.

Procedure to follow at Highfield in the Event of a Parent Failing to Collect a Child at the Appointed Time

At the end of the school day there is a Signing-Out rota involving Heads of Year and the Deputy Head who sign children out at the Pick Up and Drop Off Point. If the Day Child awaiting collection has not been collected within 10 minutes of the normal collection time, they should wait with this member of staff at the Pick Up and Drop Off Point. At this point the following procedure is followed. The member of staff should check with the child to determine whether they have a sibling at Brookham, if this is the case, the Brookham School Office should be contacted on 01428 722005 to check whether that child has already been collected. The member of Staff attempts to contact the person due to collect the child on their mobile number. (All numbers are available from Reception, the School Office or the Headmaster's PA). If there is no reply, other contact numbers for that person in the first instance should be used. Then, try other numbers on emergency contact form, held by the School Reception and Office until contact has been made and an arrangement made for the collection of the child. Any Day Pupil awaiting collection after the expected time should wait in the Library. The Deputy Head and Atrium Receptionist will be informed of their presence, so they are able to check that they are safely collected. In their absence, the SMT member leading the evening Duty Team will take this responsibility

Training

All staff receive this policy and an explanation of these procedures as part of their Staff Induction.

A 'Missing Child Practice Drill' is carried out twice a year, once in the Autumn Term and once more in either the Spring or Summer Term, led by the Deputy Head or Head of Boarding.

Notes from these practice drills are made by the Deputy Head or Head of Boarding and retained in the Deputy Head's Office.

DG/PGSE June 2013

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Reviewed and updated by PGSE/SB/CS/SC and at SMT meeting

Reviewed and updated September 2017 CS

Reviewed and updated September 2019 AK

Reviewed and updated September 2021 ADJB