

# Missing pupil policy

Action	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Reviewed	P Vanni	September 2016	✓
Reviewed	Education Committee	27 September 2016	✓
Approved	Board of Governors	8 December 2016	✓

To be published on the following:	
Staff Portal	✓
School website	✓



## 1 Policy statement

**Scope:** This policy applies to staff (including *volunteers*), pupils and parents at St Paul's Girls' School (**School**). This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding (child protection) policy and Supervision of Pupils policy. Where applicable, this policy is in accordance with guidance outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education* and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (amended 2016) referred to as 'The Regulations' in this policy.

**Publication:** This policy is provided to all staff via the Staff Portal. Parents may request a copy from the School or review the policy on the School website. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

**Policy aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- promote the safety of pupils at all times
- ensure that School staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing during the school day
- set out procedures for liaising with the local authority in accordance with The Regulations and in order to promote effective information sharing for the wellbeing of pupils.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being absent without authorisation or explanation.

## 2 Responsibility

The Governors delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the School to the High Mistress. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the School by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the School's Supervision of Pupils policy, the staff duty rota and any other directions of the High Mistress and Senior Management Team. Schools are under a general duty to supervise pupils to the standard of a prudent or careful parent.

As required, the Director of Pastoral Care liaises with the local authority in accordance with the Regulations. Further guidance on the Regulations can be found in the DfE's statutory guidance for local authorities *Children missing education (September 2016 available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children Missing Education - statutory guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf))*

The procedures outlined in this policy relating to registering pupils and pupils missing during the school day may be adapted as necessary and at the discretion of the High Mistress, Director of School, Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Senior School.

## 3 Registering pupils

**Pupils in MIV to VI (year 7 to year 11)** are registered twice a day; at 8.30 am by tutors and at 1.20 pm (after lunch) by the period 5 teacher. Pupils who are late to school must sign in at reception and if a pupil is authorised to leave school during the school day, they are required to sign out at reception.

**Pupils in the Senior school (years 12 and 13)** also register twice a day. Morning registration is conducted via tutors as usual. Afternoon registration is taken via one of the following methods:

- If a pupil has a taught lesson in period 5 they are registered by the teacher as usual
- If a pupil does not have a taught lesson but is in school, they are registered during period 5 by senior school staff (the Senior School Administrator, Director, or Deputy director).

Senior pupils are authorised to leave the school site during the day when they have no taught lessons. Pupils in VIII (year 13) with no afternoon lessons may leave the school for the day after the morning session. They are required to sign out (and indicate non-return). Other pupils may leave temporarily

but must register their whereabouts during period 5 with senior school staff and sign in on their return.

#### **4 Procedure for pupils in the lower and middle school (MIV – VI) missing from registration** *(see appendix 1 for summary)*.

If the tutor (for morning registration) or the period 5 teacher (for afternoon registration) marks the pupil as absent, the School Administrator will initiate the following **initial search**. The below will be activated if a pre-authorised absence has not been recorded in the School's management information system. The School Administrator:

- checks the 'call in' list of reported absences for that day and the sign in / out sheets at reception.
  - rings the Medical Room to check whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment
  - checks the pupil's timetable for that day and visits the class they should be in. If the pupil is absent, the School Administrator will ask the teacher and the pupil's classmates if the whereabouts of the pupil are known. The School Administrator will validate any information received second hand by either contacting the parents or the pupil's form tutor.
  - checks the list of music lessons and rings the music department in case the pupil is there and also checks with the Library.
  - contacts the form tutor or the head of year (if available) for any information.
- 4.1 If the pupil cannot be found following the above investigation, the School Administrator will attempt to contact the pupil's parents to verify whether an absence should have been reported to the school.
- 4.2 If the parent confirms that the child should be at school, or if the parent is unavailable, the School Administrator will contact the Head of Year immediately. If the Head of Year is unavailable, the Director of School is contacted. The Head of Year will initiate an **extensive search** of the School site with the assistance of caretakers and administrative staff as required. The missing pupil's fellow classmates and friends will be asked if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts and the Head of Year will gather any information.
- 4.3 If the pupil is not found after the extensive search, the Director of School will be informed immediately (if he is not already aware). In his absence, the Director of Pastoral Care is informed.
- 4.4 At this point, the Director of School (or in his absence, the Director of Pastoral Care) will contact parents again if available. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for the Head of Year to make contact (eg where there is a known pastoral concern which is being managed by the Head of Year). The Director of School or the Director of Pastoral Care will be kept informed. The school will work with the parents to try to locate the pupil.
- 4.5 If the pupil's whereabouts cannot be ascertained, the Director of School (or in his absence the Director of Pastoral Care) will discuss a course of action with the parents if available and will determine whether the police should be contacted. The police will be provided with the information listed in section 7, as well as any other information reasonably requested. Where appropriate, the local social services team will also be contacted and will be given details of the missing pupil.

#### **5 Procedure for pupils in the Senior School (VII and VIII) missing from registration** *(see appendix 2 for summary)*

Arrangements for girls in the Senior school seek to reflect the age and maturity of the pupils while providing sufficient safeguards to ensure that the School meets its welfare and pastoral

responsibilities. If a Senior girl is registered as absent at morning registration with no pre-authorized absence the following procedures apply:

- 5.1 The Senior School Administrator checks the 'call in' list of reported absences for that day and the sign in / out sheets, then contacts any missing pupils and instructs them to report by a given time. If a pupil does not make contact by the given time, the Senior School Administrator will:
- contact the medical centre, Library and the music department to check whether the pupil is there
  - attempt to contact the pupil again, and attempt to contact parents to check whether an absence should have been reported
  - visit the lesson that the pupil should be in or if the pupil had a scheduled free period, check with other Senior girls to obtain any information about the possible whereabouts of the pupil.
- 5.2 If the parent confirms that the pupil should be at school, or is unavailable, the Senior School Administrator informs the Deputy Director or the Director of Senior School, who will initiate an extensive search of the school with the assistance of caretakers and administrative staff as required. If the pupil cannot be found, the Director of Senior School must be informed if he is not already aware. In his absence, the Director of School is notified.
- 5.3 At this point, the Director of Senior School (or in his absence, the Director of School) will contact parents again if available. Alternatively, it may be appropriate for the Deputy Director of Senior School to make contact (eg where there is a known pastoral concern being managed by the Deputy Director of Senior School) but the Director of Senior School will be kept informed. The school will work with the parents to try to locate the pupil.
- 5.4 If the pupil's whereabouts cannot be ascertained, the Director of Senior School (or in his absence, the Director of School) will discuss a course of action with the parents if available and will determine whether the police should be contacted. The police will be provided with the information listed in section 7, as well as any other information reasonably requested.

Senior pupils absent in the afternoon session are investigated by the Senior School Administrator, staff and senior tutors as appropriate. Pupils with unauthorised absences or who have not followed signing in / out procedures in the afternoon may face appropriate sanction.

## **6 Procedure for pupils missing during or following a school trip or visit**

- 6.1 The School's Educational Visits policy and detailed procedures for staff organising visits provide a framework for managing school visits, taking into account the School's safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities. Appropriate staff supervising ratios are agreed by the Director of Pastoral Care and supervising arrangements will be relevant to the locality, age of girls and type of activity. The following procedures apply if a pupil goes missing on a school trip or visit or has not arrived at the School following a journey.

The member of staff in charge will:

- attempt to contact the pupil
  - organise for accompanying staff / volunteers to search the immediate vicinity and/or the group's recent locations
  - check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey
  - check with other pupils and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.
- 6.2 If the pupil is not found, the member of staff in charge will contact the Director of School (or in his absence, the Director of Pastoral Care). The Director of School will contact the pupil's

parents. If the trip is taking place during school holidays, the designated senior staff contact for the trip will be contacted. The Director of School / senior staff contact will agree with the member of staff in charge of the trip the procedure for contacting the pupil's parents and if necessary, the local police (see section 7).

## **7 Information to be provided to the Police**

7.1 When the School contacts the Police, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil such as "I'm going to run away".

7.2 The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the School should be necessary.

7.3 The School will liaise with social services in accordance with local inter-agency procedures.

## **8 Once a pupil has been found**

If an extensive search of the School premises (or the surrounding area on a school trip) has been initiated due to a pupil going missing, the Head of Year will meet with the pupil and consider the following:

- whether the absence was deliberate or if the pupil has broken school rules in which case sanctions may apply
- whether the pupil is distressed about some element of school life and what action may need to be taken to resolve the situation
- whether there are safeguarding concerns, in which case the matter will be referred to the Designated Person for child protection (the Director of Pastoral Care) or in her absence, the deputy designated members of staff (the Director of School or the Director of Senior School).

## **9 Persistent non attendance (including lateness) and pupils of compulsory school age<sup>1</sup> leaving the School.**

9.1 If a pupil does not attend school without good reason, or goes missing from school on repeat occasions and/or is late on repeat occasions, the pupil's Head of Year will raise the matter with the Director of Pastoral Care or the Director of Senior School. The Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Senior School will take the necessary steps to determine whether there are any safeguarding concerns that should be addressed, meeting with the pupil and parents as appropriate. In certain circumstances, a referral will be made to children's social services and/or the tri-borough ACE team, and in accordance with the School's Safeguarding (child protection) policy.

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<sup>1</sup> A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

- 9.2 The Director of Pastoral Care will notify the local authority's ACE team (see local authority contact below) when a pupil of compulsory school age does not attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, or fails to return to school within 10 school days after a granted leave of absence. In the event that a pupil has not attended school for 10 days or more and no explanation has been given, the pupil will not be removed from the School's admissions register until both the School and the local authority have jointly failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is. In any event, a pupil will not be removed from the register before 20 school days have elapsed and only if the School and the local authority have no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or other unavoidable cause.
- 9.3 The School is also required to notify the local authority's Admissions and School Planning team if a pupil of compulsory school age is to be removed from the School's admissions register at a non standard transition point under any of the 15 grounds listed in The Regulations (part 8), which include a pupil leaving to start at another school or the pupil being withdrawn from the school by the parents. The School will also make reasonable enquiries if a child of compulsory school age has been added to the admissions register but fails to start school as a new pupil on an agreed date and will notify the local authority. Further guidance on these duties and the 15 grounds for notification can be found in the DfE's statutory guidance for local authorities *Children missing education (September 2016, available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children Missing Education - statutory guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)*. The School also notifies the local authority of new pupils of compulsory school age.

The local authority has put in place arrangements for the School to provide this information and the pupil data required to the Admissions and School Place Planning team.

## **10 Review**

This policy is reviewed annually, or as and when new statutory guidance to schools may apply, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review, the Director of School will take into account any records of incidents that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the School and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

## **11 Records of incidents**

The Director of Pastoral Care will keep a full written record of any missing pupil incident involving the police and/or social services, and/or the local authority pupil attendance services.

## **12 Contacts**

### **Tri-borough team (for transfer of data regarding starters/leavers):**

Admissions and School Place Planning, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX.  
Telephone number: 020 7745 6432 / 6433 / 6434

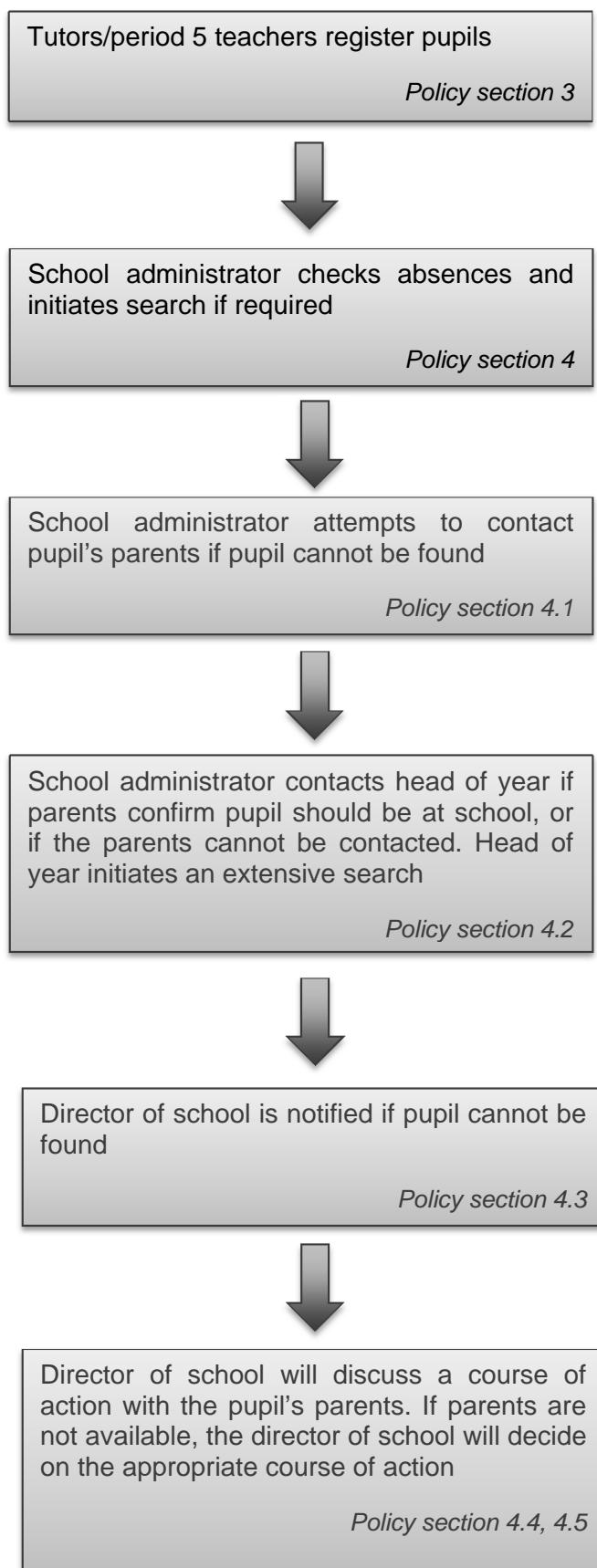
### **ACE Team Green Zone (for pupils missing education)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX  
Telephone number: 0207 745 6615 (children missing education) / 0207 745 6614 (exclusion)

### **Availability of this policy**

A copy of this policy may be downloaded from our website <http://www.spgs.org/school-policies> or is available on request from the school office, St Paul's Girls' School, Brook Green, London, W6 7BS (tel: 0207 603 2288). This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Flow chart for staff: procedures for pupils missing from registration (MIV – VI)



**Flow chart for staff: procedures for pupils missing from morning registration  
(Senior school)**