



Missing Child Policy

(including protocol for dealing with children not collected at the end of the school day/activity)

Whole school		WEBSITE
Statutory?	Yes	
Reviewed	January 2025	

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all pupils at King's Ely is of paramount importance and all staff appreciate that they have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To this end, steps have been taken to ensure that the school premises and surrounding site are as secure as possible and that pupils are aware of what the boundaries are and where they can and cannot go.

To prevent a child going missing, all children are registered twice a day; at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The registers are completed online and any unauthorised absences are followed up by the School Office staff, who initiate an appropriate search for children who have failed to register before contacting parents. The School recognises that a child missing education, particularly repeatedly, may be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. The School monitors attendance of its pupils closely and identify patterns of absence as outlined in the King's Ely Attendance and Authorised Absence Policy.

King's Ely Senior and King's Ely International boarding students are also registered after breakfast and after tea in their Boarding Houses. There are restrictions on which students can leave the house after prep and where they can go; all students must sign out and specify a return time. The tutor on duty oversees the signing In and Out sheets. The Housemaster/mistress or the Resident Tutor (duty night dependent) will check all students are in house or their dorms, before the house is locked. KEP boarding students are registered twice in the evening and are also registered again first thing in the morning. Should a child in KES, KEI or KEP be found to be missing, parents would be informed once a thorough search has been conducted and certainly within 45 minutes.

King's Ely Acremont children are always counted before going out to play and again when they are lining up to come back indoors. A member of staff will always be at the end of the line to ensure that no children are left outside. In King's Ely Acremont Nursery, paper registers are taken each day as well as electronic ones, and times of arrival and departure are recorded. Should a child in EYFS or King's Ely Acremont be found to be missing, parents would be informed immediately.

In the case of an off-site visit, it is the responsibility of the staff taking the trip to ensure that a regular register is taken or head count made. This will depend on the nature of the trip, the mode of transport used and the location of the trip.

In accordance with KCSIE guidance the School will aim to hold, where reasonably possible, more than one emergency contact for each pupil.

This policy applies to all pupils, including EYFS, and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, the Educational Visits Policy, the Attendance and Unauthorised Absence Policy, the Section's Supervision Policy and the Crisis Management Policy.

A. MISSING DAY PUPILS

Actions To Be Followed By Staff If A Child Goes Missing From The School

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions:

- Ascertain whether the child concerned has another commitment, e.g. music lesson, external appointment - check with the school office and with the child's class/House;
- Ask all of the adults and children present in the missing child's class/House if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child. Attempts will also be made to contact the child by use of mobile phone (in the case of KEA pupils, the Head of section will be informed and will contact the child's parents);
- The child's friends will be asked whether or not they have any information, including about the child's state of mind;
- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present;
- Occupy the other children in their classroom/House; on no account will any children be left unsupervised at any time;
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adult(s) to search the immediate premises/grounds. In particular, where younger children are concerned, carefully check all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide;
- If appropriate, check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit;
- Inform the relevant Head of section.

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ask the Head of section to ring the child's parents/guardian (within 45 minutes in the case of missing KEP, KES and KEI pupils and this will have already been done in the case of KEA pupils, where parents are notified immediately) and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. If possible, ask them to come to the school;
- The Head of section should also contact the police with key information (please see [Appendix Two](#));
- The Head of section should also arrange for staff to widen the search to the rest of the school premises and grounds;
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff should set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Customer Service Centre Cambridgeshire Children (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 5203 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724, or referral email: referralcentre.children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk);
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care;
- Inform the Chair of Governors;
- The Insurers would be informed, if applicable;
- If the child is injured, where applicable, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE;
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

If A Child Insists On Leaving The Premises:

- If a child insists on leaving the premises with the knowledge of the Staff and cannot be persuaded by them to stay on site, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If it is thought that the child may be a danger to him/herself or others, then reasonable force to return the child to the School premises should be used (as per the King's Ely Use of Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils Policy);
- If appropriate, and enough Staff are available to enable one to leave the premises with a mobile phone, they will follow and observe as to where the child is going;
- The relevant Head of section should be informed and may decide the child is unsafe and therefore will call the police and/or the Customer Service Centre - Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 5203 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724);
- A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record.

B. MISSING BOARDING PUPILS

Key points are all registrations that occur within boarding houses; this will be:

- first thing in the morning, either prior to or immediately after breakfast;
- KES and KEI lunchtime, between 1.30pm and 2.00pm;
- KEP boarders are day pupils at lunchtime and are registered at school;
- KEP weekend lunchtime registrations are in House;
- After tea, before first prep;
- Bedtimes (when year groups are preparing for bed is another key time for ascertaining whereabouts).

If a boarder fails to register, a number of procedures begin:

If a boarder is unregistered in the morning:

1. Ascertain if student has a prior commitment (for example, early music lesson, trip, asked to meet with a member of staff, has gone to Health and Wellbeing Centre) or is prone to forgetfulness;

If boarder is still not accounted for.

2. Ask room-mate or friend in house to try and ring/text student to ascertain whereabouts. Get them to check social media.
3. Check dorm for any missing belongings e.g. holdall, clothes etc. If belongings are missing, go straight to point 7. then 8. and 6.
4. Inform Resident tutor and ask if they have any information.
5. Room-mate and fellow boarders should be questioned. Speak to child's tutor for any additional information. (FROM THIS STAGE ONWARDS KEEP A LOG OF ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES)
6. Call house for full registration and ask collectively for any information. If child still not found/located.....

7. AT THIS STAGE INFORM ALL RELEVANT SENIOR STAFF: HEAD OF SECTION AND PRINCIPAL, DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD, DIRECTOR OF BOARDING. KEEP THEM UPDATED.
8. Head of Section instructs staff to keep eyes open for sighting and asks available staff to widen search of grounds and informs parent/guardian/guardian agency (**within 45 minutes**) and the police.
9. Child's friends from other houses should be questioned with their HsM/tutor present.
10. Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Customer Service Centre - Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 5203 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724).
11. Principal informs Chair of Governors
12. Full cooperation with all agencies including police.

If a boarder is at school in the morning but fails to register at lunchtime.

1. Check registration for student's next lesson. If she/he is registered then follow up as to why they failed to register earlier.
2. If she/he isn't registered, contact the Health and Wellbeing Centre to check if the child has gone there. If they are not at the Health and Wellbeing Centre...
3. Check dorm for missing belongings...if holdall and clothes etc have gone go straight to 6.
4. Go to the lesson for a visual check.
5. Ask classmates if they know anything; get friends to try and contact student on phone or via text, check social media...question room-mates and fellow boarders (FROM THIS STAGE ONWARDS KEEP A LOG OF ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES)
6. AT THIS STAGE INFORM ALL RELEVANT SENIOR STAFF: HEAD OF SECTION AND PRINCIPAL, DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD, DIRECTOR OF BOARDING. KEEP THEM UPDATED.
7. Head of Section instructs staff to look out for missing child and may widen search of grounds and informs parent/guardian/guardian agency (within 45 minutes) and the police.
8. Child's friends questioned with their HsM/tutor present.
9. Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Customer Service Centre - Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 5203 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724).
10. Principal informs Chair of Governors.
11. Full cooperation with all agencies including police.

Failure to register at evening roll call or absent for bed-time or lock-up.

1. Check Signing In/Out sheets and check duty log.

2. If evening roll call, speak to the assembled pupils to ask if they know of the whereabouts of the missing pupil.
3. Check dorm for missing belongings. If belongings are missing, go to 11.
4. Get friends to ring/text/check social media.
5. Ring other boarding houses.
6. If bed-time or lock-up check dorm for missing belongings. If missing, go to 11.
7. Get friends to ring/text.
8. Get friends to check social media
9. Ring other boarding houses
10. Initiate roll call to speak to whole house and ask for information.
11. AT THIS STAGE INFORM ALL RELEVANT SENIOR STAFF: HEAD OF SECTION AND PRINCIPAL, DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD, DIRECTOR OF BOARDING (who will come in to school if at all possible).
12. Head of Section informs parent/guardian/guardian agency (within 45 minutes) and the police.
13. Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Customer Service Centre - Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 1362 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724).
14. Principal informs Chair of Governors
15. Full cooperation with all agencies including police.

C. IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate, additional head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present;
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity;
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search of the wider area;
- Ask friends to try and ring/text student to ascertain whereabouts;
- Speak to all pupils and ask for information;
- In the absence of information, contact the Police and any other relevant agencies such as Coastguard, Mountain Rescue;
- Inform the relevant Head of Section, the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead by mobile phone;
- Ask the Head of Section to ring the child's parents/guardian and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school (as appropriate);
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Customer Service Centre – Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 1362 (or the Emergency Duty Team outside of office hours on 01733 234724);

- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care;
- Inform the Chair of Governors;
- If appropriate, Ofsted would be informed;
- The Insurers would be informed, if appropriate;
- If the child is injured, where applicable, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE;
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

D. ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to and take care of the child;
- Speak to the other children (particularly in the case of Early Years children) to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing;
- The Head of Section will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident;
- The Principal will initiate a full investigation (if appropriate, involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board and other agencies);
- Media queries should be referred to the Principal;
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements;
- The report should be detailed, covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing and also any lessons for the future.

E. PUPIL NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

It is the parents'/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the pupil is collected by a responsible person. In the case of children in King's Ely Acremont and EYFS, they may only be collected from school by their parents or a named person who the parents have informed the school will be collecting the child that day. In King's Ely Acremont Nursery, parents are encouraged to bring in any adult who may be picking up the child, in order that staff may identify them. However, if this isn't possible, a password system is in operation. The school must be notified immediately it becomes apparent that the person collecting the child may be late.

King's Ely agrees to care for a pupil who has not been collected from school, until such a time as he/she has been collected by a parent/guardian, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care, and/or the Police, in order to maintain the child's safety.

Where children are not collected on time a concern is raised on My Concern by the member of staff on duty as a record of incidents where parents/guardians do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the King's Ely Safeguarding (including Child Protection) Policy.

If a child is not collected at the end of the school day or approved activity, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian or designated emergency contact. During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

In the case of children in King's Ely Acremont and EYFS, if a child is not collected, they will move to the Owls after-school club if parents have been contacted and are delayed. If parents or other emergency contact are not in school by 6:30pm, children will remain at school with two members of staff until the parent arrives or alternative arrangements are made by Cambridgeshire Social Care Team.

Children in King's Ely Prep will be taken to supper with Priory Boarders at 5.30pm if their parents were expected by 5.20pm. Once 6pm arrives, any parent expected at 5.20pm who has not arrived will be contacted. Should contact prove to be problematic, an emergency contact will be called.

In the case of a pupil not being collected and no contact being made within 45 minutes of the usual collection time, the relevant Head of section will ring the **Customer Service Centre - Social Care (Office hours Mon-Fri) on 0345 045 5203** and request a discussion with the Duty Social Worker for Children's Services, to discuss the concerns and seek advice. This will allow the Social Care Team to be made aware of the possibility that they may need to make arrangements for the alternative care of the child. For information which may need to be passed on, please see [Appendix One](#)

Social Care will give advice and make appropriate checks. However, King's Ely will continue to be responsible for trying to contact the parent/guardian/emergency contact and to keep Social Care updated about the situation.

If there are any concerns about the welfare of the parent/guardian, Social Care may ask the local Police to visit the home address; please note that the Police cannot themselves provide a place of safety for a child.

If attempts to contact a parent/guardian are still unsuccessful, school and Social Care will jointly take responsibility for arranging for the child to be transported to the Social Care team (or other appropriate venue) who will arrange a place of safety (this could include arrangements for the child to stay within the boarding provision at King's Ely). Social Care will notify the school of the child's placement and provide contact details as appropriate. It will be the intention to return the child to the parents'/guardian at the earliest opportunity.

It should be noted that Social Care offices close at 5:20pm on Monday – Thursday and at 4:25pm on Friday. Outside of these hours, the **Emergency Duty Team should be contacted on 01733 234724**.

The school will make a full written report of the incident and any call which results in action being taken by Social Care/Police will be followed up by a Referral Form to Children's Social Care, according to advice given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We at King's Ely undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains in our care.

Children Transported To/From School By School Mini Bus

Older children, with the prior agreement of their parent/guardian, make their own way home from the bus stop. In the case of younger children, the driver will always ensure that the child is handed over at the stop to the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is not there to meet the child, the driver will wait a short while for the parent/guardian to arrive, before contacting Vectare, the School's transport management partner. Vectare will continue to attempt to contact the parent / guardian, as well as notifying the School, to ensure the relevant Section DDSL or the KE DSL (who are contactable outside of office hours and who have details of the parents/guardians/ emergency contact for all children using the bus route) is made aware. The Section DDSL or the KE DSL will attempt to make contact with the parents/guardians/emergency contact. Should the relevant Section DDSL or the KE DSL be unable to contact the parents/guardians/emergency contact, the driver will bring the child back to King's Ely and the relevant Section DDSL or the KE DSL will contact the relevant Head of Section, who will initiate the procedure to be followed when a day pupil is not collected on time (above).

APPENDIX ONE

List of information which may be required by Contact Centre/Social Care in the event of a child being referred as not having been collected:

- **Child's details:**
 - Name
 - Date of birth
 - Address
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Religion
 - First language
 - Communication needs/SEN
 - Behavioural needs
 - Medical needs
 - Dietary requirements

- **Brief outline of incident**

- **Name, role and contact details of referrer**

- **Parent/carer/emergency contact details:** name/address(es)/contact telephone numbers

- **Any current/previous child protection concerns**

- **Any previous incidents of child not being collected**

APPENDIX TWO

List of information which may be required by the police:

- **Child's details:**
 - Name
 - Date of birth
 - Address
 - Gender
 - First language
 - Communication needs/SEN
 - Behavioural needs
 - Medical needs

- **Name, role and contact details of referrer**

- **Parent/carer/emergency contact details:** name/address(es)/contact telephone numbers

- Time child last seen

- Where child last seen

- Any other relevant information (i.e. where child may be heading; factors which may be influencing child's behavior)