



# MISSING PUPIL POLICY

*Reviewed and updated autumn 2025 | Next review autumn 2026*

## Introduction

St Nicholas' School is committed to the well-being and safety of all our pupils and ensuring that their whereabouts are known at all times. For this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being absent without authorisation or explanation.

This document is reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or as events, legislation or procedural change requires. In line with the School's Health and Safety Policy it is important that the safety and well-being of each individual pupil is ensured. It is the responsibility of all staff (and older pupils) to ensure that the School buildings and sites are always safe and secure. External doors must be kept closed and locked (where applicable).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Attendance Policy.

## Infants

All outdoor play areas must be secured before pupils enter the playground.

Teachers should keep regular account of the pupils in their care; counting pupils, when leaving and arriving at an activity, is vital.

## Procedure for Infant Pupils Lost at School

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for it is important that the teacher retraces their movements and informs the Head of Infants that a pupil is potentially missing.
- 2) Should the pupil not be found at this stage, the Head of Infants must lead the search of Branksomewood indoor and outside areas. They must remember to look in all small spaces, cupboards and toilets, checking each room and then informing the Head of Infants which rooms have been checked.
- 3) If the pupil remains unaccounted for, the DSL and Head or, if not on site, another member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) must be informed and a search of the grounds coordinated with members of staff working in pairs.
- 4) If a pupil is missing for half an hour, the Head of Infants should inform the parents of the pupil and the local Police of the situation. Parents and police would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far. Keeping a current photograph of pupils is important and will enable the Police and other services to have a clear description of the pupil.
- 5) Whilst waiting for parents and Police to arrive, if not already informed, the Head and other members of SMT will be contacted by the Head of Infants and given details of the search so far.

- 6) If the pupil has still not been found, staff should continue to search the School and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 7) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by the Head of Infants and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 8) Other staff/parents who came to Branksomewood around the time the pupil went missing may have initial information and should be approached.
- 9) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 10) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.

## **Procedure Infants– Pupil Lost on a Trip or Visit away from School**

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for, it is important that you retrace your movements and inform the member of staff in charge of the trip that a pupil is potentially missing.
- 2) Should the pupil not be found at this stage, the member of staff in charge of the trip must lead the search of the immediate area.
- 3) At this point, the offsite facility/location staff must also be informed so that they can follow their set procedure for searching for a missing pupil.
- 4) If the pupil remains unaccounted for the Head or, if not available, another member of SMT must be informed.
- 5) The member of staff in charge of the trip must liaise with the facility/location manager in order to inform the Police.
- 6) The Head of Infants should inform the parents of the pupil of the situation. Parents would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far.
- 7) Whilst waiting for parents and Police to arrive, if not already informed, the Head and other members of SMT will be contacted by the Head of Infants and given details of the search so far.
- 8) The Head, or other member of SMT, will drive to the offsite facility/location to continue with the search and will provide a photograph of the missing pupil.
- 9) The other pupils will return to School as soon as practical.
- 10) If the pupil has still not been found, continue to search the facility and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the Agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 11) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by the Head of Infants and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 12) Refer to Strategy in the Event of a Disaster for useful advice.
- 13) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 14) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.

## **Juniors**

### **Procedure for Years 1- 6 – Pupil Lost at School**

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for it is important that staff retrace their movements and inform the Head/Deputy Head of Juniors that a pupil is potentially missing.
- 2) If the pupil remains unaccounted for, check with friends/classmates, peri teachers and the School Office.

- 3) Should the pupil not be found at this stage the Head of Juniors must lead the search of the classroom and buildings. Staff must remember to look in all small spaces, cupboards and toilets, checking each room and then informing the Head of Juniors which rooms have been checked.
- 4) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, the Head will be informed and the fire alarm will be sounded, giving the opportunity to register pupils, and check buildings and the School site.
- 5) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, the Head of Juniors will coordinate a further search of the School and Grounds with members of staff working in pairs.
- 6) The Head of Juniors should inform the parents of the pupil and the local Police of the situation. Parents and Police would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far.
- 7) Whilst waiting for parents and Police to arrive, if not already informed, the Head and other members of SMT will be contacted by the Head/Deputy Head of Juniors and given details of the search so far.
- 8) Pictures of pupils are stored on the School's iSAMS database and should be printed off, to enable the Police and other services to have a clear description of the pupil. Update photographs annually.
- 9) If the pupil has still not been found, continue to search the School and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 10) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by the Head of Juniors and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 11) Other staff/parents who came to School around the time the pupil went missing may have initial information and should be approached.
- 12) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 13) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.

### **Procedure for Juniors – Pupil Lost on a Trip or Visit away from School**

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for, it is important that teachers retrace their movements and inform the member of staff in charge of the trip that a pupil is potentially missing.
- 2) Should the pupil not be found at this stage, the member of staff in charge of the trip must lead the search of the immediate area.
- 3) At this point the offsite facility/location staff must also be informed so that they can follow their set procedure for searching for a missing pupil.
- 4) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, the Head of Junior/Headmistress or, if not available, another member of SMT must be informed.
- 5) The member of staff in charge of the trip must liaise with the facility/location manager in order to inform the Police.
- 6) The Head of Juniors/Head should inform the parents of the pupil of the situation. Parents would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far.
- 7) Whilst waiting for parents and Police to arrive, if not already informed, the Head and other members of SMT will be contacted by the Head of Juniors and given details of the search so far.
- 8) The Head or other members of SMT will drive to the offsite facility/location to continue with the search and will provide a photograph of the missing pupil. This can be sent via email if the offsite location is at some distance.
- 9) The other pupils will return to School as soon as practical.
- 10) If the pupil has still not been found, continue to search the facility/location and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 11) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by the Head of Juniors and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 12) Refer to Strategy in the Event of a Disaster for useful advice.

- 13) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 14) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.

## **SENIOR SCHOOL**

### **Procedure for Senior – Pupil Lost at School**

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for, it is important that staff check the following areas and use iSAMS to alert key staff members of the missing pupil before reporting to a member of SMT that the pupil is potentially missing. The pupil might be:
  - with another member of staff
  - absent from School
  - signed out for an appointment
  - at a Curriculum Support or a peri lesson
  - at the School office
- 2) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, check with friends/classmates who may know their whereabouts.
- 3) Should the pupil not be found at this stage then a member of SMT must lead the search of the classroom and buildings. Staff must remember to look in all rooms, including changing rooms, toilets, cupboards and small spaces, checking each room and then informing the SMT which rooms have been checked.
- 4) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for ring their mobile phone. You will have to ask their friends for the mobile number. On occasions, it might be better to ask a friend to ring or text the missing pupil.
- 5) If the pupil remains unaccounted for, the Head or if unavailable, the member of SMT deputising for her, must be informed.
- 6) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, sound the fire alarm, register pupils and check buildings and site.
- 7) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, SMT will coordinate a further search of the School and Grounds with members of staff working in pairs.
- 8) The Head or Director of Pastoral Care should inform the parents of the pupil and the local Police of the situation. Parents and Police would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far.
- 9) Pictures of pupils are stored on the School's iSAMS database and should be printed off, to enable the Police and other services to have a clear description of the pupil.
- 10) If the pupil has still not been found, continue to search the School and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 11) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by SMT and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 12) Other staff/parents who came to School around the time the pupil went missing may have initial information and should be approached.
- 13) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 14) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.

## Procedure for Seniors - Lost on a Trip or Visit away from School

- 1) If a pupil cannot be accounted for it is important that staff retrace their movements and inform the member of staff in charge of the trip that a pupil is potentially missing.
- 2) Should the pupil not be found at this stage, the member of staff in charge of the trip must lead the search of the immediate area.
- 3) If the pupil still remains unaccounted for, check with their friends and, if applicable, then ring their mobile phone. If you do not have their number, then ask their friends for the correct number to ring. On occasions, it might be better to ask a friend to ring or text the missing pupil.
- 4) At this point the offsite facility/location staff must also be informed so that they can follow their set procedure for searching for a missing pupil.
- 5) If the pupil remains unaccounted for, the Head, the DSL or a member of SMT must be informed.
- 6) The member of staff in charge of the trip must liaise with the facility/location manager in order to inform the Police.
- 7) The Head/DSL should inform the parents/guardian of the pupil of the situation. Parents/guardians would be asked to meet at the School and be given up to date details of the search so far.
- 8) The Head/DSL or a member of SMT will drive to the offsite facility/location if nearby to continue with the search and will provide a photograph of the missing pupil. This can be sent via email if the offsite location is at some distance.
- 9) The other pupils will return to School as soon as practical.
- 10) If the pupil has still not been found, continue to search the facility/location and surrounding area, and keep providing feedback to the agencies involved as to what is happening, until the pupil is found.
- 11) The key stages of the incident must be recorded by SMT and statements taken from the staff involved. An enquiry will initially be held, and disciplinary action may result from the findings.
- 12) Any enquiries from representatives of the press should be directed to the Head. No comment should be given by any other person.
- 13) Once the pupil has been found, a full investigation will take place and all information recorded, and a full account of the findings given to those involved.