Ealing Independent College

Missing Child Policy

This policy applies to all students in the college

Reviewed: August 2024
Next Review: July 2025

Contents

Procedures

The welfare of students is paramount. The college endeavours to ensure that no student goes missing and has measures in place to minimise the likelihood of this happening and take the necessary action, should the situation arise.

- Formal registration is taken in the morning at 8.40am and at 2.00pm for compulsory age students.
- The staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the day and are aware of the location of the students in their care at all times. Registration is taken in each lesson.
- When on excursions outside the college premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the college's Health & Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.

The above measures ensure that situations where a student goes missing are very limited. These are:

- Where a student wanders off on an off-site visit
- Where a student goes out/ leaves the College without a reason
- Where a student is taken from the college site by an unapproved adult

The college has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am if a compulsory aged student has not arrived in college and the reason for absence is not known. This should ensure that staff become aware at the earliest opportunity of any student who may have gone missing on the way to college. In these circumstances, this policy will be followed.

College policies relating to health and safety and welfare, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring. However, should a child become lost, the following action will be taken:

Lost at college

All compulsory school age GCSE students are registered at 8.40 and 14.00 each day. A list of students absent from these registration sessions will be extracted from ISAMs by the Office. The college office will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible. Registers are also taken lesson by lesson.

All tutors will keep their own register of students' attendance and enter absent, late and present students electronically on ISAMS. Absence will be monitored by the college office. A list of unauthorised absences (and late students) will be followed up appropriately (please refer to the Absence File, kept by the Office Manager). Form tutors will have a key role in this. Decisions will be taken at the meeting as to how unauthorised absence and lateness is to be tackled for individual students.

If a compulsory school age GCSE student cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure must be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the student (from ISAMs) and their description. The Principal will consider calling a fire drill to see if the student who is not accounted for arrives at the roll call point.

Lost whilst off-site (including on sports fixtures)

If a student is lost on an outing, the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a roll call/headcount.

1. A member of staff (or the whole group if appropriate) should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management/security services of the organisation being visited and the College office to let them know the situation.
3. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
4. If the child is not found after fifteen minutes the police will be called and the College will alert the parents.
5. Staff will cooperate with the police and take any action as directed by them.

Pupil removed from college premises by unapproved adult

No child is allowed to leave the college site with an adult other than a parent without permission being received from a parent either by telephone or email. This rule must be rigorously enforced. In cases where a parent is legally denied access to their child all staff must be informed in writing of the circumstances together with a photo of the child and, if possible, the parent. If a child is seen (or believed) to be taken from the college site by an unapproved adult, the police and parents will be immediately informed.

Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing include:

- Information to staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Requirement for all visitors to register on arrival with the office, present evidence of identity on their first visit and obtain a visitor's badge
- Boundary security regularly checked by the Principal
- Supervision of children relevant to their age – including duty teams at break and lunchtime
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue and the nature of the activity being undertaken
- Rigorous risk assessments for trips

Following up an incident

When the situation has been resolved the Principal and SMT will review the reasons for it happening. This will include:

- Reviewing the incident with the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Assessing the effectiveness of risk assessment procedures
- Taking written statements from and interviewing staff involved
- Collecting information from any other relevant adult witnesses, including officials from the venue where a child has gone missing off-site
- Discussion, as appropriate with students
- Informing Bellevue Head Office to discuss the review and agree any further action
- If the incident requires reporting to Ofsted, in respect of RIDDOR or any other official body, such action will be taken
- The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.

The Vice-Principal will issue advice to staff and students and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again.