

SUPERVISION – MISSING STUDENTS POLICY

Date of Policy	February 2019
Approved by Principal	February 2019
Next Review Date	August 2019
Lead for Review	Deputy Head Pastoral

This policy is consistent with:

The legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of students as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002, DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC), DfE guidance Children missing in Education 2016 and Children missing from Home and Care Procedures (Kent Safeguarding Children Board 2017).

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Policy Links

This Missing Student Policy links to the following Policies that can be accessed on the CATS Canterbury Intranet and Shackleton:

- Attendance
- Anti - Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Equality and Diversity
- Physical Restraint
- Medical Care
- First Aid
- Substance Misuse
- Educational visits
- E-safety
- Visitors and Staff Guests
- Safer Recruitment
- Rewards and Sanctions
- Confidentiality
- Pastoral Principles, Welfare and Practice
- Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Purpose of these Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to develop robust responses to young people who run away or go missing from our care. The reasons for their absence/s are often varied and complex. Young

people who go missing may place themselves and others at risk and each missing episode is potentially serious.

When a young person goes missing or runs away they are vulnerable and at risk, particularly of sexual exploitation, involvement with gangs or radicalisation. Every “missing” episode should attract proper attention from the professionals involved, who must collaborate to ensure a consistent and coherent response is offered to the child/young person on his/her return:

- To reduce the incidence of all young people going missing and the risks associated with young people who go missing.
- To prevent the missing young person suffering from harm and to recover the young person to safety as soon as possible.

This will be achieved by providing effective support and interventions. Interventions will include a consideration of risks for each individual young person and a focus on reducing repeat missing episodes. Working in partnership with young people, their families and outside supportive agencies is a key part of this process where the young person’s views and concerns will be taken seriously.

The definition of missing and running away is taken from the Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care 2017.

Definitions Used in this Guidance

CATS College definitions for this guidance has been adopted from the DfE Statutory Guidance on children who runaway or go missing from home or care 2014.

- Child Student: Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- Adult Student: Students aged 18 +
- Missing: Any students regardless of age
- Runaway: A Child Student who has run away from the College or feels they have been forced or lured to leave
- AWOL: Absent without Leave

Police Definitions:

Since April 2013 police forces have been rolling out new definitions of ‘missing’ and ‘absent’ in relation to children and adults reported as missing to the police.

- Missing: Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another
- Absent: a person not at a place where they are expected or required to be.

The police classification of a person as ‘missing’ or ‘absent’ will be based on ongoing risk assessment. Note that ‘absent’ within this definition would not include those defined as “away from Boarding House without authorisation” (AWOL)

Responsibilities

- Ultimate responsibility with this policy lies with the Principal
- All members of staff are responsible to ensure their awareness of this policy and procedures and ensured they are acted upon as necessary.
- This policy will be available to staff, students, visitors and parents and will be accessible on the CATS College intranet and the website.
- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when statutory guidance is reviewed and changed.
- House Parents in Boarding Houses of students are responsible for ensuring that they know the whereabouts of the student in the care at all times – curfew checks must be completed and recorded in a timely manner.
- House Parents managing adult student accommodation must record a curfew check at least once in the evening and report if no contact is made.
- The EMERGENCY DUTY MANAGER (EDM) will be a main contact, out of hours, to guide House Parents in the Missing Student Policy.
- The EDM will be responsible for informing the Deputy Head Pastoral or in their absence the Principal regarding a student being missing.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral will be responsible for liaising with the Principal regarding informing and consulting with the parents of the missing child student or missing adult student as appropriate.

Missing Young Person and Adult Student Procedure

For the purpose of this procedure a child student (student aged 17 or under) is defined as missing when they fail to return back to their Boarding House evenings or weekends or immediately they are discovered missing during the College working day.

For the purpose of this procedure an adult student (18+) is defined as missing when they fail to return back to their Boarding House AND have not been seen for the duration of that day, HOWEVER, a disappearance should be reported immediately if the adult student is felt to be vulnerable/unsafe or at risk of harm to themselves or others.

- House Parent is to contact the child/adult student by telephone/what's app/text.
- If unsuccessful, ask the student's friends if they are aware of any reason for absence. Does the friend have a different contact number for the child/adult student missing or can they contact the child/adult student and receive a response?
- EDM to check if there is any other relevant information on the child/adult that is pertinent to them being missing (i.e. exeat inbox/has student rung EDM).
- EDM will assess and decide if the Police is to be informed – the House Parent on duty would be expected to phone the police and record on students Shackleton page.
- EDM to contact the Principal.

If the missing child/adult student returns to the College or Boarding House then the House Parent must immediately inform the police and text an update to the EDM and note on Shackleton.

House Parents on duty are to interview the young person (at an appropriate time) about reasons for being absent, make a note on the private section on Shackleton and inform the young person that they will be required to speak to a member of the welfare team regarding their being missing or AWOL from the Boarding House.

Reporting a Young Person or Adult Student Missing to the Police

When reporting a young person or adult student missing the police will ask certain questions. The questions may be as follows so please ensure you have these at hand when speaking to the police.

- All personal details known to you, including their full name, date of birth, address.
- Any details relating to the disappearance; when you or others last had contact with the individual, what they were wearing when they disappeared and any other details relating to possible reasons behind their disappearance.
- Any factors that might put the young person or adult student at risk. This might be age, physical or mental health issues or perhaps the individual may have received bad news or been in emotional distress.
- The police may ask for various personal items belonging to the missing individual. This may include mobile phones, diaries and laptop computers.
- The police may also want to visit the accommodation and carry out a routine search and ask for a picture of the young person or missing adult.

What happens after you have reported a student missing

Once you have made a report, what the police do will depend on the circumstances of the disappearance and to what extent the police considers the missing person to be at risk. If someone has gone missing recently and unexpectedly, the police will usually investigate.

They will assess the level of risk for the missing person by considering his/her age, the circumstances of their disappearance, whether this is out of character, and whether he/she needs medication or treatment. If the police assess that the missing person is at risk, and they continue to be missing, the police will make some enquiries, which may include:

- a search of the missing person's home, or last known address;
- a search of the area where the missing person was last seen;
- attempts to make contact with them by phone, if they have a mobile;
- checks on his/her mobile phone/ computer;
- house to house enquiries;
- checking local hospital admissions;
- review of CCTV footage;
- land and air searches, particularly in high risk cases;

- co-ordinating any media coverage;
- issuing a press release to the local media appealing for help from the public.

Once you have reported the child/adult student missing, the EDM is responsible for assessing the incident and determining at what point the Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP) or Principal need to be informed.

The DHP and/or the Principal will decide on how to contact the parents/agents to inform them that their child is missing.

Safe and Well Checks

Safe and well checks are carried out by the police as soon as possible after a young person reported as missing has been found. Their purpose is to check for any indications that the young person has suffered harm, where and with whom they have been, and to give them an opportunity to disclose any offending by or against them.

Where a young person goes missing frequently, it may not be practicable for the police to see them every time they return. In these cases a reasonable decision should be taken in agreement between the police and the young person's parent or carer, or their social worker, with regard to the frequency of such checks bearing in mind the established link between frequent missing episodes and serious harm, which could include gang involvement, forced marriage, bullying or sexual exploitation.

The reason for a decision not to conduct a safe and well check should be reported on the safeguarding file held on the young person or student adult by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or if there is no safeguarding file held, noted on the private note of the young person's/adults students Shackleton page.

Independent Return Interviews

When a young person is found, they will be offered an independent return interview. Independent return interviews provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect the young person from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their home or at College.

In Kent, this interview is offered by the Education and Young People's Services, Early Help and Prevention Team. The Police informs this team of a child who has gone missing and been found and the team then contact the DHP to discuss the young person and arrange a time for the interview.

The interview provides an opportunity hear from the young person about why they went missing and to understand the risks and issues faced by the child while missing.

Following the safe and well check and independent return interview, this builds a comprehensive picture of why the young person went missing, to understand what happened while they were missing to understand who they were with when they were missing and where they were found and

what support the young person requires upon returning to the college in accordance with the 'Working Together' guidance.

Pupils and students missing from education

In order to fulfil our duties as set out in the DfE statutory guidance for Children missing in education 2016 and our UKVI responsibilities. This section should be read in conjunction with the Attendance and the Admissions Policies. CATS College adheres to the following Principles:

- The College enters students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the College has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the school.
- If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the College will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's or young person's whereabouts and consider notifying UKVI at the earliest opportunity.
- The College monitors students' attendance through the daily register.
- If a student misses 10 consecutive contact points, they will be reported to UKVI.
- We monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance.
- We apply a Stage Warning system and inform parents, guardians and agents as necessary.
- It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.
- If a student has missed 10 contact points and has been referred to UKVI, they will be removed from the admissions register.
- We will investigate any unexplained absences.

Review & Evaluation

This policy will be re-viewed annually or earlier if government guidance or local Kent procedure are updated.

All young person or student adults reported as missing to the police will be logged on the welfare report to Board and fully evaluated to ensure students and staff are offered or receive appropriate support.