

Missing and Uncollected Child Policy

Primary person responsible for updates to this policy: James Kidd

Job title: Vice Principal (Pastoral)

Last review date: July 2021

Next review date: July 2022

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

All DLD college students' attendance is registered electronically in each lesson and absences followed up by the Attendance & Intervention Officer, in the first instance. The Attendance & Intervention Officer is Line Managed by the Compliance manager, who supports the interventions of the student, alongside Tutors, Housemaster/Housemistresses (HMs) and the Vice Principal (Pastoral). For the purpose of this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a student being not present without authorisation or explanation. On occasions when a staff member identifies a student as missing from their expected location, immediate action is required as outlined in the procedures below. Communications with parents and the appropriate services (particularly the police) are an integral part of the procedure and all instance of a missing student must be reported to the Vice Principal (Pastoral) or the Vice Principal (Boarding), and the appropriate investigations made.

This policy applies to all students, both boarding and day. DLD College is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the College's Equal Opportunity Policy.

DLD College seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document. This document is available to all interested parties at no cost on request from the Principal's PA and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy. This documentation also complies with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding (2015), Standard 15: Staffing and Supervision.

Procedure: Missing Day Student

A student may be identified as missing:

- After an absence at their first morning registration is not confirmed by the Attendance Officer's contact with home.
- By comparing students in a class with the day's absence notifications.
- On reconciliation with the afternoon lesson attendance.
- By a report of a missing student by a fellow student.

Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the Attendance Officer who will:

- Attempt contact with the student using contact details, and also the parent/guardian.
- Contact and make the necessary check such as the personal tutor / class teacher to assess whether the absence is expected, and/or the Nurse to check for any known medical emergency. Check all lists of trips out of College and check the signing out log at Reception.

If the student is still found to be missing, the Attendance Officer will immediately:

- Inform the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and/or ELT members, who will initiate and oversee a search of the College building and grounds.
- Advise all teachers due to teach or tutor the student later that day that they must immediately inform the Attendance Officer if the student appears.

If the site search fails, the Principal and parents will be informed.

If there is no explanation for absence and no contact with the student within one hour of the check-in time the Principal, or someone delegated by the Principal, will contact the Police.

If the student is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The Principal, Parents and ELT will be directly informed by the Attendance Officer.

- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- The Principal and Vice Principal (Pastoral) will initiate a full inquiry, and provide a written report. This report and the incident log will be kept on the student's file.

Procedure: Missing Boarders

During the College day, the procedure is the same as that for a missing day student, but includes:

- Contact the Vice Principal (Boarding)

A Boarder may be identified as missing if their whereabouts cannot be confirmed visually, from information provided by the student or other trustworthy students with regard to their movements, the sign-in software or telephonic contact with them or their parent/guardian.

Staff discovering a discrepancy must:

- Notify the Vice Principal (Boarding) and/or the duty boarding staff member
- Attempt to ascertain whereabouts from friends.
- Attempt to contact the student by their mobile phone.
- Arrange a check of the College building and grounds.
- Contact staff who might previously have taught the student that day (if a weekday).
- Check the list of trips and activities out of College.

If a student is still missing, staff should:

- Inform the Vice Principal (Boarding) and/or the duty boarding staff member
- Notify the Houseparent Team and check for any known circumstances that might have led to the student being missing.
- Contact their parents/guardians (with due regard for time zones).
- Contact back-up duty staff, and request assistance as appropriate.
- If possible a search of local roads, shops, potential haunts etc. should be made on foot where appropriate.

On completion of this and any subsequent searches made, the Principal and parents/guardians will continue to be informed of progress.

If there is no explanation for absence and no contact with the student within one hour of the check-in time the Principal, or someone delegated by the Principal, will contact the Police.

If the student is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The Principal, Parents/guardians, Vice Principal (Pastoral) will be directly informed by the Boarding staff.
- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- The Principal or Vice Principal (Boarding) will initiate a full inquiry, and provide a written report. This report and the incident log will be kept on the student's file.

After the Incident

- The senior member of staff involved will sensitively discuss with the student's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the student.
- The Principal will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- The incident report will detail:
 1. The date and time of the report

2. What staff/students were in the group/class
 3. When the student was last seen in the group/class/boarding house
 4. What has taken place in the group/class/boarding house since then and the time it is estimated that the student went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to whether a breach of security happened and, if appropriate, procedures (including risk assessments and training) may be updated.

Procedure for boarders missing a lesson

If a boarder is missing from class and is not at the accommodation both boarding staff and College staff will try to contact the student and their guardian/parents. If a boarder is missing from morning registration or morning classes the attendance officer should report this to the boarding staff who will check the student's room and will assist in contacting the student.

Procedure for boarders missing curfew

If a student is not in residence at the allowed curfew time, the following procedure should be followed:

Stage one

- Call student & explain that they are breaking the curfew and need to return to accommodation immediately.
- Check sign out book for information on where they might be
- If there is no answer, leave a message and continue to call at intervals.
- Check with other boarding staff if they have seen or been in contact with the student.
- Search common areas.
- Check with the student's friends. Ask the student's friends to call his/her mobile, or by using social media.
- Check all student rooms informing each student that if you do not locate the missing student by an agreed time that you will call the police.
- Contact parents/guardians (who may be able to provide an explanation, but in any case need to be made aware of the situation) and ask them to phone the student.
- If these enquiries do not provide an answer, and a period of time has elapsed whereby the absence is giving particular cause for concern (probably no more than an hour), then more extensive enquiries (Stage Two) should be carried out. From this point a log should be kept indicating action taken at each stage.

Stage Two

- Inform the Vice Principal (Pastoral)
- Instigate a search of the full College site and other locations in the vicinity of the College, e.g. in smoking area, inform Urbanest staff.

Stage Three

- At this point the Vice Principal (Pastoral) takes over responsibility for the search from the Houseparent.
- If none of the procedures in Stage Two lead to the whereabouts of the pupil being ascertained, the local police should be informed with a view to instigating a missing person's enquiry.
- Inform parents of action taken.
- Inform Principal of action taken.

Stage Four

When the student is found, the Vice Principal (Pastoral) should inform the parents. Once the student returns to College, the Vice Principal (Boarding) or Houseparent should take appropriate action. If in doubt as to whether the matter should be treated as a disciplinary issue, he/she should discuss the matter with the Vice Principal (Pastoral).

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) will decide how to deal with the student once they have returned to College. Depending on the situation and any mitigating circumstances, the student may be sanctioned and/or counselled. They will be supported appropriately and parents, Boarding staff, personal tutor, nurses, and the College Independent listener will be involved as appropriate.

All missing person records are the overall responsibility of the Vice Principal (Pastoral). The Vice Principal (Boarding) keep records of Stage 1 & 2 and the Vice Principal of Stages 3 & 4.

If the Houseparent cannot be located, or the Vice Principal (Boarding) should be notified.

If a student wishes to stay away from the accommodation over night or past normal allowed curfew they must ask a parent/guardian to submit a request using the DLD weekend request form by the Wednesday preceding the weekend in question. If the student will be staying out of the accommodation a parent/guardian must supply the name and address and contact details of a suitable adult with whom the student will be staying. The College stipulate that the supervising adult must be over 25 years old and should not be under the instruction of the student. The boarding staff will make contact with the adult to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the student's care while away from the accommodation.

Persistent lateness or failure to sign in will result in a referral to the student's HM/ Head of Lower School in line with the Behaviour Policy.