

MISSING PUPIL POLICY & LATE COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Including EYFS



Blundell's
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

MISSING PUPIL POLICY & LATE COLLECTION PROCEDURES

(including EYFS)

Policy Name:	Missing Pupil Policy & Late Collection Procedures (including EYFS)
Applicable to:	Preparatory School
Name of Sponsor:	Head of Preparatory School
Date of Policy	16 th September 2026
Date for Next Review:	NLT 30th September 2028
Governing Body Oversight:	Yes
Date Approved by Governing Body:	22nd November 2024
Date for Next Review by Governing Body:	20th November 2026
Published Internally:	Yes
Published on School Website:	Yes

POLICY AMENDMENTS

Date of Amendment	Material Details
1 st October 2024	ISBA template adopted to reflect KCSIE 2024 & Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024. Format Updated. Title changed to include Late Collection Procedures.
16 th September 2025	Point 10 changed to show requirement for all staff to read Part 1 of KCSIE.
16 th September 2026	<p>Updated KCSIE 2026 staff reading requirements.</p> <p>Clear definitions of absence, missing from school and children missing education.</p> <p>Same day unexplained absence procedures.</p> <p>Stronger first day absence escalation.</p> <p>Correct Local Authority and safeguarding partner terminology.</p> <p>Removal of inappropriate LADO references.</p> <p>EYFS Ofsted notification requirements.</p> <p>Clear incident coordination and Police escalation.</p> <p>Maintenance of EYFS staffing and supervision requirements.</p> <p>Controls for searches beyond the school site.</p> <p>Improved RIDDOR wording.</p> <p>Authorised collection and identity checks.</p> <p>More detailed arrangements for uncollected children.</p> <p>Child centered post incident review.</p> <p>Contemporaneous safeguarding records.</p> <p>Review of risk assessments and individual pupil plans.</p>

CONTENTS

Part One Missing Pupil Policy (including EYFS)	Page 4
Introduction	Page 4
Information for Parents	Page 4
Information for Parents (Additional for EYFS)	Page 5
Action if Child Fails to Attend First Day at School	Page 5
Duty to Report	Page 6
Prolonged and/or persistent Absence	Page 7
Action if Child Goes Missing from School	Page 8
Action if Child Goes Missing from an Outing	Page 10
Action Once a Child is Found	Page 12
Part Two Late Collection Procedures	Page 13

PART ONE | MISSING PUPIL POLICY (EYFS)

DEFINITIONS

Absent from education means a registered pupil who is not attending school, including repeated, persistent or prolonged absence.

Missing from school means a pupil whose whereabouts cannot be established while the pupil is, or should be, under the School's supervision.

Child missing education means a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. A registered pupil who is persistently or severely absent is not, solely for that reason, a child missing education.

INTRODUCTION

1. The safety of pupils at Blundell's (the 'School') is our paramount responsibility. A child being absent from education, for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse or neglect, child sexual and/or criminal exploitation and county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.
2. The School recognises that children who are absent from education, particularly repeatedly, persistently or for prolonged periods, may require support and may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, mental health concerns, radicalisation or other safeguarding risks.
3. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education.
4. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child being absent in the future.
5. Where staff have concerns that a child is absent from school for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, or missing from school, this policy should be followed.
6. Every member of staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full and follow the School's safeguarding policies and procedures.
7. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

8. Our Pupil Supervision Policy describes:
 - a. The arrangements for children arriving at school and leaving the premises at the end of the day;

- b. The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school;
 - c. The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon. We take a register of pupils at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact the parent if the child fails to arrive at school without an explanation;
 - d. The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building;
 - e. The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the School.
- 9. The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our pupils are set out in a detailed policy document: Educational Visits for Pupils. This document is on our website, and can be provided to parents on request.
 - 10. We review these policies regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective.
 - 11. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of children and are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS (ADDITIONAL FOR EYFS)

- 1. The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: Educational Visits for EYFS Children. This is available on our website, in addition to this policy, and can be provided to parents on request.
- 2. We review this policy regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that it is robust and effective.

ACTION TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD FAILS TO ATTEND THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

3. All new pupils, regardless of age, are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend. Where a pupil fails to start on the expected date, the Head or DSL will make enquiries without delay. Where the pupil's whereabouts cannot be established, or there is a safeguarding concern, the School will notify the Local Authority Children Missing Education team and, where appropriate, Children's Social Care or the Police at the earliest opportunity.
4. The School admissions register, also known as the school roll, contains specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the School, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The School also has an attendance register which records pupil attendance.
5. Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.
6. Parents are required to inform the School promptly of changes to home address, telephone numbers, parental responsibility and emergency contacts. The School will take reasonable steps to ensure that admission register and emergency contact information remains accurate and current.
7. The School also has an attendance register which records pupil attendance. Attendance registers are taken at consistent and published times for all registered pupils during both morning and afternoon sessions. On each occasion the School will record whether each registered pupil is physically present or, if not, the reason for absence, using the appropriate national attendance and absence code under regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
8. Registers are legal records. The School will preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date of entry. Where amendments are made to the registers, the School will ensure that the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment.

DUTY TO REPORT

9. The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance.
10. Unexplained absence will be followed up on the same day. Where contact cannot be established, the School will assess the pupil's vulnerability, known safeguarding information and the circumstances of the absence, and will escalate the response accordingly. All enquiries, decisions and outcomes will be recorded.
11. Where attendance concerns indicate that a family may require additional support, the School will consider community focused early help, targeted Family Help (previously Early Help) or referral to statutory services in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy.
12. The School will make all statutory returns and notifications required by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, including in relation to pupils who fail to attend regularly or who have been absent without permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more. The School will not wait for a statutory threshold where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's whereabouts are unknown or earlier contact with the Local Authority, Children's Social Care or the Police is appropriate.

PROLONGED AND/OR PERSISTENT ABSENCE

13. Where a pupil has not returned from a period of leave or has had a continuous period of absence, the School, together with the Local Authority, may need to carry out joint reasonable enquiries under regulation 9 (1) (h) or (i) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to try to find out where the pupil is.
14. A pupil's name will be deleted from the admission register only where one of the statutory grounds for deletion is fully met. This includes, where applicable, continuous unauthorised absence for not less than 20 school days where there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or another unavoidable cause, and where the School and Local Authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries but have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts. The School will retain a written record of the applicable ground, enquiries, decisions and notifications, and will notify the Local Authority no later than the time of deletion.
15. In addition, the School recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, to help identify children who are missing education or otherwise at risk of harm.
16. The School also recognises that children who are absent from education particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. The School's response to persistently absent pupils supports identifying such abuse, and helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.
17. Where attendance concerns indicate that a family may require additional support, the School

will consider whether an Early Help or Family Help assessment should be initiated or supported.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

18. Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.
19. The Head, or the most senior member of staff present, will act as incident coordinator. The incident coordinator will allocate responsibilities, maintain oversight of the search, preserve relevant evidence, ensure that the remaining pupils are appropriately supervised and ensure that a contemporaneous chronology of decisions and actions is maintained.
20. The deployment of staff to undertake a search must not compromise the safety or effective supervision of the remaining children. Where EYFS children are involved, statutory staffing and supervision requirements will continue to be met.
21. The Police will be contacted immediately where there is reason to believe that the child may be at immediate risk of harm. The School will not delay contacting the Police in order to complete an internal search.
22. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:
 - a. Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts;
 - b. Check with reception who will check their records;
 - c. Inform the senior member of staff on duty;
 - d. Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil;
 - e. Occupy all of the other pupils in their classroom(s) with a relevant activity;
 - f. At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the buildings, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc. where a child might hide;
 - g. Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.

23. A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is absent from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.
24. If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:
 - a. Inform the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
 - b. The Head would ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. The Head will ask them to come to the School at once;
 - c. The DSL or Head would immediately notify the Police;
 - d. The Head would arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds;
 - e. If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff may be asked to check if the pupil has gone home and would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them;
 - f. Any decision to search beyond the School premises will be based on an immediate risk assessment, agreed by the incident coordinator and, once the Police have been contacted, coordinated with Police advice. Staff must not place themselves or others at risk;
 - g. The DSL would liaise with Children's Social Care and, where appropriate, safeguarding partners in accordance with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
 - h. The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority;
 - i. The Head would inform the Chair of Governors;
 - j. The School's insurers would be informed; and
 - k. The School will consider whether the incident is reportable under RIDDOR and will make any required report to the Health and Safety Executive within the applicable statutory timescale.

25. During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the School will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.
26. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.
27. Where the incident involves a child in the EYFS, the School will notify Ofsted of the incident and the action taken as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 14 days. The School will also consider whether any other statutory notification is required.
28. The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

29. If a child goes missing on an outing:
 - a. An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils were present;
 - b. An adult would search the immediate vicinity;
 - c. Inform the Head and the DSL by mobile phone;
 - d. The remaining pupils would be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable;
 - e. The Head would ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. They would be asked to come to the venue or the School at once;
 - f. Contact the venue manager and arrange a search (where relevant);
 - g. Contact the Police immediately;
 - h. The DSL would liaise with Children's Social Care and, where appropriate, safeguarding partners in accordance with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
 - i. The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority;

- j. The Head would inform the Chair of Governors without delay;
- k. The School's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable;
- l. The School will consider whether the incident is reportable under RIDDOR and will make any required report to the Health and Safety Executive within the applicable statutory timescale;
- m. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The School will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.
- n. Where the incident involves a child in the EYFS, the School will notify Ofsted of the incident and the action taken as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 14 days. The School will also consider whether any other statutory notification is required.

ACTION ONCE A CHILD IS FOUND

30. Once the child is found:

- a. Talk to, take care of and comfort the child;
- b. Seek the child's account sensitively and in an age appropriate manner, taking account of any communication, SEND, medical or emotional needs. The child will not be questioned in a manner that could compromise a Police or safeguarding investigation;
- c. Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing;
- d. The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident;
- e. The Head will oversee a full investigation, involving Children's Social Care, the Police or other safeguarding partners where appropriate;
- f. Media queries should be referred to the Head;
- g. The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements;
- h. 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 they appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future; and
- i. Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Safeguarding policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child.
- j. Review relevant site security arrangements, supervision procedures, educational visit

risk assessments, individual pupil risk assessments, behaviour or support plans, medical plans, SEND provision, collection arrangements and safeguarding plans, and implement lessons learned.

PART TWO | LATE COLLECTION PROCEDURES

1. If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers.
2. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.
3. Parents and carers must notify the School promptly of any change to collection arrangements. A child will be released only to a person authorised by the parent or carer and, where that person is not known to staff, only after appropriate identity and security checks have been completed through the School's agreed collection process.
4. If there is no answer, the Head or the duty member of SLT will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after by the School.
5. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency contact numbers within one hour, or when the premises are closing, the Head or DSL will contact Children's Social Care or the Emergency Duty Team for advice and support. Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the Police will also be contacted.
6. The School will follow the advice of Children's Social Care, the Emergency Duty Team and, where involved, the Police. Appropriate alternative care arrangements will be agreed with the relevant agency. The School will make a full written record of the incident, the advice received, decisions made and the outcome.
7. The School will look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain in the School's care. The child will be reassured and their food, drink, medication, personal care and communication needs will be met. The child will not be taken home privately by a member of staff. They will be released only to an authorised adult following appropriate identity and security checks, or to Children's Social Care or the Police under agreed safeguarding arrangements.
8. The School's DSL will keep a record of all incidents of children missing from school, missing on educational visits or not collected on time will be recorded on the School's safeguarding recording system. These records will be reviewed by the DSL to identify any emerging patterns or wider safeguarding concerns. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
9. Each record will include a summary of the concern, a contemporaneous chronology, actions taken, decisions made, the reasons for those decisions, advice received and the final outcome. Repeated late collection or non collection will be reviewed with professional curiosity and may lead to additional support or safeguarding referral.

END

Blundell's Preparatory School
Milestones House
Blundell's Road
Tiverton
Devon
EX16 4NA

Tel: 01884 252393
E.mail: prep@blundells.org

www.blundells.org/prep

