



Bringing out the Best in Everyone"



**Buckinghamshire Council /
Pebble Brook School**

Missing / Absconding Child Policy

Signed _____ dated _____

Chair of Governors

Date Approved /Ratified	Summer 2023
Date of next review	Summer 2025

Policy Statement

Pebble Brook School Missing Pupil

The welfare of all of our children at our school is our paramount responsibility. 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. Thus, any member of staff who suspects that a pupil may be missing should follow the procedure appropriate to their section of the school which is outlined below. The definition of 'missing' in this context is 'not present without authorisation or explanation'.

This policy is written in support of the school's aims and ethos and applies to all members of our school community. Pebble Brook School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

This document is available on our website and copies are available on request from the school office. It should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and the Health and Safety Policy.

Procedures

1. A pupil absent from either morning or afternoon registration:
 - Mark the pupil as absent even if another pupil says that they know where they are.
 - The office staff will follow up any pupil recorded as absent by checking whether they have signed in or whether a parent has contacted school with a reason for their absence. If the pupil cannot be accounted for then a phone call is made to parents to check on their whereabouts. If the pupil has been sent to school by the parent then the procedure outlined below should be followed.

2. A pupil who goes missing during the course of the day:

Follow outlined procedure as below:

- Alert staff on reception with the name and form of the pupil, along with information about where that pupil should be (assuming you know that).
- The local area within school should be searched, in particular toilets, storerooms, resources room and changing rooms.

- Enquiries should be made with their Form Tutor as to possible locations. Questions may be asked of their friends including the mobile phone number of the pupil. This may be phoned by an appropriate member of staff.
- If the pupil has still not been located then SLT should be informed, they will then inform the Headteacher. One of these individuals will contact:
 - The parents or carer of that pupil and then
 - The Police or other appropriate emergency service
 - The Child Protection Officer will inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
 - The school will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
 - Inform the Chair of Governors
 - Ofsted will be informed
 - The insurers will be informed.

If the Pupil is Injured

A report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE. 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.

Action to Help Prevent Missing Pupils

The information below is taught and reinforced to all children in the school through form times and PSHE in order that they know the correct procedure: All pupils to know the boundaries of the school and not to leave school premises without adult supervision. If at any point a child finds themselves lost within the school premises they are to go into a classroom and report to an adult immediately.

Actions to be Followed by Staff if a Child Goes Missing on an Outing

Follow procedure as detailed in Appendix 1.

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- The remaining children would be taken back to school.

- Inform SLT at school by phone. School to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue / the school at once.
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search.
- Contact the Police.
- The Child Protection Officer would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- Inform the Chair of Governors.
- Ofsted would be informed.
- The insurers would be informed.

Actions to be Followed by Staff Once the Pupil is Found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises / separate from a group on an outing.
- The Headteacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headteacher will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services / Local Children Safeguarding Board).
- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher.
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- 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 s/he appeared to have gone missing and lessons for the future.

Appendix 1

Missing Children Protocol Summary Guidelines

This document to be displayed in all classrooms.

A copy to be taken by lead person on all off-site trips.

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises

- The lead person must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults (where possible) must stay with them.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- The lead person should contact school. School to alert Designated Child Protection Officer and Headteacher immediately.
- If the child is not found within 5 minutes the lead person must contact the Police by telephoning 999.
- The lead person should alert school that the Police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the procedures described in the Missing Child Protocol will be followed. Staff will continue to search.

In the event of a member of staff fearing a child has gone missing while at school

- If a member of staff suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity they contact SLT and the school office immediately. The SLT member and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the building, including outside areas, toilets and storage areas if there is not a valid reason for absence.
- The attendance registers and off site record held in the school office will be checked.
- Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register for each teaching group.

- A thorough check of all exits will be made to ensure all gates / doors were locked / bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of SLT immediately. Checks also made on key places.
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified. The Headteacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the Police need to be contacted. The procedures described in the Missing Child Protocol will be followed while a search continues.