



Bosworth
Independent
School

Missing Student and Students Missing In Education Policy

Reviewed	July 2024
Next Review Date	July 2025
Lead for Review	Assistant Principal Pastoral

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Introduction

This Policy serves two purposes. Firstly in Part One, it deals with assuring student safety. Bosworth School accepts that while students are in attendance, the School or any of its representatives are *in loco parentis*. This is considered to mean that in the event of any incident, the School should act in the best interests of the student and reflect what would normally be expected by a reasonable, sensitive and well-informed parent.

Secondly, this Policy specifies in Part Two how Bosworth fulfils its monitoring, detection and care for Students Missing in Education in accordance with KCSIE. In addition, this policy enacts the requirements of the DfE's Statutory Guidance: 'Working together to improve school attendance'.

To help in tracing students, it is a Bosworth School rule that they must always carry their charged and switched-on mobile phone with them when at School (both day and boarding students) and boarding students when outside their boarding house or senior house. GDPR requirements are always followed by the School in holding students' mobile numbers.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

PART ONE – ASSURING STUDENT SAFETY

Missing Students During the Academic Day

The School legally registers all students at morning and afternoon registration and the beginning of all lessons. If a student is missing, this is picked up by staff in the Administration Office at Newton Building.

Day Students

If a day student is reported missing, possible timetable changes are investigated and their friends consulted. The student's mobile telephone number is called. If the whereabouts of the student cannot be determined after these actions, the student's parents are contacted (usually by 9.30am). The responsibility for tracing the student is at this point transferred to the parents, though the School will continue with any possibly fruitful lines of inquiry, remaining in contact with parents. Parents are asked to remain in contact with the School and to inform the School when the student is traced. School notifies the parents also when a student is located. If a day-student's parents or family member of parental age cannot be contacted, the School will liaise with appropriate external agencies to ensure the student's safety.

Boarding Students

If a boarding student is missing from class, possible timetable changes are investigated, and friends consulted. If the whereabouts of the student cannot be determined, the Boarding Management Team or School Nurse will be contacted. (S)He will then visit the student's accommodation if the student lives in a Senior House and /or telephone the student's mobile, as appropriate, and subsequently (if the student is not found) contact either the appropriate House Parent (HP), Boarding Office staff or a family house member to determine the last time of the known whereabouts of the student.

If a boarding student's whereabouts cannot be determined immediately, this will not necessarily be considered sufficient grounds for contacting parents. The rationale for this position is that in the vast majority of cases, there will be a simple explanation for a student being missing, but for most parents overseas, distance and time away from home will tend to exaggerate any natural concerns they would have.

If the missing student has not been located by 1600 or earlier depending on age, vulnerability etc, a review meeting will be called of all relevant people, usually the Deputy Headmaster / Assistant Head Pastoral, Head of Boarding, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Head of Year, to decide on next steps and when parents, guardians and police should be contacted.

If a student's whereabouts cannot be accounted for and the procedures above reach the stage of contacting parents (day students) or unsuccessful searching of student accommodation (boarders), the Deputy Headmaster / Assistant Head Pastoral is informed. If a student's absence raises extra concern (e.g. because they are unwell or have been reported as under abnormal mental strain), the Deputy Headmaster / Assistant Head Pastoral is informed as soon as the absence is identified. The Head of Boarding may also fulfil this role.

Missing/Late Boarding Students in Boarding Time

This process covers boarding time – i.e. after 15:40 on weekdays, all weekends and all non-teaching days when students are in residence.

Provisions are in place to ensure that a student's propensity to be "missing" is reduced in various ways, including the signing in/out procedure, curfew times briefed to students during induction week, the exeat process, holiday plan records, and provision of emergency phone numbers on student key fobs.

All boarding and on-call staff should be familiar with these procedures, which have been developed to ensure we are discharging our responsibilities for safeguarding students under normal circumstances. Where a student might deliberately be missing, such as the very rare occurrence of trafficking, all staff will need to constantly remain vigilant, and share concerns/observations with senior staff rather than rely on records/processes only.

As such, all boarding staff are expected to watch for potential signs that a student may abscond including: students who are evasive about their movements, those who don't unpack shortly after arrival, rooms which begin to look empty over a period of time, other students distancing themselves from a particular student, changes in behaviour, adult visitors to the boarding house and anything else which gives cause for concern.

When an adult collects a student, this should be supported by an exeat form completed in advance of the visit, and the supervisor on duty must see identification. If no ID is available, or if it's a "surprise" visit with no supporting paperwork, the supervisor must contact the senior person on call before allowing the students to leave. PLEASE SEE PART TWO OF THIS POLICY.

Boarding Houses

Students under 18 must return by 21:00 and make their presence known to a House Parent. Student residing in Senior Residences must return by 21:30. Only students with an approved exeat

can be absent overnight. HPs are tasked with briefing our expectations to students during Induction Week.

Before curfew time, HPs are expected to:

- Make regular checks of the signing out sheet and personally call any student who is more than 15 minutes overdue to check they are safe and record any revised return times.
- Check if a student is abusing the signing out procedure and discuss with student on return and/or escalate to their HP who can suggest earlier curfews or discuss other penalties with the Head of Boarding.
- Hand over to the HP at the end of their duty, inform the HP of any students who are delayed/haven't returned, and what actions have been taken.

If a student fails to return by the appropriate time, the Houseparent must:

- Phone the student (or the contact number if they are on exeat), check that they are safe and ask that they return immediately. The incident should be recorded on the MIS if there is no reasonable excuse for being late, or just in the boarding log if there was a valid reason.
- If the student is unable/unwilling to return, but the Houseparent is satisfied that they are safe, (e.g. staying an extra night with their guardian), record all the information on a Concern Form.
- If the student can't be contacted, ask friends/roommates to see if they know where the student has gone. They might be at a senior house, (if so, phone the residents). If they still can't be contacted or can be but the Houseparent is not satisfied they are safe, or if the student refuses to return the Houseparent should contact on call staff to discuss next steps (see rota in supervisors' file). This could include calling the police to report a missing person as advised by on-call.
- HPs cannot authorise students to be absent overnight if a student asks for a "late" exeat.
- On call staff should be called within 15 minutes after their expected arrival time.

On call staff should satisfy themselves that everything within reason has been done to locate the student and should take appropriate action e.g. speak to the student to insist they return, or if no contact can be made, advise the HP to call the police as a precautionary measure (call 101).

The on-call staff member is responsible for ongoing checks with boarding staff to verify the safe return of the student, should ensure that the police are informed if a student reported as missing returns and should brief the Head of Boarding on the next working day.

Holiday Returns (Current Students)

Occasionally students don't return on time after holidays. This would not usually be formally recorded until first registration by administration staff. A failure to return would not normally be reported to on call or the police at this stage. Often, a flight has been rebooked or the student is ill at home. In such circumstances, HPs should send an email to the contact shown on engage if the student was expected to arrive over a weekend, in order to ascertain from them if a student is actually thought to be somewhere in the UK, or to record any planned delay. If parents are concerned and/or can't contact the student, the missing student process as detailed above should be invoked. If the parent confirms the student will return late, the details should be emailed by the HP to the Head of Boarding.

If the missing student was expected to return during the week, HPs should email the Head of Boarding, so investigations can take place during the following working day.

Although the above refers mainly to current students, the process also applies to new intake students where we have been informed of arrival times.

We are not always informed by families of planned return times after holidays. Hence action is only taken when staff know an anticipated return time is not fulfilled. Failure by a student to return by the return time specified on the Academic Calendar ('Boarders must return by...') will trigger the procedure appropriate to their age.

Taxi 'No-Shows'

If any student can't be found when a taxi transfer has been booked, Amber cars will contact Bosworth Hall to inform staff. Amber will check that a flight has landed/baggage cleared but will ask for advice on waiting. Staff on duty should be aware that a waiting time of one hour is included in the price, and that subsequent hours are charged at £12. Amber should be asked to wait 2 hours total whilst further checks are made by the supervisors on duty before standing them down.

Senior Houses

Students in senior houses, aged 18 or older, are subject to the same checks above.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The procedures above are modified as required for students with SEND. For example, a student with autism will activate procedures immediately or earlier contact with the police if (s)he may not be safe outside Bosworth. SEND includes students who may have temporary issues such as depression. **Office staff and senior staff should ensure they are aware of temporary conditions notified by the Nurse, families or pastoral staff. Missing students should have their names checked on the School Special Needs register.** In passing information to external agencies or to other staff, messages should always include information about relevant SEND.

PART TWO – STUDENTS MISSING IN EDUCATION

Introduction

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing in education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

Bosworth School understands that, although rare amongst its UK (mostly) day-students, the School has a clear educational, statutory and safeguarding duty to detect and support such students or those in danger of being ‘missing in education’. This responsibility also applies to overseas boarding students. Away from home, such students may become victims of exploitation, radicalisation or slavery.

Unexplained absence (e.g. early departure or late returns from holiday) may indicate mental health difficulties. Students may also be economic migrants preparing to abscond from Bosworth School after nefariously gaining entry on student visas (see page 2). Bosworth School’s Missing Students and Children Missing in education Policy states how the School fulfils its responsibilities according to the following legislation:

- DfE ‘Working together to safeguard children’ 2018
- The Education (Student Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2016)
- DfE KCSIE 2024
- DfE Working together to improve school attendance 2024
- The current Independent Schools Standards Regulations (Education and Skills Act 2008 section 94)
- DfE ‘Children missing Education’ 2024
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016)
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989 & The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Defining ‘Children Missing in Education’ For the purpose of this Policy, a CME is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by a Local Authority, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes students who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include students who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), insufficient language skills.

Categories of students at risk

- Students at risk of harm or neglect – where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed;
- Children of gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) families
- Children of service personnel – the school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children’s Education Advisory Service for advice to ensure continuity of education for these children.

- Missing children/runaways – should the school suspect a child has gone missing/run away, the DSL will inform the police, immigration authorities and social care.
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice Service
- Children who cease to attend Bosworth – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending the School is not known, the Local Authority will investigate the situation.
- Children of migrant families – there is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address or may have arrived into an Local Authority area without the authority becoming aware.
- Boarder students away from the supervision and protection of their families
- Boarder students whose families are not taking care of them
- Boarder students who do not intend to complete their course but seek to reside illegally in the UK

Procedures

The School will enter students on the admissions register before or at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed, or the day that the School has been notified, that the student will attend the School.

In the event that a student fails to attend the School on the agreed or notified date, the School will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence and will consider notifying the Local Authority or UKVI at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

The School will keep an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents/carers to inform them of any changes.

The School will monitor students' attendance through the daily register and through boarding house roll call times. The School will comply with Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board and County Council procedures for reporting significant absence from School. However, Bosworth School will make its own enquiries and notify and work with agencies (e.g. MASH or the Police) as is appropriate in each individual case. Subject to this, the School will notify the Local Authority or UKVI if a student has missed 10 School days or more without permission.

The School will remove the student from the admission register at the discretion of the Principal. Normally, this is after determining satisfactorily that the student does not intend to return to Bosworth. Bosworth will fulfil its obligations in notifying the County Council and the UKVI if a student's name is removed from the register.

Bosworth School regards prolonged or unexplained student absence as a safeguarding matter and will act appropriately according to its own Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and in accordance with KCSIE 2024, Working together to improve school attendance 2024 and Working Together 2018.

For reasons for deleting students from the Admissions Register under Regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016), see Annex A below.

Actions by the local education authority Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a duty to establish the identities of children in the area who are not registered students at a school

and are not receiving education provision otherwise. Bosworth School will work with the local education authorities of UK students falling within the scope of this CME Policy.

Students with special educational needs statements, or EHC plans, are able to be home educated. If the statement/EHC plan sets out the provision that the student should receive at home, or names a school where the provision will be received, but the parent/carer chooses to home educate the child, the Local Authority will arrange the provision and ensure that it is suitable to the child's special educational needs.

The Local Authority is responsible for liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education.

The Local Authority is responsible for referring to the Local Authority children's social care where there is concern for a child's welfare, as well as the police if there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed.

Parents/carers Bosworth School recognises that parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.

Parents/carers are expected to notify the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the student to be removed from the admissions register. In addition, parents/carers will be asked to notify the school regarding any absences or changes to a student's education arrangements.

Working with others

Families moving from one Local Authority to another can sometimes lead to a child being lost in the system and consequently missing education. When a child moves to or from Bosworth School, the School will contact the new or former school regionally or nationally, to ensure this does not happen. As appropriate, to assist them in tracing a CME, Bosworth School will work with other schools or Schools (including overseas), with the Local Authority, the Department for Work and Pensions, the UK Border Agency and HMRC. Exchanges of information will be according to KCSIE 2024, good practice and the GDPR.

Safeguarding

Bosworth School will make reasonable enquiries in the event of an actual or suspected CME. For the purpose of this Policy, "reasonable enquiries" are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a young person or child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

In line with the Children Act 2004, the school will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, or her opposite number at previous schools to determine whether a student may be at risk of harm.

The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral via the MASH, to the UK Border Agency or to police.

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, Bosworth School, in conjunction with the Local Authority, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Check local databases
- Follow local information sharing arrangements, and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible
- Check with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
- Check with the Local Authority and school from which the student moved originally
- Check with the Local Authority where the student lives, if this is different to where the school is located
- Check with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service in the case of children of Service Personnel
- Conduct risk assessed home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate

NB. This list is not exhaustive. The School in partnership with the Local Authority, UKVI or other agency will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

Admissions Register

Bosworth School will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents/carers to notify the school of any changes as they occur, such as via email or newsletters.

Students will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the student will attend the school.

Where a parent/carer notifies the School that a student will live at another address, the School will record the following information on the admissions register: the full name of the parent/carer with whom the student will live; the new address; the date from when it is expected the student will live at this address.

Where a parent/carer notifies Bosworth that the student is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register: the name of the new school; the date when the student first attended, or is due to attend that school. Bosworth School will notify the UKVI within the required time.

Parents/carers are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from school. This can happen at any time, unless the student is subject to a Penalty Notice. The Local Authority will be informed.

Removing A Student from The Admissions Register

Bosworth School will inform the Local Authority of any student who will be deleted from the admissions register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents/carers and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home-schooled
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent/carer has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.
- Have died.
- Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should be the case.
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion.
- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:
 - There is reason to believe the student is not unable to attend school. The Local Authority and Bosworth are unable to determine the student's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries. The student has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days, and:
 - The absence was not authorised.
 - There is reason to believe the student is not unable to attend school.
 - Will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets, and the relevant person has indicated the student will not attend the school, or, the student does not meet the academic entry requirements for sixth form.

We will notify the Local Authority that a student is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met as soon as possible.

If a student's name is to be removed from the admissions register, Bosworth School will provide the Local Authority with the information requested in accordance with KCSIE 2024, good practice and the GDPR.

Review

This Policy is reviewed at least every two years or sooner in the event of statutory change or change needed in the School's practice.