

MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURE

SELECT ENGLISH POLICY DOCUMENT

Reviewed: May 2025

Next review: April 2026

Introduction

This procedure applies to Select English students (year-round and summer) under the age of 18. It should be followed by all Select English staff.

Procedure for missing pupils:

All students and staff should report all unexplained absences of any student to the Emergency phone holder. An unexplained absence may arise when a student does not attend lessons, or when the student's friends or classmates are unexpectedly unable to locate the student. As soon as a teacher or other member of staff becomes aware of an unexplained absence the following procedure will be followed:

- a) Internal enquiries will be carried out. The Course Director (summer) or Director of Studies (year-round) will speak to the student's friends and other members of staff to form a picture of the student's recent movements to help locate the student. Guidance on appropriate questions to ask is set out below. If appropriate, the Course Director / Director of Studies will arrange a search of the premises.
- b) If the student cannot be located within 60 minutes, the Course Director (CD) / Director of Studies will report the absence to the Emergency phone holder. He / she will decide whether the parents / agent should be informed immediately.
- c) If the student cannot be located within a further 60 minutes, the Emergency phone holder will contact the Police to identify if the Police have any information on the student's location (for example, if the student has been involved in an accident). Local hospitals should be contacted to find out if the pupil has been admitted.
- d) If these enquiries do not yield additional information about the student, the Police should be officially informed that the student is missing.
- e) If the student's parents / agent have not been previously contacted, they should be informed that the student is missing. The school should discuss any further steps taken with them.
- f) If the Police take over responsibility for the search for the student, all relevant information about the student will be passed to them.

Once the incident is resolved, a full written account of the incident must be produced by the person in charge of the incident on the day. The report is to be written on the same day and sent to the Directors.

MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURE

Once the incident is resolved, the SMT will review relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments and implement any necessary changes.

Procedure for students who have missed a 'check-in' on an activity or trip

Once a student goes missing (misses a sign in by 5 minutes) the leader/activity coordinator/social organiser/teacher in charge informs the Senior Social Organiser immediately has five minutes to try and find the student. This normally involves phoning them/ Whatsapp/ asking friends to phone/speaking to a Group Leader if relevant.

After five minutes (10 minutes late total) the Senior Social Organiser (SSO) (who is not directly in charge of any students) will take over trying to locate the student. The SSO should work out when the student last signed in/ last contact with the student, so that it is possible to establish how long the student has been missing. After a further fifteen minutes (twenty-five minutes since missed sign in) the SSO should notify the course director (and the emergency phone).

Normally it must be assumed that the student has been missing since their last contact with a member of staff. Thus, even though the student has only been missing for twenty-five minutes it should be borne in mind that it could already be approaching the two-hour deadline.

After the twenty-five-minute deadline, the person on the emergency phone is responsible for the decision-making, whilst the SSO keeps the person on the emergency phone and CD in the loop.

If a student goes missing on a trip / activity, a member of Select English staff should remain at an obvious location so that the student might be able to spot them.

Students over the age of 18

If a student over the age of 18 is thought to be missing, the member of staff should advise the Course Director, who in turn should inform the person on the emergency phone. The action taken will depend on the circumstances, but the questions below should be asked, and appropriate records kept.

In all cases questions to be asked:

- a) When was he/she last seen?
- b) Who was he/she with?
- c) Where might he/she have gone?
- d) Is there a school activity that he/she might be on?
- e) Has he/she been ill or injured and gone to the doctor or hospital?
- f) What emotional state did he/she appear to be in?

MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURE

- g) Has anything upset him/her recently?
- h) Did he/she speak to anyone about leaving?
- i) Who are his/her main friends at school?
- j) Does he/she have a mobile phone and what is the number?
- k) Is there any reason to believe he/she might have been abducted? (e.g. family custody dispute; very wealthy/prominent parents.)

Other action to consider taking

- Check that he/she is not in a hospital.
- Check his/her room for indications of how he/she is dressed, where he/she might have gone.
- Check his/her desk and wastepaper bins for scribbled notes.
- Ring his/her mobile (if he/she has one).

Police response:

The Police treat all missing person reports as serious. Each risk is assessed, and the following are trigger factors to be considered:

- Boy/Girl in an emotional or depressed state of mind;
- Unusual behaviour prior to disappearance;
- Boy/Girl needs essential medicine or treatment;
- Suspicion of abduction;
- Suspicion of self-harm/suicide;
- Involvement in a violent confrontation prior to disappearance;
- Previously disappeared and suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing.

Record keeping: The school will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing student including:

- the pupil's name
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the student was missing)
- the action taken to find the pupil
- whether the Police or Social Services were involved
- outcome or resolution of the incident
- any reasons given by the pupil for being missing
- any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident
- a record of the staff involved

A full written record of the incident will be kept in the pupil's file.

Review: This policy shall be reviewed every year by the Director Of Studies /DSL and updates will be made as necessary, considering any incidents that have occurred that

MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURE

indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the school and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents, agents, and pupils.