



# MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

FOUNDED IN 1480  
BY WILLIAM OF WAYNFLETE

## Missing Pupil Policy

<b>Reviewed</b>	January 2026
<b>Reviewer</b>	Usher
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## Policy statement

This policy applies to all staff (and volunteers) at Magdalen College School. It should be read with the Safeguarding Policy, and has recourse to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2025. The Master and Usher have considerable discretion in the application of this policy.

Parents may request a copy from the School or review the policy on the School website. It is associated with the Safeguarding Policy.

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- protect the health and safety of all pupils at the School;
- ensure that School staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

## Missing Child Policy

The welfare of all of our children at Magdalen College School is our paramount responsibility. A child being absent from education, particularly 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. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have 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. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. 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.

## Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school

All new pupils 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 the School. If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

The School admission 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.

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.

The School also has an attendance register which records pupil attendance. The attendance register is taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion we will record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Registers are legal records and school leaders must ensure that the school's admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Please see the School's Attendance Policy for more information.

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

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance.

The School has a statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten school days or more.

In the event that a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System goes missing, the School will report to UKVI if the pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points. Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Please refer to the School's Attendance Policy for further information on reporting duties.

## Prolonged and persistent absence

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.

Where a pupil has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the School and local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is, the School may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The School will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

In addition, the School recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

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.

## Procedure for pupil missing during the school day

In the event of a member of staff suspecting a pupil is unaccounted for, they should first check the register on iSAMS. If the pupil is recorded as present at school, the member of staff should inform the Usher's Office and in particular the School Administrator.

An initial search will be organised by the Usher's Office, with the assistance of others, such as reception, as required. This will include:

- Checking the pupil's timetable and whether he/she could be in the library, music lesson or other 'off-timetable' commitment, as well as school trip lists for the day if applicable;
- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts;
- Checking with the Medical Centre to see whether the pupil has reported sick or has an appointment;
- Check with Reception who will check the signing out/in book;
- Contact staff i/c last activity;
- Contact the senior member of staff on duty;
- Call the pupil's mobile telephone;
- Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil;
- Occupy all of the other pupils in their classroom(s);
- Contact the tutor, HoY, HoS or other senior member of staff to arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds, and to initiate and engage in further searches;
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit;
- If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the School staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to the School. If the pupil refuses to do so, staff members at the scene will attempt to continue to monitor the pupil's whereabouts. Staff should consider contacting the parents in such circumstances;

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.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps will be taken:

- Inform the Usher (who is also a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) or, in their absence, the Director of Safeguarding (DSL) or the relevant HoS who is also a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ask the Usher (or DSL or HoS as above) to ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion, and consider asking them to come to the School at once. All decisions on contacting parents should be made by the Usher or, in their absence, the DSL or HoS as above.
- The Usher (or DSL or HOS as above) must report the situation to the Extended Leadership Team along with the relevant details
- The Usher/DSL would notify the police after consultation with the parents (where appropriate) and provide the police with any other information reasonably requested by the police. A decision would be taken in accordance with the School's child protection policy and procedures as to whether the School should also contact children's social care in line with local procedures.
- The Usher would arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds.
- 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.
- The DSL would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with the LSCB this has happened
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- The School's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (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.

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

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- Inform the Usher and the DSL by mobile phone
- The remaining pupils would be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- Ask the Usher 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 or the School
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search (where relevant)
- Contact the Police immediately
- The DSL would inform the LSCB who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with the LSCB this has happened
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors without delay
- The School's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. If the child is injured, A report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

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.

## Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Usher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Usher will oversee a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Master
- 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 they appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.
- 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.

## Information to be provided to the police

When the School contacts the Police during the day or night, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up-to-date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil

The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels and no further notifications from the School should be necessary.

## Missing pupil records

The School will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil including:

- the pupil's name
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil 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 on CPOMS.