

# Missing Children Policy

Felixstowe International College



<b>Approved by:</b>	Chaerin Lee	<b>Date:</b> November 2020
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	September 2019	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	September 2022	

## **1. Introduction**

The FIC Missing Children Policy is written in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools & the Children's Act 1989;

NMS Standard 3.9;

There is a policy, known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary reporting, any boarder missing from school. A written record is made of any incident of a boarder missing from school, the action taken, and any reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

SAFEchild ([www.SAFEchild.co.uk](http://www.SAFEchild.co.uk) April 2010) points out that when children go missing, it is fortunately usually for a short time. However, they also highlight the necessity to have tight, robust policies & procedures that all staff are aware of and trained in to follow in the event that a student goes missing.

## **2. Common Situations where Students may be Reported as Missing**

**Safeguarding all our students is the highest priority at FIC.** Teaching, management & boarding staff at FIC are entrusted with the safety of our students and knowing where students are at all times. All staff have a duty to act immediately if they become aware that a student has gone missing. This situation would inevitably be a complete nightmare which would require immediate management.

Although not an exhaustive list, a student may be discovered missing in the following common situations;

1. During school-time; for example, a teacher reporting that a student has not arrived to class)
2. During meal breaks; for example, a student not present during lunch when there is no reasonable cause such as a music lesson
3. During evening free-time; for example, a student not in the Common Room or in his/her bedroom.
4. At bed time; for example, not present when the Housemother is doing final rounds.
5. During an excursion; for example, not present at a designated meeting point or register call.

The following procedures have been developed by FIC Academic, Boarding & Management staff in accordance with relevant government guidance & statutory obligations as outlined in the Introduction. This policy is reviewed annually by the Deputy Principal or at any time if a member of staff wishes to amend details to improve the efforts of staff or agencies involved in searching for missing children.

### **3. Timescale for Calling the Police via 999**

FIC has students aged 10 years to 19 years old. The timescale for calling the Police via 999 to report a student missing will be based on age & individual student circumstances.

As a general rule;

**Students aged 10-13 years - 10 minutes.**

The Police will be called after 10 minutes for students aged 10-13 years confirmed as missing.

**Students aged 14-17 years – 20 minutes.**

The Police will be called after 20 minutes for students aged 14-17 years confirmed as missing.

**Students aged 18-19 years – 30 minutes.**

The Police will be called after 30 minutes for students aged 18-19 years confirmed as missing.

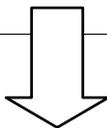
However, FIC recognises that each student should be regarded as an individual with his/her own specific needs & circumstances. Therefore, if the Deputy Principal or any staff member is aware of circumstances or other factors which give cause for concern, then the Police will be informed within a 10 minute window.

There are a number of factors which will give cause for concern. The following list is not exhaustive but enable staff to be aware of circumstances which may result in a student going missing;

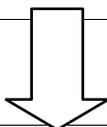
1. A student him/herself has expressed a desire to leave FIC or any other sentiment which may indicate frustration or reason to disappear. Clearly this would give rise to immediate concern and such a report would require urgent action by the staff member/student who heard a student express this or a similar sentiment. Action would require immediately informing the Deputy Principal, and Housemother on duty so that appropriate action could be taken by these staff members.
2. A student acting out of character (aggressive, agitated, depressed etc) in recent days or on the day the student is reported missing
3. A student has recently received upsetting news from family or friends at home
4. A student has recently experienced 'out of character' bad grades or been disciplined by a staff member for some reason
5. A student having experienced personal distress or change within FIC
6. A staff member has expressed particular concern about a student's behaviour or attitude.

#### **4. Procedure for Missing Child; ON School Premises at Maybush House**

If a student is reported missing, or suspected as missing at any time, the Deputy Principal (Ms Chaerin Lee) will be informed immediately as well as the Housemother on duty.



The fire alarm will then be set off. (This is the most effective way of gathering students together - rather than staff initially searching rooms & grounds and potentially wasting time). A register will be taken by the Deputy Principal or senior staff member on duty to establish whether or not the student is missing.

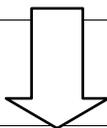


The Deputy Principal or senior staff member on duty will designate members of staff to conduct a thorough search of the grounds and buildings. The areas will be divided into;

1. Classrooms & toilets in main school buildings.
2. Male & female bedrooms, toilets & showers incl male & female rooms (Maybush House)
3. Common Rooms, Computer Room, Dining Room & Kitchen
4. School Grounds

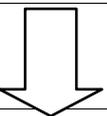
Staff will report back to the Deputy Principal or senior staff member on duty.

Hotspots to look for missing students include bedrooms, bedroom wardrobes, toilets & the student phone in the Common Room.



If the pupil is not found, the Deputy Principal or senior staff member on duty will call the Police (via 999) along with the student's parents or guardians & the Principal

Staff will use the telephone in the School Office, the Deputy Principal's office, or their own mobile phones.

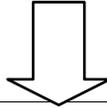


The Missing Child Incident Form will be completed & a recent photo of the student will be provided.

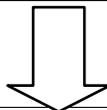
The Police will take charge on arrival & all staff will be made available to search, provide information, supervise other students or fulfill other duties as required.

## **5. Procedure for Missing Child; OFF School Premises**

If a student is reported missing, or suspected as missing at any time, the Deputy Principal (Ms Chaerin Lee) & excursion leader will be informed immediately as well as on-site staff - Housemother on duty in order to help provide information out in the field as required.

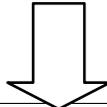


A register will be taken again by the Deputy Principal or excursion leader to establish whether or not the student is missing.



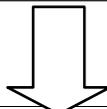
The Deputy Principal or excursion leader will inform venue (museum, cinema, shop) staff about the missing student & request immediate assistance to conduct a thorough search of the entire venue/immediate vicinity & last known whereabouts of the missing student. Hotspots include the venue shop and toilets.

The Deputy Principal or excursion leader will designate an FIC staff member to remain with other students & another FIC staff member to work with venue staff.



Within the appropriate timescale, if the pupil is not found the Deputy Principal or senior staff member on duty will call the Police (via 999) along with the student's parents or guardians & the Principal (Mrs Rebecca Mainprice). Emergency contact telephone numbers are kept in the Excursion Folder which the excursion leader always carries with him/her.

Staff will use their own mobile phones or venue phone.



The Missing Child Incident Form will be completed. A recent photo of the student should be provided. The Police will take charge on arrival & all staff will be made available to search, provide information, supervise other students or fulfill other duties as required.

## **6. Location of Emergency Information;**

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Contact Telephone Numbers -     | In school office on notice board     |
| • Missing Children Incident Forms | from Deputy Principal or in office   |
| • Student ID Photographs          | in school office – passports in safe |

## **7. Follow-Up**

The Principal and Deputy Principal will keep a record of any incidents involving missing pupils. On the return of a missing pupil, consideration will be given by the Principal and Deputy Principal, in consultation with the student's Parents and House Mother, as relevant, regarding the best course of action. This will focus on the support the student is likely to need including the possibility of counselling or other specialist professional assistance. Depending on circumstances, appropriate disciplinary action may also be taken.

In the worst case scenario, the Deputy Principal will take responsibility for liaising with the media on the advice of the Police.

## **8. Conclusion**

Suspecting or receiving a report that a student is missing will inevitably be extremely stressful for staff, parents, other students & the student him/herself. It is therefore essential that FIC staff do everything they can to mitigate this risk and remain alert to the potential for students to go missing, either voluntarily or involuntarily.

In the event of a confirmed report of a missing student, the above procedures will enable staff to take positive action to search for and successfully find the missing student. It is important for the Deputy Principal/Housemother/excursion leader to follow-up such an incident by holding a formal meeting with the student, his/her parents or guardian to discuss what led the student to go missing. External agencies should be utilised as appropriate in order to provide best care for the student, to deal with specific issues and minimise the risk of further disappearances.

FIC Policies on Safeguarding students on-site & off-site (eg. on excursions) should be read in conjunction with this policy. Training for all staff on best practice in the event of a student going missing is provided on induction and annually. Staff may request refresher-training at any time.

## FIC MISSING CHILD INCIDENT FORM

Use BLACK pen & PRINT clearly

<b>NAME &amp; AGE OF CHILD</b> (incl any nicknames)	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	
<b>LAST SEEN</b> (place, date, time & who with)	
<b>NATIONALITY &amp; LANGUAGES SPOKEN</b>	
<b>APPEARANCE</b> (height, size, hair colour, eye colour, distinguishing features)	
<b>CLOTHES LAST SEEN WEARING</b>	
<b>NAME &amp; CONTACT DETAILS OF SCHOOL GUARDIAN</b>	Ms Chaerin Lee (Deputy Principal) Mob 0754 031 0889
<b>NAME &amp; CONTACT DETAILS OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN</b>	
<b>ACTIONS TAKEN &amp; OUTCOME</b> (incl. date & time)	

Signed (Deputy Principal or Senior Staff Member taking charge); _____ PRINT NAME _____ POSITION _____ Date _____ Time _____
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Form reviewed by Deputy Principal/Principal; Signed _____ PRINT NAME _____ Date _____ Time _____
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## FIC MISSING CHILD INCIDENT FOLLOW-UP

<b>NAME &amp; AGE OF CHILD</b>	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	
<b>NAME &amp; CONTACT DETAILS OF SCHOOL GUARDIAN</b>	Ms Chaerin Lee (Deputy Principal) Mob 0754 031 0889
<b>NAME &amp; CONTACT DETAILS OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN</b>	
<b>ACTIONS TAKEN &amp; OUTCOME</b> (incl. date & time)	
<b>REASONS GIVEN BY THE STUDENT FOR GOING MISSING</b>	
<b>FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TAKEN BY FIC STAFF/PARENTS OR OTHER AGENCIES</b>	

Signed Deputy Principal or Senior staff member \_\_\_\_\_  
 PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Principal) \_\_\_\_\_  
 PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_