

Bedales Prep School Attendance and Missing Child Policy

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Author	Deputy Head Pastoral
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Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:

Inspector Folder	✓	
Website	Upload	✓
	Signpost	✓
Internal only		
Parent Portal	✓	
For Pupils/Students	✓	

School Attendance Policy

Day Children

At Bedales Prep, we see education as a partnership between the family, the child and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your child, and we look forward to your support in meeting this objective. All day children are required to be in school by 8.20 am. The school day for Groups (Years 4-6) ends at 4.10pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and at 4.30pm on Fridays. The finish time on Wednesday will depend on a pupil's choice – options are either 2.00pm, 4.00pm after activities and 5.30pm. Matches have their own collection times which are sent to parents and published on sports noticeboards.

The school day for Blocks (Years 7-8) finishes at 5.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The finish time on Wednesday will depend on a pupil's choice – options are either 2.00pm, 4.00pm after activities and 5.30pm. Matches have their own collection times which are sent to parents and published on sports noticeboards. On Fridays, Blocks children should be collected at 4.30pm. If Saturday school is in session, then Blocks pupils are expected in school for registration from 8.30am and should be collected at 12.40pm.

Pupils can stay on for activities each weekday which finish at 5.30pm for Groups and at 7pm for Blocks.

Reporting absences:

- If a child is ill, parents should e-mail (bedalespreception@bedales.org.uk) or telephone Reception (01730 300 200) before 8.00am on the first day of absence, giving a reason for absence. We will always telephone the home on the first day of an unexplained absence to determine the reason for absence.
- For dental or medical appointments, parents are asked to notify Reception who will inform the child's tutor.
- Requests for exceptional absence (i.e., absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) must be made via the request of absence form on the parent portal at least two weeks in advance. The Head will receive notification of this, and his PA will reply to you with the outcome of your request.
 - If the requested absence is during term time, then the request will be investigated in greater detail before a decision as to the outcome of the request is reached – this may involve phone calls with parents or members of staff seeking advice from external organisations.
 - If the request involves a visit to a country with a high prevalence of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), advice can be sought from the following resources:

[PDF FGM Schools Guidance 18.06.2019 \(nationalfgmcentre.org.uk\)](#)

[Female genital mutilation: help and advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Children are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless for a trip or visiting a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to you in advance. If parents do request to take a child off-site during the school day, written permission is required, and the child should sign out at Reception.

If a parent wishes their child to leave the school site with anyone other than those adults identified as having parental responsibility, they should do so by informing Reception by either ringing (permission should be witnessed by another adult) or by confirming in writing via email.

We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance in order that you can arrange your holidays without disrupting your child's education.

Boarders

Your child's boarding house (Dunhurst Boarding House as it is called at Bedales Prep) is central to their life at Bedales Prep. All children are cared for by House Parents and a team consisting of Matrons and Gap Assistants. Together, they will be responsible for your child during term, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal school hours. We expect your child to live with you or their guardian when they are away from school on Leave Weekends and at half-term during term time. We ask you to give written authority to your child's House Parent before they leave the school to stay with another family. We expect all pupils to sign out whenever they leave the school and to sign in on return.

Please contact the boarding team via email (boarding@dunhurst@bedales.co.uk) or by telephoning the Boarding House if they are taken ill during a Leave Weekend. Parents or Guardians should communicate formally with the school upon their child's return to school giving a reason for the absence. We will always telephone the home if your child is more than 1 hour late in returning from a Leave Weekend.

Requests for exceptional absence (i.e., absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) must be made via the request of absence form on the parent portal at least two weeks in advance. The Head will receive notification of this, and his PA will reply to you with the outcome of your request.

All children will register on Flat at the end of evening activities (7.00pm) and then again at bedtime.

Registration of children

All children register at the start of the day. For Groups' children, this is with their class tutor and for Blocks' children with their tutor and is recorded using iSAMS. The reception team check all these registers after registration closes and will telephone home if a child has not registered and a message has not been received detailing their absence. Children who arrive at the school after registration closes at 8.30am should sign in at Reception. The exception to this is on Wednesday when Blocks' children register in The Well before going to Squads.

Following morning registration, the reception team produces a Fire List which is kept at Reception in case it is required. Absentees can be viewed on iSAMS and is constantly reviewed throughout the day.

All children will register in their tutor bases in the afternoon (Blocks' children before lunch at 12.40pm and Groups' children after lunch at 1.45pm in Period 7) using iSAMS. The exception to this is Blocks' children on a Tuesday who register with the Ensemble with which they are involved and Groups' children on a Wednesday who register with the member of staff on duty on the queue in the dining hall.

On a Saturday morning, Blocks' children are registered as a Year group in the Well (Block 1) and Bees' Barn (Block 2). School starts at 8.40am on Saturday.

Children attending activities are registered prior to their activity using SOCS.

Pupils are also registered when attending lessons and Reception is notified if a pupil has an unexplained reason for their absence. If required, the Missing Pupils protocols are then enacted.

Annual Census

All schools in membership of ISC take part in that organisation's annual census of students, staff and expenditure, etc. From January 2009 it has been mandatory to include student ethnic monitoring data, using the same methodology as the maintained sector.

Contact with Local Authorities

Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to identify children of compulsory school age who are not in education. Schools may therefore receive an enquiry about whether they are educating a specific child. Before deleting a child's name from the register, the school is required to alert the student's Local Authority as soon as possible after a student of compulsory school age is taken out of school to be home educated, when the family has apparently moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend, when the child is in custody for more than four months or has been permanently excluded, has been absent without authority for 10 consecutive sessions, or fails to attend school regularly, or is removed from the school roll without his or her next school being known.

Missing Child Policy

NB – A copy of this section of the policy can be found in a red folder on the wall behind Reception.

Upon first suspicion that a child is missing, having checked with Reception for knowledge of the child's absence, the member of staff concerned should inform the most senior member of staff available: Head / Deputy Head Pastoral / Deputy Head Academic / Head of Blocks / Head of Groups / Assistant Head of Blocks. This senior member of staff will base themselves in the Deputy Head Pastoral's Office and will co-ordinate the search. The aim initially is to ascertain the last known whereabouts and circumstances of the child suspected of being missing.

Helpful questions to ask at this point:

- What is the child's timetable? This can be found on iSAMS.
- Has the child got a music lesson? Or an MRS? This can be found on iSAMS.
- Has the child got an activity in another area of the site? E.g., tennis
- Has the child swapped activities and not let the school office know?
- Is the child in a counselling session?
- Is the child in their known 'safe space'?

The school site will then be searched by area (simultaneously) by staff (coordinated by the senior member of staff). Each member of staff involved will have a two-way radio to keep in contact throughout the process.

- Changing Rooms & Toilets
- All activity locations that day
- Classrooms, Well area, Library & ICT suites
- Bees' Barn
- Nest/Scoff's Café
- ODW

- Cobb, Workshop and Cobb's Field
- Sports fields, Astro pitch; Prep-prep Orchard and surrounding area
- Boarding Flats and Communal areas

Appendix

Missing Child Policy Checklist

Upon first suspicion that a child is missing, having checked with Reception for knowledge of the child's absence, the member of staff concerned should inform the most senior member of staff available: Head / Deputy Head Pastoral / Deputy Head Academic / Head of Blocks / Head of Groups / Assistant Head of Blocks. This senior member of staff will base themselves in the Deputy Head Pastoral's Office and will co-ordinate the search. The aim initially is to ascertain last known whereabouts and circumstances of child suspected to be missing.

Helpful questions to ask at this point:

What is the child's timetable? This can be found on iSAMS.	
Has the child got a music lesson? Or an MRS? This can be found on iSAMS.	
Has the child got an activity in another area of the site? E.g. tennis Or changed activity?	
Is the child in their known 'safe space'?	

The school site will then be searched by area (simultaneously) by staff (coordinated by the 'senior member of staff'). Each member of staff involved will have a two-way radio to keep in contact throughout the process.

Boys' Changing Rooms, toilets & Blue Room	
Girls' Changing Rooms & toilet	
Classrooms, Well area, Library & ICT suites	
Nest, Scoff's, JB's, The Hall & Music Corridor	
ODW & Bees' Barn	
Cobb, Workshop & Cobb's Field	
Sports' Field, Dunannie Orchard & surrounding area	
Boarding Wings, Loft & Communal Areas All activity locations for that day?	

If the search is successful, report back to the 'senior member of staff' using the two-way radios. Also inform Reception immediately.

If the search is unsuccessful:

- Report back to senior member of staff.
- Sound fire alarm for check of full school register.
- If the above is completed and they are still not in attendance, telephone parents of day pupils to check they have not been picked up and not signed out. If a boarder, telephone parents to inform them.

Instigate a further search with staff members present. The search is coordinated by two-way radio by a senior member of staff using the Deputy Head Pastoral's office:

- by car down Bell Hill, past the railway station, through Petersfield.
- by car through Steep, then up Alton Road.
- by foot/bike past sand quarry, across footbridge, and pedestrian route to Petersfield (Tilmore Road).

- by foot: Bedales.
- in the case of a day child, a search by car may be organised in the appropriate direction.

Police to be informed about the missing child after all the reasonable checking and searching stages have been undertaken or before if initial investigations raise bigger concerns (i.e., child seen getting to an unknown person's car).

Common sense and flexibility are required, but probably no more than 1 hour before police should be contacted. Give the police details of circumstances and as much detail of the child as possible (including clothing, home address, telephone number and photographs taken from iSAMS). It may be advisable to contact Petersfield Railway Station as a result of police advice.

Missing Child Policy Recording Sheet

Date & Time of Incident:	
Name of pupil involved:	
Names of members of staff involved (identify senior member):	
Description of Incident	
Date & Time of Report	
Member of staff recording information	
Information sent to SMT for review – to be signed by Head	
Action (if applicable) to be taken by Bedales Prep	