

Missing Student Policy 2026-2027

Date: September 2026
Review Date: **September 2027**
Policy Contact: Mr William Yates, Senior Deputy Head

Missing Student Policy

Introduction

1. The welfare of all of the students at Seaford College is of paramount importance. Every adult who works at the school is aware that they have a responsibility for helping to keep all of our students safe at all times.
2. At Seaford College students are registered in tutor groups before school starts in the morning. Registration is then taken at 16.20. Further registers are taken in all lessons. Boarders are also registered at roll call in the evening and then again in the evening and at bed times.

Missing Students During the School Day

3. A student may be identified as missing:
 - a. After an absence at morning registration is not accounted for by the Reception staff calling home either by phone or Clarion Call.
 - b. By observation in class, by a classroom teacher, after comparison with the absence sheet on the school registration system.
 - c. On reconciliation with the afternoon register.
4. Any member of staff who discovers a discrepancy must immediately notify the Deputy Head's PA, who will:
 - a. Contact staff who might previously taught or tutored the student that day.
 - b. Contact No. 46
 - c. Contact the housemaster/mistress.
 - d. Check all lists of trips out of school.
 - e. Inform the Senior Deputy Head or another member of SMT.
5. If the Senior Deputy Head is informed that a student is missing he will then instigate a search of the College, having ascertained when the student was last seen. If this is unsuccessful a wider search of the College grounds may be instigated, possibly using a larger team of adults. A 'Missing' notice will be distributed via email, with the name of the student, photo, and the date and time of the first notified absence.
6. All teachers due to teach the student later that day will be advised that they must immediately inform the Deputy Heads' PA or the Senior Deputy Head or member of SMT co-ordinating the search if the student appears at their lesson.
7. If the student is still missing after one hour (this should be calculated from the point that they were last seen) the Senior Deputy Head or member of SMT co-ordinating the search will:
 - a. Contact parents to inform and ask for information. Parents are then to be updated every fifteen minutes.
 - b. Open a written record of the incident, which will log all specific actions taken.
 - c. Inform the Head Master.
8. A whole College fire alarm practice may be considered at any time to help to try to locate the student. The whole College may be evacuated to the Sports Hall in such circumstances.
9. If the student is still not located the Senior Deputy Head or member of SMT co-ordinating the search will update parents and a search of local roads may be made by foot or by car by available staff. The Senior Deputy Head or member of SMT will notify the Police and the College will act in accordance with Police advice.

10. Depending on circumstances the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Senior Deputy Head, may inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board and will cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
11. If stage (9) is reached the Chair of College Governors should be informed.
12. At any point, when the student is located, staff should be informed by a notice circulated by email.
13. It might be, depending on the outcome of searches, that the College insurers need to be informed.
14. If the student is located, but has been injured, a report will need to be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE.
15. If stage (7) is reached, a full record of all actions taken up to the stage at which the student was found will need to be made for an incident report. If appropriate policy will be adjusted.

Missing Boarders Out of the School Day

16. A boarding student will be deemed as missing if:
 - a. They fail to check in at the appropriate time, and after a certain 'period of grace' (no more than 30 minutes) can still not be located.
 - b. They are found not to be in their room after lights out and cannot be located in the Boarding House.
 - c. They are not able to be located during a fire alarm and cannot be located in the Boarding House (and the alarm is found to be false).
17. Once a boarding student is deemed as missing the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. The member of staff on duty in the Boarding House should inform the Housemaster/mistress and the Senior Deputy Head as soon as possible that there is a student missing. The Senior Deputy Head will then coordinate the search.
 - b. The Senior Deputy Head will then speak to students and friends of the missing boarder who may have been with the missing boarder prior to their disappearance to determine at which point the boarder was last seen.
 - c. If the boarder is not found, the Head Master will be informed and a fire drill will be considered. A more thorough search of the College site will take place.
 - d. If the boarder is not located the Senior Deputy Head will contact the boarder's parents to explain what has happened and the procedures that have been followed. Following this the Senior Deputy Head will notify the Police, and the College will act in accordance with Police advice.
 - e. The Senior Deputy Head may, in some circumstances, inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board and will cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
 - f. If stage (d) has been reached the Chairman of the College Governing Body will be informed.
 - g. If stage (d) has been reached the staff body will be informed as early as possible the next working day.
 - h. Depending on the outcome of searches the College insurers may need to be informed.
 - i. If the boarder is located but has been injured, a report will need to be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE.
18. Full records will be kept of the procedures followed and, if appropriate, policy will be adjusted.

Procedure to be Followed if a Student Goes Missing on a Trip or Visit.

19. If a student is found to be missing during a school trip or visit, the following procedure should be followed:

- a. An immediate head count should be carried out in order to ensure that all other students are present.
- b. An adult will search the immediate vicinity.
- c. The Senior Deputy Head should be informed by telephone.
- d. The remaining students should be taken back to transport or, on a residential trip, the hotel/accommodation. If the trip is local students should be taken back to the College, whilst one adult remains 'on location'.
- e. If the trip is to an 'enclosed' area (e.g. theatre, shopping centre etc.), the venue manager should be contacted to arrange a search.
- f. The Senior Deputy Head will inform the Head and then will contact the student's parents and explain what has happened and the procedures that have been followed. Following this the Senior Deputy Head will contact the Police and the College will act in accordance with Police advice.
- g. The Senior Deputy Head, in certain circumstances, may inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- h. The College will cooperate with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- i. If stage (f) has been reached, the Chairman of the College Governing Body will need to be informed.
- j. Depending on the outcome of searches the College insurers may need to be informed.
- k. If the student is located but has been injured, a report will need to be made, under RIDDOR, to the HSE.

20. Full records will be kept of the procedures followed and, if appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

Procedure to be Followed by Staff when a Student is not Collected on Time

21. If a student is not collected within an hour of the agreed collection time the College will call the contact numbers for the parent. During this time the student will be safely looked after by the College. The Senior Deputy Head will be informed.

22. If there is no response from the parent's contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a three hour period the Senior Deputy Head will contact the Social Care Duty Officer. The College will be able to offer emergency accommodation for the student, but if it is more appropriate Social Care will make emergency arrangements. Social Care will arrange for a visit to be made to the student's house and will check with the Police. The College will make a full written report of the incident. The Chairman of the College Governing Body will be informed.