

# Missing Pupil Policy



CATERHAM  
SCHOOL



CATERHAM  
PREP

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## CATERHAM SCHOOL ETHOS AND AIMS

### Inspiring Education For Life

Caterham School is one of the leading co-educational schools in the country. We are committed to providing an environment in which all pupils are challenged to be the best they can be and one in which pastoral care and well-being underpin academic, co-curricular and sporting excellence. The majority of our pupils are day pupils but we are also a thriving boarding community, which enriches the educational opportunity and experience for all. We believe in providing an education for life for all Caterhamians and we seek to ensure that the learning experience at our school blends the best of tradition with the exciting opportunities provided by new technology. Learning how to learn is a key facet of a Caterham education and is in our view an essential skill for life in the twenty-first century. We believe that a truly excellent school is about more than academic achievement alone: it is also about developing a passion for learning, a capacity for independent and critical thinking, self-awareness and resilience, self-confidence without arrogance and genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

At Caterham School we focus on developing the whole person, aiming to ensure that each pupil leaves here ready for the challenges of life at university and beyond and understanding their responsibilities towards others. We want our pupils to leave Caterham well equipped to engage positively with a rapidly changing world as accomplished problem solvers and innovators, confident in their ability to lead and with a clear appreciation of and respect for the views and potential of others. In so doing we remain true to our founding Christian principles and values.

### Policy Statement

The welfare of all of our pupils at Caterham School is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school is aware that they have a responsibility for helping to keep all of the pupils safe at all times. It is therefore, the responsibility of all staff to search actively for pupils who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every pupil is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

All Caterham School pupils are registered before school starts in the mornings. Registration is taken again after lunch for all pupils. A list of absentees is held in the school office. Therefore, for the purpose of this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being not present without authorisation or explanation. On occasions when a staff member identifies a pupil as missing from their expected location, immediate action is required as outlined in the procedures below. Communications with parents and the appropriate services (particularly the police) are an integral part of the procedure and all instance of a missing pupil must be reported to the Headmaster, Head of the Preparatory or their Deputies and the appropriate investigations made.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting. Caterham School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

Caterham School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document. In line with our Provision of Information policy, this document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the main school office and should be read in conjunction with the following documents: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and Attendance Policy and Procedures. This documentation also complies with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding (2022), Standard 20: Staffing and Supervision. This policy works in conjunction with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2024.

**Procedure for Missing Day Pupils (Senior School)**

A pupil may be identified as missing:

- After an absence at morning registration is not confirmed by the office staff's contact with home.
- By comparing pupils in a class with the day's absence sheet.
- On reconciliation with the afternoon registration.
- By a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil.

Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the School Secretary who will:

- Contact and make the necessary check such as the tutor/teacher to assess whether the absence is expected, the Health Centre to check for any known medical emergency. Check all lists of trips out of School and check the signing out books at Reception.

If the pupil is still found to be missing, the School Office will immediately:

- Inform the Deputy Head and/or SMT members, who will initiate and oversee a search of the site.
- Coordinate and make the necessary search over the school grounds.
- Advise all teachers due to teach or tutor the pupil later that day that they must immediately inform the office if the pupil appears.

If the site search fails:

- The fire alarm may be sounded so that a full register can be taken. The fire alarm monitoring service should be informed ahead of an alarm being sounded.
- The Headmaster and parents will be informed, and in some cases a search of local roads will be made on foot, or by car, by available staff and parents as appropriate. This may include the ground staff (Head Groundsman 07973 238234) or caretaking team (Facilities Manager 07377 658083/01883 330859)
- On completion of this and any subsequent searches made over the day parents will continue to be informed of progress.
- At his discretion, the Headmaster will arrange for the police to be informed.

If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The Headmaster/Head of the Preparatory School and parents will be directly informed by the School Office.
- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- The Headmaster or Head of the Preparatory School will initiate a full inquiry and provide a written report. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file.

**Procedure for Missing Boarders**

During the school day, the procedure is the same as that for a missing day pupil, but includes:

- Contact the Boarding Housemaster or Housemistress.

A boarder may be identified as missing if their whereabouts cannot be confirmed visually, from information provided by the pupil or other trustworthy pupils with regard to their movements, the sign-in book or telephone contact with them or their parent/guardian.

Staff discovering a discrepancy must:

- Notify the Boarding Housemaster or Housemistress, and/or the duty boarding staff member and Deputy Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing)
- Attempt to ascertain whereabouts from friends.
- Attempt to contact the pupil on his/her mobile phone.
- Arrange a check of the School grounds.
- Contact staff who might previously have taught the pupil that day (if a weekday).
- Check the list of trips and activities out of School.

If a pupil is still missing, the staff should:

- Inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) and the Headmaster, or in his absence the Principal Deputy Head.
- Notify the Boarding Tutor and check for any known circumstances that might have led to the pupil being missing.
- Contact their parents/guardians (with due regard for time zones).
- Contact back-up duty staff, and request assistance as appropriate, including the ground staff (Head Groundsman 07973 238234) or caretaking team (Facilities Manager 07377 658083/01883 330859)
- The fire alarm may be sounded so that a full register of those on site can be made. If this step is taken, the fire alarm monitoring service should be informed ahead of an alarm being sounded.
- If necessary a search of local roads, shops, potential haunts etc. should be made on foot or by car where appropriate.

On completion of this and any subsequent searches made, the Headmaster and parents/guardians will continue to be informed of progress. The Headmaster or in his absence, the Principal Deputy Head, will arrange for the Police to be informed.

If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The Headmaster, Parents/guardians, Principal Deputy Head will be directly informed by the Boarding staff.
- The Police will be informed if they have been involved.
- The Headmaster or Boarding Housemaster will initiate a full inquiry, and provide a written report. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file.

### **After any Missing Pupil Incident**

- The Senior member of staff involved will sensitively discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.
- The Head of Preparatory School or Headmaster will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- The incident report will detail:
  - I. The date and time of the report

2. What staff/children were in the group/class
  3. When the child was last seen in the group/class/boarding house
  4. What has taken place in the group/class/boarding house since then and the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and, if appropriate, procedures (including risk assessments and training) may be updated.

**Preparatory School (Shirley Goss and Mottrams)****Procedure**

A pupil may be identified as missing:

- After an absence at morning registration is not confirmed by the office staff's contact with home.
- By comparing pupils in a class with the day's absence sheet.
- On reconciliation with the afternoon registration.
- By a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil.

**Step 1.** Try to establish why the child may be absent. Check the absence list on CHIP then check with children in the class:

- Was the child in the last lesson?
- Is the child in the toilet? Send a pupil to check.
- Is the child at an individual lesson e.g. musical instrument?
- Was the child sent to the office unwell?
- Do they know where the child may be? If not:

**Step 2.** Contact the Office to check:

- Is the pupil in the Health Centre? (call 250 or 07930 177 837)
  - Is the child in the Senior School Music Centre, Sports Centre or Drama Studio?
  - Is the child at Mottrams (if usually at Shirley Goss)?
  - Is the pupil temporarily absent? (dentist etc)
- If not:
- Check with Form teacher/Tutor on movements when last seen.

**Step 3.** Notify Senior Deputy Head (Shirley Goss) or Head of Pre-Prep (Mottrams)

- Use any available staff to assist with search.
- One member of staff should stay in the office to co-ordinate.
- All other staff take mobiles or walkie-talkie and search.

At **Shirley Goss**, search:

- Main building, Soderberg Hall, Y4 and Y6 block including toilets.
- Ground floor including changing rooms.
- Playgrounds including shed, area behind the hall, Titch Pitch, Pavilion and Pavilion field, car park.

- Top and Bottom paths to Senior School.

At **Mottrams**, search:

- Ground floor including kitchens and toilets.
- First floor including toilets and reading room'
- Second floor including back staircase and staff room.
- Tarmac area to rear of Mottrams, playgrounds, sheds.
- Mottrams' field, immediate area of woodland.
- Car park, slip road.
- Cellars.
- Path between Mottrams and Shirley Goss.

**Step 4.** Notify Headmaster and search:

- Bridleway to Viewpoint
- Harestone Valley Road
- (use cars if necessary) If still not found after 10 minutes:
- Call parents
- Call police **999**

**After the Incident**

- The Senior member of staff involved will sensitively discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.
- The Head of Preparatory School or Headmaster will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- The incident report will detail:
  1. The date and time of the report
  2. What staff/children were in the group/class
  3. When the child was last seen in the group/class/boarding house
  4. What has taken place in the group/class/boarding house since then and the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and, if appropriate, procedures (including risk assessments and training) may be updated.
- OFSTED is informed in the case of an incident of a missing EYFS pupil.