



MISSING PUPIL POLICY

This document outlines the policy and gives the rationale behind it.

AIMS

1. To ensure that Bale's Farm's systems enable key members of staff, within reason, to know the whereabouts of all pupils attending the outdoor learning provision.
2. To identify possible weaknesses in the systems and to suggest possible improvements.
3. To formalise a coherent and workable procedure for use in the event of a pupil going missing.

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Bale's Farm takes an attendance register in the morning upon arrival onto site and in the afternoon after lunch. These are kept on file and sent to the required authorities as and when is necessary.

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PROCEDURES

For the purposes of this document a missing pupil is broadly defined as a pupil who is not where he / she should be at the expected time.

Since this can encompass a wide variety of situations, from the potentially extremely serious to the routine, it will be necessary for the teaching staff, based upon their knowledge of the individual concerned, the time of day and any other relevant factors to categorise the concern as follows:

Category 1 – “Urgent Concern”:

The child/young person is not where he / she is supposed to be, the whereabouts are unknown **and** there is cause for serious concern about the person's welfare.

(e.g. There is real or implied threat of self-harm; a pupil is missing having been feeling extremely unwell)

Category 2 – “Concern”:

The child/young person is not where he / she is supposed to be, the whereabouts are unknown **but** there is no immediate cause for serious concern about the person's welfare. *(E.g. A pupil is running late.)*

The category chosen will determine subsequent procedure.

Category 1 – “Urgent Concern”:

The teaching staff – or, in his/her absence, another responsible adult - should attempt a search of the grounds for the missing pupil.

Other pupils may be able to provide a satisfactory account of the missing person’s whereabouts and the signing out book may provide the answer.

If these avenues fail to resolve the problem, James Bosworth should be informed right away.

After a review of the situation and the actions taken so far, a decision will then be made as to whether the parents and police should be called. Depending on circumstances, this decision should be made within an hour of James Bosworth being notified of the incident. If called, the parents or guardians should be kept abreast of all developments at frequent and regular intervals by the teaching staff. The commissioning service involved with the young person will also need to be notified of the circumstances and updated through developments.

All category 1 incidents should be formally reported as an “incident” in accordance with Bale’s Farms policy. The decision as to when a Category 1 “Urgent Concern” absence becomes a “Critical Incident” rests with James Bosworth.

Category 2 – “Concern”:

Other pupils may be able to provide a satisfactory account of the missing person’s whereabouts or the signing out book may provide the answer.

The teaching staff – or, in his/her absence, another responsible adult - should attempt a search of the grounds for the missing pupil.

If these avenues fail to resolve the problem, James Bosworth should be informed right away.

After a review of the situation and the actions taken so far, the category 2 will be raised to category 1. A decision will then be made as to whether the parents and police should be called. Depending on circumstances, this decision should be made within an hour of James Bosworth being notified of the incident. If called, the parents or guardians should be kept abreast of all developments at frequent and regular intervals by the teaching staff. All category 2 incidents should be formally reported as an “incident” in accordance with Bale’s Farms policy

Day Pupils

The Missing Pupil Policy applies to any child/young person whose whereabouts is unknown at all times when Bale’s Farm assumes responsibility. At other times, Bale’s Farm will endeavor to provide all reasonable means of support whilst recognising that the parents are ultimately responsible for the young persons’ welfare and safety.

Safeguarding and child protection

In all cases, a decision will be taken in accordance with Bale’s Farm child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures as to whether Bale’s Farm should also contact children’s social care in line with local procedures.

ATTENDANCE

In the instance that a young person doesn't attend Bales Farm Outdoor Learning, we would follow this up by contacting the parents/guardians to find out why they are unable to attend. An unauthorised absence of a young person going missing is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. After three missed sessions we would then perform a physical welfare check and visit the young person at home. Throughout the process we will also keep all relative parties informed of proceedings and take any appropriate action necessary.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where a young person goes missing on repeat occasions.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed every year as part of Bale's Farm annual review of safeguarding and updated as necessary. The next review date is 05/03/2026

In undertaking the review the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take into account any incidents in the termly safeguarding review meetings that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at Bale's Farm and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

