Beat: Miscellaneous

British girl, 15, thought to have run away to France with teacher

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USPA News - A 15-year-old British girl is believed to have run away to France with her 30-year-old math teacher, police said on Monday as her parents made an emotional appeal. The girl was described as excited and told her mother she loved her just before she left.

Megan Stammers, 15, was reported missing at 12:30 p.m. local time on Friday after she failed to turn up for class at the Bishop Bell C of E School in Eastbourne, a coastal town in East Sussex, about 83 kilometers (51 miles) southeast of central London. Her math teacher, 30-year-old Jeremy Forrest from Ringmer, also failed to show up. The schoolgirl had told her parents she was staying with friends the night before, but police now know the pair boarded a ferry from Dover, England to Calais, France at around 9:30 p.m. on Thursday night. Police had initially said the pair boarded the ferry on Friday evening but a spokeswoman clarified the information on Monday. "They boarded a ferry after 9.30 pm on Thursday night. [Her] family believed she was staying with friends. She was reported missing when she didn`t turn up to school the next day," said Jenni Nuttall, a spokeswoman for Sussex Police, when asked why Megan`s family did not report her missing until Friday afternoon. In an emotional appeal on Monday, Danielle Wilson asked her daughter to come home. "Sweetheart, I don`t care what you have done or why, but you can tell I`m in pieces and I just want you home," she said. "Please darling, just do anything. Text me, ring me, send me a message. I`ve sent you a message on Facebook. Just do anything. The phone number hasn`t changed at home, so just ring, please, sweetheart." The pair had tickets to return to England on late Sunday evening but they were not used. "The scheduled ferry and the passenger list were checked but they were not on either," Chief Inspector Jason Tingley said. "We believe the pair may still be in France and we are working with the UK Border Agency, the British Embassy in France and the French authorities in a bid to trace them." Police are asking anyone in France who has seen a couple matching their description or Forrest`s car, a black Ford Fiesta with license plate GJ08 RJO, to contact Sussex Police or local police. Authorities in France are on the lookout for the pair and have issued an alert to all highway patrols, but no sightings have been reported. It is unclear whether the pair was in a relationship before they left, but Wilson described her daughter as being excited when she last saw her. A blog posted on Forrest`s website on May 19 also talked about trying to deal with a "moral dilemma," although he did not refer to Megan or anyone else by name. "It will have to be a bit vague to be public-ally digestible," he wrote. Wilson, describing the last time she saw Megan, said: "She was going out the door .. and she puts her arms around me and kisses me and that, and she was really excitable, almost like an excitable puppy jumping around, and she grabbed my shoulders and said to me, `Mom, can you look me in the eye?`, and I said, because she was fuzzy, `Meg, please get off me.` And she said, `No, mom, look me in the eye,` and I looked her in the eye, and she went, `I love you`, and then she left." In the May 19 blog post on Forrest`s website, he said he had to deal with a "moral dilemma" about a week earlier. "And the overiding (sic) question it left me with was this; How do we, and how should we, define what is right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable??? I came to a few different conclusions, mainly that actually we get a lot of things wrong, but at the end of the day I was satisfied that if you can look yourself in the mirror and know that, under all the front, that you are a good person, that should have faith in your own judgement." Police also appealed to Megan during Monday`s press conference, asking her to make contact and assuring her she is not in trouble. "We believe that you left of your own accord with Jeremy but we need to hear that you are ok," Tingley said in a message to Megan. "Your family and friends are extremely worried but you are not in any trouble. Please do make contact with us." Talking directly to Forrest, Tingley said the priority right now is to know that Megan is safe. "My message to Mr Forrest is that this may have not gone as you expected it would," he said. "Right now our priority is to know that Megan is safe and I would ask you to do the right thing and make contact with us. We will work with you to get you both safely back into the country." Megan is described as white, 5` 6" (1.67 meter) tall, with long straight dark brown hair, blue eyes and was last seen wearing a white vest top and silver chain. Jeremy is of slim build with fuzzy facial hair and mousy brown hair. He wears square glasses, dresses casually and has a black star tattoo on his upper left arm.

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