

Missing Learner Procedure

Procedure for learners who do not attend and cannot be contacted

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out the actions to be taken when a learner:

- Does **not attend** a scheduled session or activity, **and**
- Cannot be contacted, and
- Has **not** followed an agreed absence or reporting process.

The procedure aims to:

- Safeguard learners effectively
- Ensure timely, proportionate responses
- Meet statutory safeguarding and duty-of-care responsibilities
- Support SEND learners who may be at increased risk

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All learners aged **16–25**
- Including learners with **SEND, EHCPs, medical needs or vulnerabilities**
- On-site, off-site, and community-based provision
- Routine attendance and scheduled off-site activities

3. Relevant Legislation and Guidance (England)

This procedure is informed by the following:

- **Education Act 2002** – duty to safeguard and promote welfare
- **Children Act 1989 & 2004** – duties relating to safeguarding (under-18s)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** – for learners under 18
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children** – multi-agency working
- **Care Act 2014** – safeguarding adults at risk (18–25)
- **Equality Act 2010** – reasonable adjustments for SEND learners
- **GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018** – lawful information sharing for safeguarding

Safeguarding takes precedence over data protection where there is a risk of harm.

4. Definitions

- **Missing learner:** A learner who is expected to attend but does not arrive and cannot be contacted.
- **Vulnerable learner:** A learner with SEND, anxiety, medical needs, SEMH needs, history of going missing, or safeguarding concerns.

5. Immediate Actions (Day 1 – Non-Attendance)

Step 1: Confirm absence

- Check registers, timetables, and any reported absences.
- Confirm the learner was **expected** to attend.

Step 2: Attempt contact (within 30–60 minutes)

- Call the learner's mobile phone
- Send a text message
- Check college email or agreed communication platform

Record:

- Time of attempts
- Method used
- Outcome

6. Escalation When Learner Cannot Be Contacted

Step 3: Contact emergency / parent / carer

If no response from the learner:

- Contact parent(s), carer(s), or emergency contacts
- Check if there is a known reason for absence
- Confirm last known whereabouts if possible

Step 4: Assess risk level

Staff must consider:

- Age of learner

- SEND needs and EHCP outcomes
- Mental health / anxiety / SEMH needs
- Medical conditions
- History of missing episodes
- Whether this behaviour is **out of character**

If the learner is considered **high risk**, escalate **immediately**.

7. Safeguarding Escalation

Step 5: Inform safeguarding lead

- Notify the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or deputy
- Share all actions taken and information gathered

The DSL will decide next steps, which may include:

- Continued monitoring
- Welfare check escalation
- External agency involvement

8. Contacting External Agencies

Police

- **Emergency (immediate danger): 999**
- **Non-emergency missing concern: 101**

Provide:


- Learner's full name and age
- Description and SEND / vulnerability profile
- Last known location and time
- Actions taken by the college

Adult Safeguarding (18+)

If the learner is an adult at risk:

- Contact **Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team**
- Birmingham Adult Safeguarding – Contact Details

Primary number (to report concerns / seek advice):

 0121 303 1234

(Adult Social Care Contact Centre – Monday to Friday, 9:00am–5:00pm)

Out-of-Hours (Urgent Safeguarding Concerns)

If the concern is urgent and it's **outside normal office hours**:

 **0121 464 9001**

(Adult Social Care **Out of Hours Team**)

- Follow local multi-agency safeguarding procedures

Children's Services (Under 18)


Where a learner **under 18** is missing, uncontactable, or there are **safeguarding concerns**, staff must follow **Local Safeguarding Children Partnership** procedures.

Action to Take

- Escalate concerns immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- A referral must be made if there are concerns about the learner's **safety, wellbeing, or vulnerability**, particularly if:
 - Their whereabouts are unknown
 - The behaviour is out of character
 - The learner has SEND, SEMH or medical needs
 - There is risk of harm

Referral and Contact Details (Birmingham)

Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS)

 **0121 303 1888** (Mon–Thu 8:45am–5:15pm, Fri 8:45am–4:15pm)

[[lscpbirm...ham.org.uk](https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk)], [[birmingham...rust.co.uk](https://www.birminghamrust.co.uk)]

Emergency Out-of-Hours Team

 **0121 675 4806** [[lscpbirm...ham.org.uk](https://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk)], [[birmingham...rust.co.uk](https://www.birminghamrust.co.uk)]

Emergency Services (Immediate danger)

 **999**

9. Off-Site Activities (e.g. Gym Visits, Community Access)

If a learner:

- Does not arrive at an off-site activity **or**
- Becomes separated from the group

Staff must:

1. Check immediate area
2. Alert visit leader
3. Contact DSL immediately
4. Contact emergency services if not located promptly

Off-site procedures must align with:

- Visit risk assessment
- Lost/missing learner procedure
- Supervision plans

10. Recording and Documentation

All incidents must be recorded, including:

- Times and actions taken
- Contacts made
- Decisions taken by DSL
- External agency involvement
- Outcome and follow-up actions

Records must be:

- Factual
- Confidential
- Stored securely in line with GDPR

11. Follow-Up Actions

Once the learner is located:

- Conduct a welfare check
- Offer support as required
- Review risk assessments if needed
- Update EHCP support strategies where appropriate
- Consider whether additional safeguards are required

12. Staff Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Teaching / Support Staff	Identify non-attendance, initiate procedure
Visit Leader	Manage off-site incidents
DSL / Deputy	Risk assessment and escalation
Senior Leadership	Oversight and policy compliance

13. Key Contact Numbers (Insert Local Details)

- **Police (Emergency):** 999
- **Police (Non-emergency):** 101
- **DSL:** 0121-257-6072
- **Local Authority Safeguarding:** 0121 303 1234

14. Review

This procedure must be reviewed:

- Annually
- After any serious incident
- Following changes to safeguarding guidance or legislation

This procedure reflects the college's commitment to safeguarding, proportionate risk management, and the specific needs of SEND learners, ensuring timely and appropriate responses to missing learner concerns.

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