



MISSING PERSONS POLICY & PROCEDURE

DATE APPROVED:	August 2025	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	August 2026
POLICY OWNER(S):	Director of Adult Learning		
DESIGNATION:	Sixth Form		
APPROVED BY:	Executive Team		

Purpose of policy

St Elizabeth's Centre has a duty of care for the safety and welfare of all learners. In a 16–19 FE context, learners (including those under 18) may lawfully leave the site unless specific legal restrictions apply to the individual. However, a learner leaving unexpectedly, failing to attend, or being uncontactable may indicate a safeguarding risk. This policy sets out the sixth form's response to support the learner's welfare, to manage risk proportionately, and to ensure that appropriate agencies are informed when required.

This policy should be applied alongside the sixth form's safeguarding arrangements and with regard to relevant statutory guidance for schools and colleges, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Children Missing Education (CME)

Links to other policies	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (including procedures for referrals to Children’s Social Care/MASH and the Designated Safeguarding Lead) • Attendance and Punctuality / Absence Reporting procedure (including first-day response) • Children Missing Education (CME) procedure / CME reporting and enquiries process • Health and Safety Policy (site safety and emergency arrangements) • Behaviour Policy / Learner Code of Conduct (where relevant) • Information Sharing / Data Protection guidance (record keeping and sharing information lawfully) • Missing Persons Folder / local operational guidance (where used)
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St Elizabeth’s Centre has a duty of care for the safety and welfare of all learners. In a day-only 16–19 FE context, learners may lawfully leave the site unless specific legal restrictions apply to the individual. However, a learner leaving unexpectedly, failing to attend, or being uncontactable may indicate a safeguarding risk. This policy sets out the sixth form’s response

to support the learner's welfare, manage risk proportionately, and ensure that appropriate agencies are informed when required.

Please use this policy in conjunction with the Missing Persons Folder,

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy provides staff with a procedure to follow if a learner is missing from the site, is absent without explanation, or is otherwise uncontactable where there are safeguarding concerns.
- 1.2 All staff must be alert to learner whereabouts and attendance and must act promptly on any unexplained absence or concern, in line with the sixth form's safeguarding arrangements.

2. Advanced Planning

- 2.1 On enrolment, each learner must have an up-to-date profile completed and accessible to relevant staff, to support safe and timely action should the learner go missing (see Appendix A)
- 2.2 Profiles should be reviewed at least annually (and sooner if needs or circumstances change), including updating photographs where necessary (see Appendix A). Where a learner has SEND and/or communication needs, the profile should record reasonable adjustments for contacting the learner and for responding to missing episodes (for example: preferred communication method, known triggers, safe places, travel/transport risks, and agreed de-escalation/support strategies).
- 2.3 A risk assessment must also be completed on the likelihood of an individual going missing / leaving with purpose and the probable risks associated with this (See Appendix A).
- 2.4 Strategies must be in place to pre-empt and prevent such a situation occurring.

3. What is a missing person?

A missing person can be defined as someone who has absented himself / herself from their home, or activity they are attending without the knowledge of staff or without letting others know that they have left the grounds – also known as leaving with purpose.

4. Actions in the event a learner goes missing

If someone has gone missing the following actions must be taken:

- It is vital that all members of staff work as a team.
 - Academic staff are to check the register and timetables to establish whether the learner is on a prearranged outing, activity or walk. If they are and are overdue then the Manager should make efforts to contact the staff or/ place to check that they are safe.
- 4.1 Upon receiving a missing person's report, the Manager should carry out the following procedure:

- Establish when the person was last seen, who the last person was that saw them and question them about the learner's known plans and movements. Record this information.
- Alert all staff to the possibility of the resident / learner being missing and ask for information / sightings (channel 9 on Bleep).
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Deputy DSL and a relevant Senior Leader without delay. Where the learner is under 18, the DSL/DDSL must consider whether the circumstances indicate a child protection concern and whether a referral to Children's Social Care/MASH and/or the police is required.
- Arrange a thorough search of the accommodation and grounds, checking that the learner is not on-site or in the vicinity of the building. Knowledge of the learner and their usual movements and habits should be applied (i.e. staff should search their favourite places. Staff may be dispatched to tour the vicinity).
- At the end of the search, the Manager must be confident that the accommodation and its grounds have been systematically searched, including the learner's own room, flat toilet and favourite spots. For searches in the dark, a supply of torches is kept in the building, along with high visibility jackets and a first aid kit. Bleeps and a mobile phone should be taken on the search.
- On no account should other learners be allowed to be involved in any search of the grounds and sufficient staff should always remain in the sixth form building to ensure its proper running and safety of other learners.

If the learner cannot be located, or information indicates the learner may be at risk (for example: safeguarding concerns, vulnerability, exploitation risk, health needs, immediate danger, inability to keep themselves safe), contact the police without delay and follow police advice. Do not delay contacting the police where risk is suspected.
- Contact members of the missing-learner's family if they have not already been contacted.
- Ensure CPOMS is completed by staff.
- If the learner has been found, it is essential that all the parties who were advised of the emergency, are contacted again (on bleep channel 9) and informed that the search has been concluded.
- Follow the below actions for assessed risk: (as further detailed at Appendix B).

1. GREEN - Low Risk

There is no immediate apparent threat or risk to self, peers, staff or visitors.

2. AMBER - Medium Risk

The risk assessed is likely to place the missing person in danger. They or others are likely to come to harm.

3. RED - High Risk

The assessed risk is immediate and significant. There are substantial grounds for believing that the individual is in danger through their own vulnerability or there is substantial risk to others.

In this way individuals who use the services are supported in a safe and responsive manner depending on their individual levels of risk.

5. Procedure to Follow after a Missing Persons Incident

- 5.1 Academic staff must record any significant incident on CPOMS and update the Risk Assessment accordingly. This should be made available for inspection. The recording on the missing persons form should include the times the person went missing and was returned and the actions taken for the person to be returned.
- 5.2 If the learner was injured, harmed, or was seriously at risk of harm as a result of going missing, the DSL/DDSL must be informed immediately and must consider: referral to Children's Social Care/MASH (for learners under 18) and/or contacting the police, and any internal serious incident reporting requirements. All actions, decisions and rationales must be recorded on CPOMS.
- 5.3 If a complaint is made against a member of staff, as a result of a learner going missing, the matter will be investigated through the complaints procedure. The investigation will include any possible misconduct by the staff member responsible, as a result of the person going missing through its established disciplinary procedures.
- 5.4 All staff are made aware of the possible risks and consequences of a learner whom they are supervising going missing.

6. Training

All staff are trained in the missing persons procedure and to know their role in the event of a search.

7. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals. Data and appropriate reporting methods will be used to inform Senior Leadership and Governors and will include the following:

- Frequency of Incidents
- Multi-Disciplinary team action
- Complaints
- Investigation outcomes
- Incident report reviews

Appendix A

St Elizabeth's Sixth Form Learner Information

N. B. Please ensure sent to all statutory agencies.

Please ensure Centre Management on call is informed Bleep 9

Local Police number is 01279 491491 or call 101

DESCRIPTION OF CLOTHING WORN AT TIME OF DISAPPEARANCE

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NOTIFICATION OF MISSING LEARNER CHECKLIST

PERSON TO BE INFORMED	TIME	NAME/SIGNATURE
DOMICILIARY CARE MANAGER		
DUTY NURSE		
REGISTERED MANAGER		
DEPUTY HEAD OF SIXTH FORM /DSL		
DEPUTY REGISTERED MANAGER		
DIRECTOR OF ADULT LEARNING /DSL		
NOK		
EXECUTIVE MEMBER ON CALL		
GP		
POLICE INFORMED		

NOTES/COMMENTS

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GREEN - LOCAL RESPONSE AGREEMENT

INDIVIDUAL	STAFF	POLICE
<p>There is no apparent threat of danger to the individual, staff or visitors if the individual is reported as being a missing person.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any individual whose whereabouts are unknown, but who is not thought to pose a risk to themselves or others. 2. Any individual who may have made their way to the home of a friend or peer and is thought to be safe until agreement about return can be made. 3. Any individual who has the capacity to safely leave an area by themselves however has done this and has not returned to the area for some time. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If individual is identified as missing, then follow policy and procedure. 2. Confirm search of buildings and grounds of centre. 3. Confirm search of buildings, grounds and immediate vicinity of main site or Windhill. 4. Make contact with relatives or people at home address to advise them. Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 5. Make all other reasonable enquires (friends or relatives) to establish whereabouts of Missing person. Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 6. Contact Person In Charge (person on Bleep 9) to inform them. 7. If not returned/located within 1-hour, contact Police and request officer to attend. Conduct further risk assessment and pass a copy of the logs, and risk assessment to the Police upon arrival. Allow Police access to individual's files. 8. On location of the missing person, Person in Charge to be informed and to conduct a de-brief with missing person to ascertain reason for going missing and where the person has been 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be informed after 1 hour. 2. Initiate search. This would become a red incident at this stage. 3. Receive care plans and risk assessments about the missing individual if requested / required.

AMBER - LOCAL RESPONSE AGREEMENT

INDIVIDUAL	STAFF	POLICE
<p>The risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The individual's behaviour may be a risk to themselves or others around them. 2. The individual may show dramatic changes in behaviour that may cause danger or risk to others. 3. An individual's prolonged absence without medication places them at high risk. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If individual is identified as missing, follow missing person policy and procedure. 2. Confirm search of buildings and grounds at centre. 3. Confirm search of buildings, grounds and immediate vicinity of main site or Windhill. 4. Make contact with relatives or people at home address to advise them Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 5. Make all other reasonable enquiries (friends or relatives) to establish whereabouts of Missing person. Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 6. Undertake a review of risk status. 7. If not located within 30 minutes, then re-classify as RED incident. 8. If located Person in Charge will assess the individual's well-being and conduct de briefing session with the missing person to ascertain reason for going missing and where the person has been. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informed after 30 minutes. 2. Initiate more extensive search. 3. Visit site and take over search. 4. Receive care plans and risk assessments about the missing individual if requested/required.

RED - LOCAL RESPONSE AGREEMENT

INDIVIDUAL	STAFF	POLICE
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<p>The risk posed is immediate and there are individual substantial grounds for believing that the danger or risk posed to the individual or others around them is substantial and may cause serious potential harm or injury.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual who, due to their diagnosis of epilepsy, is likely to have a seizure posing a threat to their wellbeing or life? 2. Individual known to show risk behaviours that may cause physical harm to themselves or others. 3. Individual may be unaware of external dangers. 4. Individual poses a serious risk to themselves through self-harm or self-injury. 5. Individuals who suffer from intense physical pain or individual who have mental health problems which would be greatly exacerbated without the use of medication. 6. When located lead nurse must review and conduct risk assessment. If not located within 15 minutes the police must be informed. 7. Complete a safeguarding concern to the host authority 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If individual is identified as missing, follow missing person policy and procedure. 2. Confirm search of buildings and grounds at centre. 3. Confirm search of buildings, grounds and immediate vicinity of main site or Windhill. 4. Make contact with relatives or people at home address to advise them. Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 5. Make all other reasonable enquiries (friends or relatives) to establish whereabouts of Missing Person. Keep a log of who has been contacted, when, by whom and the outcome. 6. The Person in Charge must also alert the SLT member on duty 7. When located, Person in Charge, must review and conduct risk assessment. 8. If not located within 15 minutes the police must be informed. 9. Notify the Local authority, allocated social worker and Ofsted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be informed if missing for 15 minutes. 2. Police will attend centre and lead/co-ordinate search. 3. Receive care plans and risk assessments about the missing individual if requested/ needed.
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