



TITLE		REF	VERSION
Students Who Go Missing Throughout the College Day Procedure			2.0
DEPARTMENT	Group Student Support - Safeguarding		
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STUDENTS WHO GO MISSING THROUGHOUT THE COLLEGE DAY PROCEDURE

Procedure Statement

Activate Learning is committed to fulfilling its statutory and legal duties to our students, ensuring all our students feel safe, supported, and cared for in line with our core values and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Research informs us that unexplained absences from education and going missing can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues such as abuse, harm, exploitation, neglect or mental ill-health. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a student going missing in future.

This procedure outlines the actions and responsibilities of all staff and volunteers at Activate Learning when a student is believed to go missing during the college day or a residential student is believed to be missing from their halls of residence or overnight.

There are separate policies and procedures for students who are absent from college whereby there are no additional concerns or vulnerabilities or persistently absent from education, utilising our Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Policy and Student Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Procedure.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Activate Learning students whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests they may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm.

This also relates to all circumstances where a residential student (under the age of 18) has not returned after their curfew (23:00 hours) without satisfactory explanation and their whereabouts cannot be established, or the context suggests they may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm.

This is especially pertinent for students who are deemed to be vulnerable, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Students who are or have recently been open to Activate Learning's Safeguarding Team (as indicated by a 'Safeguarding' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students who are or have recently been open to Children's Social Care e.g., Early Help, Child in Need, Child Protection Plan (as indicated by a 'Safeguarding' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students who are or have recently been open to Adult Social Care (as indicated by a 'Safeguarding' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students on a 14-16 Study Programme.

- Students who are Cared For by the Local Authority, are a Care Leaver, a Young Carer or Young Parent (as indicated by a 'Student Support' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students at risk of harm, abuse, exploitation or neglect e.g., at risk of being radicalised or exploited, at risk of so-called honour-based abuse or female genital mutilation.
- Students who may present a risk to themselves or others e.g., a mental health difficulty including incidents of self-harm, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts; is misusing substances; involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement; at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation, or county lines.
- Students who have a Personal Risk Assessment or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans in place due to an additional health or wellbeing need (as indicated by a 'PRA/PEEP' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students who have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), disability, significant health need and/or special educational need (as indicated by a 'EHCP' badge on ProMonitor).
- Students who have repeat episodes of absconding or going missing.

Procedure

Procedure for Learners Who Go Missing During the College Day

- When a student is suspected to be missing, the concerned staff member (e.g., tutor, performance coach, faculty coordinator), must first attempt to contact the student by phone, text, consulting with others, and reaching out to emergency contacts to determine their location and confirm their safety.
- If a student is identified as missing or there are immediate concerns for their safety, the following procedure must be initiated immediately.
- The concerned staff member should inform the Duty Manager, Behaviour and Welfare Officer, Head of Student Experience, and Safeguarding Team who will assist in locating the student by searching the premises and reviewing CCTV.
- While the search is ongoing, the Safeguarding Team, with other relevant staff, will assess the student's vulnerability, considering all risks and known external circumstances. If the student has a Social Worker or Support Worker, the Safeguarding Team will inform them to aid in the risk assessment.
- If contact cannot be made with the student or their emergency contacts, the Safeguarding Team and DDSL/DSL will assess the urgency of the situation on a case-by-case basis to determine when to notify the Police.

Procedure for Residential Learners Who Go Missing Overnight

- Residential learners under 18 must return to their halls of residence by 23:00 and sign out with the accommodation team or duty warden when leaving, stating their destination and expected return time. Those over 18 hand over their keys when staying out overnight.
- The duty warden monitors evening meals to ensure all residents are present and investigates any absences by contacting the learner, consulting with others, searching halls of residence and premises, checking the access control system (Symmetry), and reviewing CCTV. For

residential students living at Harcourt Hill, the duty warden will liaise with Oxford Brookes University staff to review their systems.

- If a residential student is identified as missing, the duty warden must call the student's emergency contact or next of kin and inform the Accommodation Manager.
- If contact cannot be made with the student or their emergency contacts, the Police should be notified (via 101 or 999) within one hour of the initial contact attempt. The student's Social Worker or Support Worker should also be informed (if relevant). Out of hours Social Care contact details are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

Procedure for Students Who Go Missing During an Offsite Activity, Trip or Visit

When a student is suspected missing during an offsite trip or activity (e.g., fails to meet at an arranged time or location), the following actions will be taken:

- Conduct an immediate head count to ensure all other students are present.
- Attempt to contact the student and consult with other staff and students present.
- One staff member remains with the group, while another searches the immediate vicinity.
- Depending on circumstances, notify venue staff to inform them and assist in a search.
- During college working hours, inform the Safeguarding Team on 01865 550401, assess the level of vulnerability and risk, and agree on the next steps.
- The trip organiser should make safe arrangements to return the remaining students to the college.
- If no contact can be made with the student or their emergency contacts, the Safeguarding Team and DDSL/DSL will assess the urgency of the situation on a case-by-case basis to determine when to notify the Police.
- For trips and visits outside of usual college hours (e.g., overnight and weekends), where the Safeguarding Team cannot be reached and contact with the student or their emergency contacts is unsuccessful, the Police should be notified (via 101 or 999) within one hour of the initial contact attempt. The student's Social Worker or Support Worker should also be informed, if applicable. Out of hours Social Care contact details are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

Notifying the Police

A member of the Safeguarding Team, a Behaviour and Welfare Officer, Head of Student Experience, or Duty Warden (for residential learners outside of normal college hours) will notify the Police where a student remains missing or where there are immediate concerns for a student's safety or welfare.

The information usually required by the Police to assist in locating and returning the student to a safe environment is:

- The student's full name, age, date of birth and home address
- Physical description, what they were wearing and any belongings they had with them (e.g., a bag, mobile phone)
- Date, time and location they were last seen (CCTV footage may help determine this)
- Where and when they went missing
- Previous missing episodes (if any) and where they went and where they were found
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with
- Circumstances or significant events leading up to them going missing
- Relevant health or safeguarding information (e.g., medical conditions, mental health concerns, Cared For status, Child Protection Plan, known risks)
- Details of parent/carer(s), friends, and emergency contacts

While the on-site search by staff is in progress, the reporting staff member should maintain communication with the Police and follow their instructions.

The Advice and Admissions team should be notified to temporarily suspend the student's ID card and place a note on the student's REMS profile, instructing staff to contact the Safeguarding Team if the student attempts to use their ID card to access college buildings or facilities.

Next Steps

Student is located

Reporting staff member to inform Police and emergency contact.

A member of the Student Support and Safeguarding Team (or Duty Warden for residential students) should support Police to conduct a return interview and try to ascertain whether there were any triggers or support measures needed.

The Safeguarding Team will consult with the Police and study programme staff or Accommodation Manager to agree on the most appropriate next steps. This will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances and an assessment of vulnerability and risk. It may be deemed appropriate for the student to be transported home or to a place of safety whilst appropriate support is considered and implemented.

Student remains missing

If the student does not return to college or halls of residence within the same day or is not found within working hours, the Safeguarding Team will continue to liaise with the Police and emergency contact and will keep the study programme area and Accommodation Manager informed of any updates.

For residential students, where the Safeguarding Team are not available, residential wardens will continue to liaise with the Police and emergency contact outside of normal college hours and will update the Safeguarding Team immediately the next working day, as per the Safeguarding – Reporting a Concern Procedure.

Monitoring

Follow up

Where there are concerns regarding the student being a risk to themselves or others, it may be deemed necessary to temporarily implement a period of remote learning, until a Personal Risk Assessment and Support Plan can be implemented or updated. This decision will be made in conjunction with the Student Support and Safeguarding Team, and the study programme area or Accommodation Manager.

For students on the 14-16 programme, the Safeguarding Team and 14-16 Programme Lead will work collaboratively with the Local Authority and main education provider to share information and implement appropriate support.

Recording

All instances of a student going missing must be reported to the Safeguarding Team as per Activate Learning's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding – Reporting a Concern Procedure.

A report can be made in one of the following ways:

- Call: 01865 550401
- Email: safe@activatelearning.ac.uk

- Complete a record of concern form on SharePoint ([Link to record of concern form](#))
- Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Adviser directly. **IMPORTANT** - *Once referred, staff must follow up immediately with a written record and ensure this is sent to the relevant Designated Safeguarding Adviser. This can be via email or on a safeguarding Record of Concern form. Safeguarding referrals should not be via ProMonitor due to confidentiality.*

Multi-Agency Working

We recognise that going missing can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. The Safeguarding Team are responsible for making referrals to statutory services when a child or adult in need is at risk of abuse, harm, exploitation or neglect.

Monitoring

The Safeguarding Team will record instances of students going missing using Activate Learning's Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). Instances are monitored regularly and reported on to senior leaders and Governors through the Safeguarding Committee.

References

Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Policy
Student Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Procedure
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Safeguarding – Reporting a Concern Procedure
Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy
Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure
Student Code of Conduct
Student Conduct and Behaviour in Accommodation
DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
DfE Statutory Guidance on Children Who Run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care
Home Office Missing Children and Adults Strategy