



Missing Persons Policy

New or Reviewed	Date of Next Review	Responsibility
February 2026	February 2029	Registered Manager & Principal

Our Mission:

'To enable young people to live and work without barriers'

Our Values:

- **Teamwork** – we hold ourselves and each other to account and are better when we work together
- **Compassion** – we act with trust, honesty, and kindness in everything we do
- **Inclusion** – we treat each other fairly and with respect
- **Innovation** – we encourage thoughtful, creative, and aspirational ideas
- **Pride** – we encourage each other to be proud of who we are and what we do

This policy can be read in conjunction with

Attendance Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Policy

This policy sets out what to do when a supported individual is believed to be missing whether on college sites, within the houses and out in the community.

Fairfield College refer to their Attendance Policy and procedures for learners who fail to register in the morning.

Missing Definition: When a person's whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

It is important to remember that a supported individual with capacity can choose to make unwise decisions and that they are free to leave unless there is a DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty's Safeguards) authorised in respect of freedom of movement, this information must be taken in to account and the risks to the missing person weighed up using a person centred approach.

Some supported individuals have been assessed and had training to access the community. These assessments such as Home Alone, Road Crossing and Independence in the community for visits to local shops or to use public transport can be found on SharePoint. In all cases, if you are unsure, please check on SchoolPod, SharePoint or speak to any Team Leader or Manager.

Is the person at significant risk?

A person missing would be prioritised as significant risk where the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the person is in danger through their own vulnerability.

Vulnerability characteristics may include:

- Person on a plan (Early Help, Child in Need, Looked After or Child Protection Plan),
- A disability and/or special educational needs
- Substance misuse
- Education Health Care Plan
- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.
- There are indications that THE person has already come to harm (CSE, grooming, County Lines, radicalisation etc.)

Other contributory factors should be taken into consideration when determining if the person is at significant risk, for example:

- Have there been past concerns about this person and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?
- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the person from harm?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the person associating with unknown adults?

- Was there any significant incident prior to the missing episode?
- Has the person been a victim of any bullying, online or in person?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the person is at risk? e.g. do they need essential medication or health care?
- Was the person noted to be depressed prior to the missing episode?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the person is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned?

The manager in charge of the missing person search and coordinating information should consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for any known, ongoing, or potential Safeguarding concerns.

Supported Individual is believed to be missing - what next?

Initial questions:

1. Does the person have additional permissions/assessments or a care plan that outlines a different procedure? If so - please follow the Care Plan/ Risk Assessment/ILP.
2. If not, then a search of the immediate area (i.e. college, house and garden) should be made. If the person cannot be found, then this will need to be reported.
 - For College learners: report to a Manager or the DSL.
 - For Pathways: report to a Team Leader, Manager or DSL. If outside of office hours, telephone the assigned on-call manager.
 - For Trainees, at Fairfield Animal Centre (FAC) please contact the FAC Manager or DSL.

Procedure

Manager is notified person cannot be found and a time frame is set out; what time were they last seen, and decide a time frame of a reasonable time period * to search.

Staff will try to locate the person and try to establish the whereabouts of them.

Staff will try to contact missing person via their mobile telephone if known.

*(This is determined to a large extent on the ability and behaviour of the missing person and the circumstances, in which they went missing; above consideration regards to the vulnerability and potential risks will allow staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the person's whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timelines should be on a case by case basis).

The missing person cannot be found within a reasonable time period:

A manager must inform the police on 101 or 999, depending on identified potential risks and the manager's professional judgment. If appropriate the manager must inform the person's parents/carers as soon as possible.

The police will need the following information:

1. Name, date of birth, local authority, status such as Looked After, and medical history.
2. When and where they were last seen.
3. What they were wearing.
4. A recent photograph.
5. Why you think the person has gone missing.

6. How they communicate.
7. Risks involved with this person being out alone (as above).
8. Places the person may try to go.
9. Would they go off with a stranger.
10. Who do they know in the area.

Pathways supported individuals have a 'Hebert Protocol *' in place, which must be handed to the police, to support the search.

The College use Schoolpod to store all relevant information needed, and in some cases a Missing Persons Document (MISPER) is available if there are already previous occasions of being missing or risks.

This is available on Schoolpod, Sharepoint, and printed out in a 'grab bag' on reception desk.

*The [Herbert Protocol](#) is a UK-wide scheme for carers of people with dementia, learning disabilities, or mental health needs, providing police with vital information (photos, routines, medications, past locations) via a form to help find them quickly if they go missing, saving precious time and reducing risks.

Staff not directly involved in the search are to check regularly that the person has not returned. Staff must and inform the manager organising the search if the missing person returns immediately. Staff must keep telephone lines clear of unnecessary calls so that information can be passed on efficiently.

The Manager organising the search is responsible for informing all parties involved in the search (parents/carers/on call staff/managers/Principal and if necessary, the police) when the person is found or returns.

Recording

- An 'Incident' must be reported by the staff member who first raised the concern on Schoolpod under 'Serious Incident, AWOL/Offsite' as soon as reasonably possible but within 24 hours of the missing episode.
- This record can subsequently be actioned and updated throughout the episode with a chronology. This report will inform any further actions such as updating Risk Assessments, Care Plan, Behavior Support Plans, Safeguarding and the creation of a MISPER, when necessary.
- The manager's actions can be recorded here for example contacting parents and updating the Risk Assessment.

Approved by the Board of Trustees.

Graeme Athey (Principal)
Sharlie Routley (Registered Manager)

February 2026