

Alpha Plus Guardians Ltd Missing Students Policy

The safety of all students is paramount, and it is essential we know where all students are at all times. Should a student go missing, Alpha Plus Guardian Services Ltd will take the following steps to ensure their safe return to our care.

When a child is identified as not being at a location they are meant or are expected to be at, the reporting individual must take proactive steps to trace the person's whereabouts prior to contacting the police. Such steps would include:

- Contacting the missing individual's school, host family & friends.
- Checking social media

Alpha Plus Guardians Ltd Emergency Number: +44 (0) 7981 705275 24 hours

Reporting to the Police

The Police will only become involved after all reasonable checks to locate the individual have been carried out. If the child is not located, the reporting individual should contact the Police via 101 to report them as being missing from their address.

The primary function of the Police is to investigate the disappearance and attempt to locate the young person prior to any harm befalling them. Police response and associated actions will be based on a police risk assessment of the incident and knowledge of the individual(s) concerned, which will utilise information from partners and those who know the person.

When a child is found

The attitude of professionals, such as police and social workers, towards a child who has been missing can have a big impact on how they will engage with subsequent investigations and protection planning. However, 'streetwise' they may appear, they are children and may be extremely vulnerable to multiple risks. A supportive approach when a child returns, actively listening and responding to their needs, will have a greater chance of preventing the child from going missing again and safeguarding them against other risks.

Actions to be Followed by Staff once the Pupil is Found

- Staff will talk with, take care of and comfort the pupil.
- Staff will speak with the other pupils to ensure that they understand why they should NOT leave without obtaining permission and notifying their Local Guardian.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak with the parents/agent to report the incident, and then record an account of the incident by writing a letter to the parents.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will carry out a full investigation involving, if appropriate, the Police and the appropriate Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- The written report of the incident will record details of time, place, members of staff, the circumstances in which the pupil went missing, an outline of what was understood to have happened, the length of time during which the pupil was missing and an initial explanation of how the incident appeared to have arisen. Written statements may be invited from all.
- Any media questions will be referred to Alpha Plus Guardian Services Ltd.
- All relevant procedures will be reviewed in the light of the incident.

Guidance in Children Missing from Education

A child in the UK reaches **compulsory** school age on or after their fifth birthday. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen. All children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs they may have and it is the collective responsibility of the Local Authorities, Parents/Guardians and Schools to ensure that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

Local Authorities and schools should have robust policies and procedures in place with effective registration and tracking to ensure children missing education are identified and appropriate enquiries and referrals are made.

Further information regarding Children Missing from Education can be found on the UK Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Contact details

The Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Mrs Emma Ryan

email: office@alphaplusguardians.co.uk

Emergency Contact No:

+44 (0) 7981 705275 (24 hours)

Date: 30th March 2023

Next review date: 29th March 2024