



Missing (Young) Adults Policy

Policy Reviewed by:	Suzy Hollett (HR Manager)
Date:	01.08.2026

Policy Verified by:	Sara Llewellyn (School Leader-CEO)
Date:	08.08.2026

Date for Next Review:	01.09.2027
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This policy is informed by and should be applied in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures and Kent safeguarding arrangements, where applicable.

This policy has been put in place to ensure that every action possible is taken to keep the vulnerable adults safe whilst under the school's care. The safety of learner/young adults is paramount and is always given the highest priority both on and off the school premises. Young adults are not allowed to leave the school premises during school time without knowledge or prior permission of the school Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school recognises that a missing learner or vulnerable adult may be at increased risk of harm, exploitation, neglect, abuse, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, radicalisation, self-harm, mental health concerns, or other safeguarding risks. Any incident involving a missing learner or vulnerable adult will therefore be managed as a safeguarding matter and responded to in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

The learner/young adult will not be released unless there is an appropriate adult with them, or it has been requested from a parent in writing. This policy is designed to put into place quick and effective actions to locate any missing learner/young adults and to notify and involve parents/guardians and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Every attempt is made to ensure that the security of learner/young adults is always maintained

throughout the school day through: -

- Augmented supporter with each learner/young adult.
- Registration procedure.
- Entrance/exit procedures at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Secure and locked gates to the entrance of school.
- Secure school perimeter.
- Manned reception at the front door.
- Maintaining an accurate visitor's log.

Missing Learner/young adult

If at any time during the school day a learner/young adult is noticed as missing the following procedure will take place:

- As soon as it is noticed that a learner/young adult is missing, staff will alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in their absence / Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- The DSL and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the school building and outside areas.
- The registers will be checked to make sure no other learner/young adult is missing.
- External doors and gates will be checked to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- If the learner/young adult is not found, the parent/guardian is contacted, and the missing learner/young adult is reported to the police (101).

The police will want to know:

- Where you are.
- The name of the learner/young adult.
- The next of kin of the learner/young adult.
- A detailed description of the learner/young adult (going from head to toe, clothing etc).
- When they were first noticed missing.
- When and where they were last seen.
- Circumstances of the disappearance (any trigger, arguments etc.).
- Who is looking for the learner/young adult now, where they are and their mobile phone number.
- Inform them of any factors that may be relevant e.g. deaf, epilepsy, nonverbal, if they need any medication.
- When the police arrive, they will co-ordinate the search and staff will comply fully with their instructions; staff should continue to search unless instructed by police to stop.

Follow-up to the incident

- When the learner/young adult is found, their needs and those of the parent are paramount. Emotions are likely to be running high, and this should be considered when trying to establish what happened immediately before the learner/young adult left the school premises.
- It should be established whether the learner/young adult is injured or has been harmed in any way, and the appropriate action taken.
- After the search there will be a need to meet with staff to re-assure them and to take the opportunity to de-brief.
- An incident report should be completed by the staff member co-ordinating the search and handed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence the deputy DSL. This will be placed in the school's Safeguarding File.
- The School Leader / CEO will inform School Governors of Maple Haven School.

- A Risk Assessment review will take place in the area from which the learner/young adult went missing as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 days after the event. Any identified security improvements should be put in place as soon as possible.
- A meeting should be held with both the parent and the learner/young adult to establish how the incident occurred, and what actions or support will be necessary to prevent such an incident from happening again in the future.

This may include:

- An individual risk assessment being reviewed and updated.
- A behaviour or learning support plan being reviewed and updated.
- Potential referral to an external agency where the learner/young adult's safety, mental or emotional health and well-being are felt to be at risk.
- The incident should be discussed at the next staff meeting and any recommendations for improvements in the procedure should be made to School Governors of Maple Haven School.

Missing Learner/young adult (Off-Site School Visits)

If a learner/young adult goes missing from an educational visit where parents/guardians are not attending and responsible for their own learner/young adult, the following procedure applies:

- As soon as it is noticed that a learner/young adult is missing, staff on the visit ask learner/young adults to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other learner/young adult has gone astray.
- One staff member will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The staff contact the police using a mobile phone and report the learner/young adult as missing (following the instructions listed above)
- The person in charge informs the School Leader or Deputy Head Teacher, who will then liaise with the police, inform the local authority, and contact the family.

- If appropriate, the school Leader may make their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security staff who will handle the search and contact the police if the learner/young adult is not found.

Investigation following the safe recovery of the learner/young adult.

The school Leader, with the support of the police if appropriate, carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time. An Incident Log Sheet should be completed detailing:

- the date and time of the report.
- staff/learner/young adult were in the group.
- when the young adult was last seen in the group.
- what has taken place in the group since then.
- the time it is estimated that the young adult went missing.
- Any other relevant details, including the recovery of the young adult.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and to the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer as appropriate.
- Investigations and reviews are to be done before any further school trips can go ahead.

Young adult missing due to family having left without notice.

A young adult may also be classed as a 'missing vulnerable adult' if their family has left without informing the school and in this event the school would ensure that all relevant authorities are informed.

The school will make a call to the family and ask them to get in touch. The school will also send an email and a letter. If no contact made, then the next contact on the list

would also be called. If there were still no response, then a visit would be made to the family home to try and make contact.

If there are concerns, then the following people would be contacted as appropriate:

- LADO
- KCC
- Social Services
- Local Authority
- Police