



Absent and Missing Students Policy

Study Links is committed to the safeguarding of all children under Guardianship and with this aim, to the training and awareness of Study Links staff to ensure they are able to act appropriately to safeguard students in all circumstances.

This policy sets out Study Links' procedures in the case of **absent or missing students**, in accordance with the UK government **Children Missing from Education policy**, which requires missing students who are not under the duty of care of their school to be subject to an appropriate response by their Guardian. This is to ensure that children are located and are returned to approved care as soon as possible.

Pre-arrival and Travel

Parents are asked to make their child aware before arrival of taking responsibility for their own safety when travelling. Study Links advise on practical ways they can remain safe whilst travelling or going out of homestay or school in the students' handbook. They are made aware of the **Study Links 24-hour emergency telephone number: +44 (0)1274 924055**, and asked to save it in their phones and contact us in any emergency for example when lost.

At School

If a child goes missing when they should be at school, then the School's Missing Student policy should include informing the Guardian (Study Links) who will work with the school to assist in locating and returning the child and keeping their parents informed. When Study Links is informed of a missing child incident, our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ailie Fan (or her deputy in her absence) will be contacted to supervise further action.

In a Homestay

All Homestays are made aware of the paramount importance of the safety of children in their home and given guidelines to follow to ensure this. They are asked to ensure that premises are secure and take steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises. They will be asked to supervise the child closely when visiting places outside the home and to have the child's contact number in their phone so that they are able to contact them easily. If a child goes missing from their premises, they are asked to contact Study Links immediately on the emergency phone number.

Further Procedure

The team members involved would immediately attempt to contact the child and all other parties who may have been in very recent contact with the child: friends, houseparents, parents, agents, taxi drivers, homestays. Staff members or homestays local to the area may be asked to search particular places or areas. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy in her absence) should contact the police when it has been established that a child is missing, but also direct the team to continue trying to locate the student after the police have been informed. The parents would be continually updated.

Once the child is found, they would be taken care of and comforted and the parents informed immediately. Parents will be kept updated on the subsequent investigation by Study Links into the reason for the child going missing. All details of the incident will be recorded including all communication and any follow-up action taken. Examples of follow-up action could be the child receiving school counselling for underlying pastoral concerns or Study Links working with the student to formulate an action plan to prevent such incidents reoccurring in the future.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually taking into account any changes in legislation, practice or roles concerned throughout the year.