

Remedicare Education Services

Learner Missing from Provision and Absconding Policy

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Introduction

Remedicare Education Services is committed to ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all learners who access our Alternative Provision.

We recognise that some learners may require personalised support due to their individual needs, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), communication differences, emotional regulation needs, anxiety, trauma experiences or previous adverse experiences.

This policy outlines the procedures to follow when a learner:

- Leaves an agreed supervised area without permission.
- Leaves the provision site unexpectedly.
- Leaves an educational activity or community-based activity.
- Leaves transport arrangements unexpectedly.
- Cannot be located during expected attendance.
- Is absent from planned education without explanation.

The safety of learners is our highest priority. All incidents where a learner's whereabouts become unknown must be treated as a safeguarding concern and responded to promptly.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Remedicare Education Services Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.
- Behaviour Support Policy.
- Transport Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure a consistent response when a learner is missing from agreed supervision.
- Provide clear guidance for all staff.
- Safeguard learners from harm.

- Ensure appropriate escalation and communication with parents/carers, schools, Local Authorities and emergency services.
- Support learners through a trauma-informed and person-centred approach.
- Ensure incidents are recorded, reviewed and used to improve future support.

Terminology

Remedicare Education Services uses the term “Learner Missing from Provision” as the primary safeguarding term within this policy.

This reflects our responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of learners whose whereabouts are unknown or who are no longer within agreed supervision arrangements.

The term “absconding” refers to situations where a learner leaves an agreed supervised area, activity, transport arrangement or provision setting without permission, or moves away from staff supervision in a way that creates a concern for their safety.

Remedicare recognises that absconding behaviour may be a form of communication and may indicate:

- Anxiety or distress.
- Communication difficulties.
- Sensory overload.
- Emotional regulation needs.
- Feeling unsafe or overwhelmed.
- A need for space or control.
- An unmet need.

All incidents will therefore be managed through a safeguarding and supportive approach.

Prevention and Risk Management

Remedicare Education Services takes a proactive approach to reducing the likelihood of learners becoming missing from provision.

Staff must:

- Understand individual learner needs.
- Follow learner-specific risk assessments.
- Follow agreed behaviour support strategies.
- Use appropriate communication approaches.
- Build positive and trusting relationships.

- Recognise known triggers and early signs of distress.
- Provide appropriate regulation support.

Learner risk assessments must identify:

- Known risks.
- Triggers.
- Preferred support strategies.
- Communication approaches.
- Actions to take if the learner leaves supervision.

Risk assessments must be reviewed following any incident.

Roles and Responsibilities

Directors and Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring effective safeguarding procedures are in place.
- Ensuring staff understand their responsibilities.
- Supporting decision-making during significant incidents.
- Liaising with external professionals where required.
- Reviewing incidents and identifying improvements.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Deputy DSL Responsibilities

The DSL/DDSL team are responsible for:

- Providing safeguarding guidance.
- Supporting decisions regarding escalation.
- Ensuring appropriate recording.
- Liaising with parents/carers and professionals.
- Reviewing patterns and risks.
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed.

All Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Prioritise learner safety.

- Remain calm and professional.
- Follow this policy.
- Maintain appropriate supervision.
- Communicate concerns immediately.
- Record incidents accurately.

Staff must not:

- Put themselves or others at unnecessary risk.
- Chase learners in a way that increases danger.
- Use inappropriate physical intervention.
- Leave other learners unsupervised.

When a Learner Is Missing from Provision

If a learner is not where they are expected to be, staff must:

1. Establish when and where the learner was last seen.
2. Inform colleagues immediately.
3. Check agreed safe areas where appropriate.
4. Consider the learner's individual risk assessment.
5. Inform a member of the DSL/senior leadership team.

AMBER Alert Procedure

An **AMBER Alert** should be used when:

- A learner has moved away from an agreed area.
- Staff are aware of their location.
- The situation remains manageable.
- Immediate emergency intervention is not required.

Staff should:

- Inform colleagues.
- Maintain awareness of the learner's location.
- Use agreed strategies to support the learner.
- Avoid escalating the situation.

RED Alert Procedure

A **RED Alert** should be used when:

- A learner cannot be located.
- The learner has left the provision site.
- The learner is considered at immediate risk.
- Staff have concerns regarding their safety.

Staff must:

- Inform senior staff immediately.
- Follow the learner's risk assessment.
- Begin agreed searching procedures where safe to do so.
- Contact emergency services where required.

Contacting Emergency Services

The decision to contact emergency services will be based on:

- The learner's age.
- Individual vulnerabilities.
- Location.
- Known risks.
- Time missing.
- Weather conditions.
- Any immediate danger.

Staff should contact:

999 where there is an immediate risk of harm.

101 where advice or support is required and there is no immediate emergency.

All communication must be recorded.

Parent/Carer Communication

Parents/carers should be informed as soon as appropriate.

Communication should include:

- What has happened.
- When the learner was last seen.
- Actions taken.
- Any updates received.

Where appropriate, communication with the learner's:

- School on roll.
- Local Authority.
- Social Worker.
- Other professionals.

must take place.

Learner Missing During Transport

Where a learner leaves transport unexpectedly or does not arrive at an agreed destination:

Staff must:

- Prioritise immediate safety.
- Follow transport risk assessments.
- Inform senior leadership.
- Contact emergency services where required.
- Inform parents/carers and relevant professionals.

All transport-related incidents must be recorded.

Off-Site Activities

During community activities, visits or external learning:

Staff must:

- Complete appropriate risk assessments.
- Maintain agreed staffing ratios.
- Carry communication devices.
- Understand learner-specific risks.
- Follow this policy if a learner separates from supervision.

Supporting Learners After an Incident

Following an incident, Remedicare will support the learner to understand what happened and identify future support.

Support may include:

- A restorative conversation.
- Emotional regulation support.
- Communication support.
- Changes to routines.
- Updated risk assessments.
- Additional strategies.

The aim is to understand the reason behind the behaviour and reduce future risks.

Recording and Reporting

All incidents must be recorded on the appropriate systems, including CPOMS.

Records must include:

- Date and time.
- Location.
- Staff involved.
- Circumstances leading to the incident.
- Actions taken.
- Communication with parents/carers and professionals.
- Outcome.

Records must be completed as soon as possible following the incident.

Post-Incident Review

Following any significant incident, a review must take place.

The review should consider:

- What happened?
- What contributed to the incident?
- Were procedures followed?
- What support does the learner need?
- Are changes required?

Where required, updates should be made to:

- Risk assessments.
- Behaviour support plans.
- Individual learner strategies.

Repeated Incidents

Where a learner repeatedly becomes missing from provision, Remedicare will consider:

- Increased safeguarding monitoring.
- Additional risk assessment.
- Multi-agency support.
- Review of placement arrangements.
- Additional intervention strategies.

Safeguarding Escalation

Any incident where a learner's safety may have been compromised must be considered under safeguarding procedures.

The DSL/DDSL team will consider whether referrals or further actions are required.

Confidentiality

All information relating to incidents will be handled confidentially and shared only with those who need to know.

Information will be managed in line with:

- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK GDPR.
- Remedicare confidentiality procedures.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Changes in legislation.
- Updated safeguarding guidance.
- Learning from incidents.
- Changes to Remedicare procedures.