



## Missing/Absent Person Policy

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| <b>Operational Owner</b> | Designated Safeguarding Officer: Helen Ward                          |
| <b>Trustee Owner</b>     | Lindsey Slater   |
| <b>Effective date:</b>   | 22/09/22   |
| <b>Review date:</b>      | 24/09/24   |
| <b>Related documents</b> | Safeguarding Policy<br>Dealing with Safeguarding and Prevent Reports |

## Approval History

| Version | Reviewed by   | Amendment History             | Approved by          | Date     |
|---------|---------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 1.0     | Jane Sullivan | First Draft                   | Management Committee | 30/03/21 |
| 1.1     | Emma Hughes   | Updated with staffing changes | Chair of Trustees    | 24/09/22 |

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to offer guidance regarding the procedure they should follow if a beneficiary is absent without prior notification or goes missing during their activities at Susan's Farm.

## Scope

All staff and independent volunteers who undertake activities with beneficiaries on behalf of Susan's Farm.

## Policy Statement

The well-being and safety of our beneficiaries is our paramount responsibility. Every person who works or volunteers at Susan's Farm is aware of their key responsibility to help keep those who use our services safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are generous to ensure every person is supervised and cared for whilst at Susan's Farm. However, sometimes our beneficiaries may not arrive for their session and have not notified us of their absence or may go missing during their session. This policy outlines the immediate action that must be taken in these events.

## Responsibilities

All staff and independent volunteers are responsible for reporting absences to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Deputy DSO.

The DSO or deputy DSO is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate action is taken, as outlined in this policy.

The DSO will report any such absences to the next Trustee Meeting for purposes of collation and reviewing procedures.

### **Non- attendance at a planned session**

We expect beneficiaries to inform Susan's Farm when they are not planning to attend a scheduled activity. This communication can be via text, phone call or email. If the beneficiary is a known absentee/absconder this should have been recorded in their individual risk assessment and external agency's support plan and should include any known haunts for that person.

A register of beneficiaries will be completed each morning by Susan's Farm staff. Should a person be still absent 15mins from the start of the session, without prior notification, the following steps should be taken:

1. The supervising staff member or volunteer will check with other staff members to check for incoming communications.
2. Attempts to contact the beneficiary or next of kin will be made by the supervising staff member or volunteer (or other delegated staff member).
3. Should contact not be established with the beneficiary or next of kin then the following actions must be taken by the DSO or deputy DSO:
  - a. For Alternative Provision students-contact the school and report the absence
  - b. For Care Farmers or Care Gardeners- contact the social worker or other support personnel as listed on the beneficiary records or contact the non-emergency police number (101).
4. Where there is a concern for the beneficiary's immediate safety then the police emergency number should be used (999).
5. The DSO or deputy DSO may also choose to report the incident to the Safeguarding Hub on 0333 240 1727. Further details are available in the Dealing with Safeguarding and Prevent Reports Procedure.
6. Following the absence, the supervising staff member or volunteer must ensure the appropriate documents are completed as soon as possible – beneficiary log, incident record, daily log.
7. A meeting with relevant care farm staff, the beneficiary involved and their parents/carers to discuss the circumstances of the incident and the effectiveness of the current procedures must be arranged. This will include a review of the beneficiary's individual risk assessment and, where appropriate, their placement on the farm.
8. All colleagues must be kept informed.

### **Going missing during a session**

1. An immediate search of the farm grounds should be undertaken. This search should not exceed 10 minutes.
2. If the locally known haunts of the beneficiary are known then a wider search should then take place, but this should not exceed 10 minutes.
3. Contact between staff and volunteers should be maintained using mobile phones.
4. If the person is not found the steps outlined above for an absent person should be followed.

5. If there is immediate cause for concern for the person's safety then the police emergency number must be used as a priority.