

Procedure for lost & found children or vulnerable adults

Dealing with a LOST child or vulnerable adult

1. If a person approaches a member of staff or volunteer to report a lost child or vulnerable adult that member of staff or volunteer must take personal responsibility for that incident. A volunteer should take initial responsibility until they hand over to a member of staff. The volunteer must do this at the earliest opportunity. This should be a member of VE staff or Security Staff if they are close by.
2. The member of staff or volunteer must immediately call the VEM and Security Control Room. Full details and a description of them must be obtained by the person reporting. This is to include a description of them (age, height, build, and ethnic origin) and of their clothing and circumstances of their loss including where they were last seen. Security staff must look for anyone of a similar description outside the Cathedral. The Security Control Staff must check the CCTV to see if they have already left the Cathedral.
3. The VEM and Lead Virger must work together to take charge of the incident and ensure that the details of the loss and where last seen and description are circulated to all staff via the radio. The VEM/Lead Virger should warn members of staff and volunteers to be in a position where the radio message cannot be overheard by members of the public. The VEM/Lead Virger must also liaise with the Security Control Room and ensure that all security staff, particularly at the entrance/exits points are aware of the incident and are looking out for the child or vulnerable person and have checked CCTV.
4. All members of staff should be actively looking for the lost child or vulnerable person. VE staff must not leave their position to do this. If they are not seen within 10 minutes the VEM should initiate a systematic sweep of the Cathedral including the galleries and Crypt.
5. If a missing child or vulnerable adult has not been found within a short period of time (normally around 10 minutes but this period will be adjusted depending on the risk assessment) the VEM should carry out a dynamic risk assessment. Dependant on all the circumstances the risk assessment may indicate that police must be called. At this stage the Head of Security and Resilience and Director of Visitor Engagement should be informed. As a last resort The VEM should request that the Security Control Room should issue an announcement on the PA system. The reason for this is that this could alert someone who has abducted or attempting to abduct a child or vulnerable adult. This decision should be part of a dynamic risk assessment. The name of the child or their description should not be announced. If an announcement is made a parent/guardian/teacher should approach a member of staff who

will accompany them to the designated lost/found child/vulnerable adult point. (See below.) During sightseeing hours the VEM should take the parent, guardian or teacher to the meeting point at the Main Stairs desk to report the incident and wait to be re-united with the child or vulnerable person. During services outside of sightseeing hours such as Evensong the meeting point should be at the Welcome Point.

6. If a Security Officer or member of staff see a child or vulnerable adult of a similar description walking out of an exit or if they are seen inside the Cathedral they must engage with them to ascertain if they are lost. It should be remembered that a vulnerable adult may be confused and may not remember that they had arrived with someone. They must secure the attendance of another as a witness as detailed above. If it is ascertained or suspected that the person is lost they must immediately contact the VEM and Security Control Room.
7. Where there is a particular welfare need or need for pastoral support, a Virger should contact an appropriate Cathedral Minister to attend, and remain to assist as needed and appropriate until they arrive. Physical contact can easily be misinterpreted and should be avoided at all times. It would be appropriate to sit or crouch to be at eye level with a young child.
8. The VEM will instruct the member of staff to bring them back into the Cathedral and go to the meeting point at Main Stairs or welcome point as in para. 6.
9. Once found the VEM should investigate the circumstances of the how the child or vulnerable adult became separated from their parent/guardian or teacher and report the incident. If appropriate the incident should be reported as a safeguarding incident and a report sent to the safeguarding officer.
10. The child or vulnerable adult must not leave the premises or be left alone with their parent/guardian/teacher until the ID of that person has been checked.
11. If police were called and attended full details should be obtained of the police investigation and a report should be completed and sent to the safeguarding officer.

Dealing with a **FOUND** child or vulnerable adult

1. All found children or vulnerable adults should be taken by the member of staff to the Main Stairs desk where there will always be a VEA present when the



Cathedral is open. During services outside of sightseeing hours such as evensong the meeting point should be at the Welcome Point.

2. On arrival at the Main Stairs desk the VEM and the Security Control Room must be informed immediately. The secure radio procedure outlined in lost children must be followed. The VEM should attend the desk to take charge of the incident. There **MUST** always be two members of staff present at all times with the child or vulnerable person until the child has been collected by a parent/guardian, or responsible adult.
3. All staff and volunteers should be informed by the VEM over the radio (secure radio procedure to be adopted) that there is a found child/vulnerable adult at the Main stairs desk. Staff will then be able to accompany a parent, guardian or member of teaching staff who reports them lost. If the child is believed to be part of a group such as a school, the lead teacher must be informed immediately.
4. Where there is a particular welfare need or need for pastoral support, a Virger should contact an appropriate Cathedral Minister to attend, and remain to assist as needed and appropriate until they arrive. Physical contact can easily be misinterpreted and should be avoided at all times. It would be appropriate to sit or crouch to be at eye level with a young child.
5. As much information should be taken from the child or vulnerable adult. This will include a full description of the person, clothing, age and name. All members of staff should be actively looking for an adult who may appear to be distressed or appears to be searching for their lost child. The VEA should not leave their position when undertaking this. As a last resort the VEM should request that the Security Control Room should issue an announcement on the PA system. The name of the child or their description should not be announced. This must be part of a dynamic risk assessment as there is a risk that a dubious person who is not attached to the child or vulnerable person could come forward.
6. If the parent, guardian teacher or similar responsible adult approaches the Main Stairs desk or welcome point their full details should be obtained together with a request for proof of their identity. The child or vulnerable adult should not be handed over to them unless the VEM is absolutely certain that they are the parent or guardian. This will normally be established by relevant questions and answers to the found child/vulnerable person and the parent or guardian. If there is any doubt police should be called to assist. The VEM should ensure that a report is completed and forwarded to the Director of VE and Safeguarding Officer if appropriate. The VEM should also alert the Head of Schools and Families Learning if the child is with a school party.
7. If an individual case presents with circumstance, which may lead to the child being a high risk case, for example a victim of crime, police should be called immediately. The Head of Security and Resilience and Director of Visitor



Engagement should be contacted at the same time. If a parent/guardian appears to be unable to care for a child due to being under the influence of alcohol/drugs, or if willful neglect/carelessness led to the child becoming lost, the Safeguarding Officer or if appropriate the police, should be consulted.

8. If non high-risk children or vulnerable adults are not re-united with their parent(s), guardian or teacher within a short period, consideration should be given to contacting police. A risk assessment should be conducted under these circumstances. A period of 20 minutes would be a recommended period of time unless circumstances dictate that police should be contacted before this period of time has elapsed.

Jonathan Brady
Head of Security and Resilience

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