



Southwell Cathedral

LOST CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT PROCEDURE

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Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	When a person is reported missing	1
	Immediate notification.....	1
	Information must be recorded.....	1
	Supporting the parent or responsible adult.....	1
3.	Searching and escalation.....	2
4.	If a lost child or vulnerable adult comes to you.....	2
	Public announcements (if appropriate).....	2
5.	Reuniting a lost child or vulnerable adult	2
	Identity verification	2
	If there are concerns.....	3
6.	Once the child or vulnerable adult has been safely reunited	3
7.	Recording the incident	3

1. Introduction

This procedure applies to all incidents involving a **lost or missing child (under 18)** or **vulnerable adult** within Southwell Minster and its precincts.

2. When a person is reported missing

Immediate notification

The person who receives the report must **inform the Person in Charge immediately**.

Depending on the time of day, location or nature of the activity, the Person in Charge may be:

- The **Verger on Duty**.
- The **Clergy in Residence** (contact details available in the South Porch).
- The **Activity Leader** (for education, schools or organised activities).
- The **Duty Manager** (for commercial or private events).

Information must be recorded

The Person in Charge must immediately record **full details** of the missing person, including:

- Full name.
- Age.
- Physical description (including height, hair colour, gender, clothing, disability or additional needs).
- Where they were last seen.
- Time they were last seen.
- Name of school, organisation or group they came with (if applicable).

Supporting the parent or responsible adult

The Person in Charge must:

- Reassure the parent or responsible adult that a search is underway.
- Assign a **named member of staff** or **steward** to remain with and support the parent/responsible adult.
- Ensure that **all updates** are relayed promptly to the parent/responsible adult, either in person or by phone.

3. Searching and escalation

A coordinated search must begin immediately under the direction of the Person in Charge.

If the missing child or vulnerable adult **is not located within 30 minutes**, the Person in Charge must **contact the police without delay**.

When the police arrive, the Person in Charge must fully cooperate and provide **all known information** gathered to that point.

4. If a lost child or vulnerable adult comes to you

If a child or vulnerable adult approaches you or is found alone:

- If you are alone with them, ensure you remain in a **public area** where you can be clearly seen and heard by others.
- Most events will have a **designated Lost Child Point** (refer to the event briefing or event plan).
- If another visitor is present, ask them to remain with you until help arrives.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult calmly and appropriately.
- Contact the Person in Charge immediately (see section 1).

Public announcements (if appropriate)

Public announcements may be made **only under the direction of the Person in Charge**.

If the parent/guardian's name is known, announce via the PA system:

*"This is a public announcement. Would **[Name]** please come to the Information Desk at the main entrance to the Cathedral."*

If the parent/guardian's name is not known, announce:

"This is a public announcement. If you have been separated from a family member, please come to the Information Desk at the main entrance to the Cathedral."

Do not include the name of the lost child or vulnerable adult in any announcement.

If no parent or guardian is located within **30 minutes**, the Person in Charge must **contact the police without delay**.

5. Reuniting a lost child or vulnerable adult

When someone comes forward to claim the lost child or vulnerable adult:

Identity verification

The Person in Charge (or their delegate) must:

- Ask the parent, guardian or responsible adult for **identification**.

- Confirm that the child or vulnerable adult **recognises the individual and appears comfortable**.

If there are concerns

If the child or vulnerable adult appears **distressed, anxious or resistant** to being reunited:

- **Do not release them.**
- Contact the police immediately

6. Once the child or vulnerable adult has been safely reunited

- Inform all stewards and staff involved in the search that the incident has concluded.
- If the police were involved, inform them immediately that the child or vulnerable adult has been safely reunited with their parent/carer.

7. Recording the incident

All incidents involving lost persons, including children and vulnerable adults, must be recorded on an **Incident Report Form**.

Incident Report Forms are available at the **Information Desk** in the Cathedral or from the **Safeguarding Team** via email.

Completed forms must be submitted **immediately** to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer at safeguarding@southwell.anglican.org.