

Policy Name	Parents Temporarily Absent from the Home				
Effective Date	January 2022	Date of last revision	October 2024	Version No.	1
Author	Whole School Designated Safeguarding Lead				

Version History				
Version	Approved by	Revision Date	Details of Changes	Author
1.1	MT	24.10.24	KCSIE 2020 changed to 2024	MT

Introduction

The School believes the welfare of the child is paramount and wishes to collaborate with parents and guardians to ensure their child is safe at all times. The School recognises that parents are sometimes required to travel abroad for work and family and would like to be kept informed about those periods when parents are away and need to appoint a guardian in their absence. Under UK law no minors or children under the age of 18 are allowed to be left alone for extended periods of time without the supervision of a responsible adult.

The aim of this policy is:

- to inform and help parents and staff to understand the arrangements that need to be in place, should parents have to be away from home.

Scope

The following statutory guidance is relevant to this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in education (September 2024)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2020)

This policy applies to ICS staff, parents, guardians and students.

This policy is available on request from the school offices and is published on our website.

This policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

The safety and welfare of our students is of paramount importance to us. Staff must comply with this policy, and Senior Leadership will intervene where non-compliance is evident.

Responsibilities when Children Left at Home without Parents

Responsibility of Parents

Parents are required to inform the school giving, at least, one week's notice if they are going to be away from home and their child/children need(s) to be cared for by a guardian. The school will require a clear written plan of the arrangements in place during their absence (see [Appendix 1](#)).

This will include:

- The name of the guardian and their contact details
- Address of the guardian
- The dates and length of time the guardian will be in charge of the child/children
- The nature of the relationship between the guardian and the family
- The procedure in place if the appointed guardian has an emergency

and is unable to look after the children.

Responsibility of Guardians

The guardian must contact ICS to introduce himself/herself to the School at the earliest convenience so that the School is assured of the arrangement the parents have made. This will greatly facilitate working with the guardian in the event of any concern. Moreover, if there is a medical emergency the School must have the means to contact a parent or the appointed guardian at all times.

Responsibility of ICS

If for any reason that no such arrangements are in place and the School becomes aware of a parents' absence, the School reserves the right to implement any safeguarding procedures deemed necessary to protect the child/children under UK law.

This may include one or both of the following:

- The School will inform the Local Child Safeguarding Board and Social Services
- The School will inform the Police Safeguarding/Child Protection Team.

If there is any suspicion that a child is home alone, the School may make an unannounced home visit to check arrangements.

As educators we have a responsibility to safeguard children. This includes identifying potential indicators of abuse or neglect such as a child going missing from education or having inconsistent care and supervision at home. At ICS we have procedures in place for dealing with a variety of risk factors based on the guidance outlined in the Department for Education's [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024](#)

Appendix 1: Parents Temporarily Absent from Home Form

PARENTS TEMPORARILY ABSENT FROM HOME

SCHOOL NUMBERS:

Secondary (Star Street): 020 7402 9273

Primary (Wyndham Place): 020 7298 8827

CHILDREN'S INFORMATION

Please list the name and class of each of your children who will be left at home

PARENT INFORMATION

Name of Parents:

Address of Parents:

CONTACT DETAILS

Home Phone Number: _____

Mobile Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency Contact Number: _____

GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Name of Guardian: _____

Relationship between Guardian and Family: _____

Address: _____

CONTACT DETAILS

Home Phone Number: _____

Mobile Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Dates Guardian will be in charge of the child/children:

From: _____ **(Date)** to _____ **(Date)**

Additional Comments

By signing this form, I confirm that the procedure is in place and the appointed Guardian has an emergency number to contact us and the school if he/she is unable to look after the child/children.

Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____

Please complete and hand in this form or email the information to: primary@icslondon.co.uk or secondary@icslondon.co.uk to inform the School of the arrangements in place for your child if you are planning to be away from home and appointing a guardian in your absence.

You may also email the Deputy Head of School, charlotte.nichol@icslondon.co.uk and the Primary Principal:

Appendix 2: NSPCC Advice to Parents: Home Alone

Advice on leaving a child at home

- Babies, toddlers and very young children should never be left alone
- Children under the age of 12 are rarely mature enough to cope in an emergency and should not be left at home alone for a long period of time
- Children under the age of 16 should not be left alone overnight
- Parents and carers can be prosecuted for neglect if it is judged that they placed a child at risk by leaving them at home alone
- A child should never be left at home alone if they do not feel comfortable with this, regardless of their age
- If a child has additional needs, these should be considered when leaving them at home alone or with an older sibling
- When leaving a younger child with an older sibling think about what may happen if they were to have a falling out - would they both be safe?

Things to consider before leaving a child home alone

No one knows your child quite as well as you do – so use your knowledge of what they're really like to answer these questions. This won't give you a definite answer about whether the time is right to leave your child alone at home, but it'll certainly give you plenty to think about.

- Does your child seem to be responsible and mature for their age and always do what you tell him or her?
- Would they be able to fix themselves something to eat and drink and would you be happy with them using the cooker or microwave?
- Can you imagine how they'd cope in an emergency like a power cut or a flooded bathroom?
- Would they know what to do if the phone rang or someone came to the door?
- Would they know how to contact you or another family member or friend if they needed to? Do they have these contact numbers to hand?
- How would they feel about being left alone – pleased to be given the responsibility or scared by the thought of it?

But remember, if you or your child are even the teeniest bit unsure about leaving them at home on their own, it's always best to be on the safe side and arrange some other kind of care for them such as a babysitter or childminder.