Policy Name	Parental Absence and Alternative Care Arrangements Policy				
Effective Date	January 2022	**Date of last revision**	September 2026	**Version No.**	1.2
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**
1.2	**MT**	**01.09.2026**	**KCSIE 2020 changed to 2026**	**MT**
		01.09.2026	**Name of policy changed to Parental Absence and Alternative Care Arrangements Policy.**	**MT**
		01.09.2026	**A new form has been created**	**MT**
		01.09.2026	**The form correlates with the list of criteria that the school requires from parents**	**MT**
		01.09.2026	**Updates reflect changes in the following two policies.** • **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026** • **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**	**MT**

Introduction

The School believes the welfare of the child is paramount and wishes to collaborate with parents, carers and nominated 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.

There is no specific legal age at which a child may be left at home alone. However, parents and carers have a responsibility to ensure that any arrangements made for their child are safe and appropriate to the child's age, maturity, individual needs and circumstances. Leaving a child unsupervised may constitute neglect where the circumstances place the child at risk of harm.

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 (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

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.

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 During Periods of Parental Absence

Responsibility of Parents

For the purposes of this policy, references to parents include carers and any person with parental responsibility for the child, where applicable.

Parents should notify the School as soon as reasonably practicable and, wherever possible, at least one week before the planned absence.

Where an absence arises unexpectedly, parents should notify the School as soon as possible.

Parents must notify the School as soon as reasonably practicable of any change to the nominated guardian, backup guardian, contact details, dates of absence or other arrangements that may affect the child's care or welfare.

Parents and guardians must take account of the child's age, maturity, emotional wellbeing, health, disability, special educational needs, medical needs and any other circumstances that may affect their ability to remain safely without parental supervision.

Parents should, where appropriate, discuss the proposed care arrangements with their child and take account of the child's views, feelings and level of comfort with the arrangements.

Parents must complete the School's Parental Absence and Alternative Care Arrangements Form where they will be absent from home and another adult will have responsibility for the child's care during that absence, where the School reasonably considers that the information is necessary to safeguard or support the child.

This will include:

- The name of the guardian and their contact details
- The procedure in place if the appointed guardian has an emergency and is unable to look after the children (a back up/emergency guardian)
- A mobile telephone number
- Address of the guardian
- The nature of the relationship between the guardian and the family
- The dates and period during which the guardian will be responsible for the care of the child/children
- Arrangements for transport to/from school
- Relevant medical information and arrangements for medical treatment, where applicable
- Who can collect the child
- Details of who is authorised by the parent(s) to make appropriate day-to-day decisions concerning the child's care during the period of absence, recognising that this does not confer parental responsibility
- parent's international contact details
- Time zone if relevant

- Emergency contact outside the UK, if appropriate

Responsibility of Guardians/Care Providers

For the purposes of this policy, a nominated guardian/care provider is the responsible adult nominated by the parent(s) to provide or oversee the child's care during the parent's absence. The nomination of a guardian for the purposes of this policy does not, by itself, confer parental responsibility or any other legal status on that person.

The nominated guardian should contact the School at the earliest opportunity. The School may request further information where reasonably necessary to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements have been made for the child's welfare.

Nominated guardians should:

- accept responsibility for the agreed period;
- provide and maintain accurate contact details;
- notify the School promptly if the care arrangements change;
- ensure that appropriate care and supervision are provided;
- contact the parent(s) and the School if they are unable to continue providing care; and
- activate the agreed emergency/backup care arrangements where necessary.

Responsibility of ICS London

Where the School becomes aware that a parent or carer is absent and appropriate care arrangements have not been provided or cannot be confirmed, the School will seek to establish the circumstances and, where appropriate, contact the parent(s), nominated guardian or other relevant adult.

Where the School has reasonable cause to believe that a child may be at risk of harm, neglect or inadequate care, the School will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures. This may include seeking advice from or making a referral to the relevant local authority children's social care and/or contacting the police, where appropriate.

Where appropriate, the School will work with the relevant local safeguarding partners and other agencies in accordance with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The School will respond proportionately to the circumstances and will take into account the child's age, maturity, emotional wellbeing, health, disability, special educational needs, medical needs, vulnerability and any other relevant circumstances.

As educators, we have a responsibility to safeguard children. This includes identifying potential indicators of abuse or neglect, including concerns about inconsistent care and supervision at home. The School will act in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

The School's responsibilities include:

- recording relevant information;
- sharing information internally on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements;
- monitoring and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- following the School's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- escalating concerns proportionately; and
- making referrals to relevant external agencies where necessary.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information provided under this policy will be handled securely and in accordance with the School's data protection and privacy policies. Information will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, welfare, educational or emergency purposes, or where disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the School may share relevant information with appropriate external agencies in accordance with its safeguarding procedures and applicable legal requirements.

Appendix 1: ICS Parental Absence and Alternative Care Arrangements Form

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL LONDON

Appendix 1: Parental Absence and Alternative Care Arrangements Form

To be completed by parents/carers when alternative care arrangements are required during a period of parental absence.

Purpose of this form

This form should be completed by parents/carers when they will be absent from home and alternative care arrangements have been made for their child/children. Parents/carers should notify the School as soon as reasonably practicable and, wherever possible, at least one week

before the planned absence. Where an absence arises unexpectedly, the School should be notified as soon as possible. The information provided will be used to support the safety, welfare and safeguarding of the child/children during the period of parental absence.

1. Children's Information

Child's full name	Date of birth	Year/Class	School

2. Parent/Carer Information

Parent/Carer 1

Full name:

_____

Relationship to child/children:

_____

Usual home address:

_____

Mobile telephone:

_____

Email address:

_____

International contact number while away:

_____

Destination/country while away:

_____

Time zone (if different from UK):

_____

Parent/Carer 2

Full name:

_____

Relationship to child/children:

_____

Usual home address:

_____

Mobile telephone:

_____

Email address:

_____

International contact number while away:

_____

Destination/country while away:

_____

Time zone (if different from UK):

_____

3. Period of Parental Absence

Date and time parents/carers will leave:

_____

Expected date and time of return:

_____

Destination(s):

_____

Will both parents/carers be absent during this period?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, please provide details of the parent/carer who will remain responsible for the child/children:

_____

4. Primary Nominated Guardian / Care Provider

For the purposes of this policy, a nominated guardian/care provider is the responsible adult nominated by the parent(s) to provide or oversee the child's care during the parent's absence. The nomination of a guardian for the purposes of this policy does not, by itself, confer parental responsibility or any other legal status on that person.

Full name:

_____

Relationship to child/children and family:

_____

Address:

_____

Mobile telephone:

_____

Alternative telephone number:

_____

Email address:

_____

Will the child/children stay at the guardian's address?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, please provide details of where the child/children will stay:

_____

_____

Dates the guardian will be responsible for the child/children (From / To):

_____

5. Backup / Emergency Guardian

Please provide details of a second responsible adult who can take over the care of the child/children if the nominated guardian is unexpectedly unable to provide care.

Full name:

_____

Relationship to child/children and family:

_____

Address:

_____

Mobile telephone:

_____

Alternative telephone number:

_____

Email address:

_____

When would the backup guardian take responsibility?

_____

Has the backup guardian agreed to these arrangements?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Care and Supervision Arrangements

Where will the child/children stay?

_____

Who will provide day-to-day care?

_____

Who will supervise the child/children outside school hours?

_____

Are there any periods when the child/children may be without adult supervision?

☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, please provide details:

_____

_____

Please provide any other information about the care arrangements that the School should be aware of:

_____

_____

7. School Arrangements

How will the child/children travel to and from School?

_____

Who is authorised to collect the child/children from School?

_____

Name(s):

_____

Relationship to child/children:

_____

Contact number(s):

_____

If the School is unable to contact the parent/carer, the School should first contact:

☐ Primary guardian/care provider ☐ Backup/emergency guardian ☐ Other person

If other person, please specify:

_____

8. Medical and Additional Needs

Does the child/children have any medical conditions, allergies, medication or additional needs that the guardian needs to be aware of?

☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, please provide details or confirm that the School's existing medical records are up to date:

_____

_____

Are there any other health, wellbeing, educational or safeguarding matters that the School should be aware of during the parent's absence?

☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, please provide details:

_____

_____

9. Emergency Arrangements

Step 1 — Contact:

_____

Step 2 — Contact backup guardian:

_____

Step 3 — Contact parent/carer:

_____

Step 4 — Contact School, where appropriate:

_____

Any additional emergency arrangements:

_____

_____

10. Parent/Carer Confirmation

☐ I/we have provided accurate and up-to-date information about the arrangements for the care and supervision of my/our child/children during my/our absence.

☐ I/we have informed the nominated guardian/care provider of the arrangements and they have agreed to provide or oversee the child's care.

☐ I/we have provided a backup/emergency care arrangement should the nominated guardian be unable to provide care.

☐ I/we have provided the School with accurate contact information and will remain contactable where reasonably practicable during the period of absence.

☐ I/we have informed the School of any relevant medical, additional or welfare needs.

☐ I/we will notify the School as soon as reasonably practicable if any of the arrangements described in this form change.

☐ I/we understand that the School may contact the nominated guardian, backup guardian or other relevant person if necessary to safeguard or support the child/children.

☐ I/we understand that where the School has safeguarding concerns, it will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may seek advice from or make a referral to relevant external agencies where appropriate.

Parent/Carer 1
Name:
_____

Signature:
_____

Date:
_____

Parent/Carer 2
Name:
_____

Signature:
_____

Date:
_____

11. Guardian/Carer Confirmation

I confirm that I have been informed of the above arrangements and agree to provide or oversee the care of the child/children for the period specified. I understand that I should notify the parent(s) and the School as soon as reasonably practicable if I am unable to continue providing care or if the agreed arrangements change.

Guardian/Care Provider name:
_____

Signature:
_____

Date:
_____

12. School Use Only

Date form received:
_____

Received by:

_____

Arrangements reviewed by:

_____

Date reviewed:

_____

Further information required?

☐ No ☐ Yes

Details/action required:

_____

_____

Safeguarding concerns identified?

☐ No ☐ Yes — refer to Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures

DSL/Deputy DSL notified, where applicable — Name:

_____

Date:

_____

Additional comments:

_____

_____

_____

ICS London Contact Details

Primary School — Wyndham Place	Secondary School — Star Street
Telephone: 020 7298 8827 Email: primary@icslondon.co.uk	Telephone: 020 7402 9273 Email: secondary@icslondon.co.uk

Please submit the completed form to the relevant School office or designated School contact.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information provided under this form will be handled securely and in accordance with the School's data protection and privacy policies. Information will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, welfare, educational or emergency purposes, or where disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the School may

share relevant information with appropriate external agencies in accordance with its safeguarding procedures and applicable legal requirements.

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 slightest 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.