

**LOST/FOUND CHILD/VULNERABLE PERSONS GUIDANCE**

The goal of the Lost and Found Person Guidance is to reunite each lost or found person with their parents or guardians. Please read this procedure carefully –

There needs to be a clear distinction between the terms **Lost** and **Found** when relating to a child/vulnerable person:

A **Lost** child/vulnerable person is one whose whereabouts is **not known**. (Normally reported by a parent or guardian).

A **Found** child/vulnerable person is one whose whereabouts is known but who is not with their parent or guardian.

**Clearly any child who is ‘lost’ is at greater risk.**

A Lost and Found Persons service should be provided throughout the event while ticket holders/event goers are on site. All enquiries and dealings regarding lost and found children should be co-ordinated by the Lost Child Tent/Area and all staff on site need to be fully briefed about this. The staff at the Lost Child Tent/Area should have a current DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service). If you’re a small organisation, it’s very hard to get people DBS checked but you may have people involved who are DBS checked because they work in healthcare / teaching / charity sector, etc.

Throughout this procedure the term “parent” also includes “guardian”.

**Lost Child / Vulnerable person procedure**

If on-site staff are approached by a parent who has lost a child/vulnerable person, they will escort the parent immediately to the Lost Child Tent/Area and will alert the staff.

* The member of staff will take full contact details from the person reporting the missing person and their relationship / position of responsibility to the missing child / vulnerable person and then a full description taken from the parent/guardian/carer of the missing person. To include:

1. Person Details: Name, Age, Sex, Address
2. Person Description: Hair colour, Clothing, identifiable features
3. Access to a mobile and contact numbers
4. Any known vulnerabilities
5. Incident Details: Location last seen, Time last seen.
6. Any instruction the missing person has been given if they become ’lost’.

* The person reporting should remain with the event staff however if they are insistent on leaving and searching themselves it is essential that they remain immediately contactable by some means.
* The member of staff will contact Control who will then co-ordinate information out to all security and stewards. Consideration should be given to immediately monitoring any gates/exits to the event. **NB**: The event Safety Officer should risk assess whether West Mercia Police should be informed immediately

* Stewards & CCTV on site entry / exits points should acknowledge this message, stay on point and be prepared to challenge subjects who match the description even if accompanied to confirm the child / vulnerable person is in rightful care.
* We understand that speed of communication is of paramount importance and the briefing of all on-site staff will be co-ordinated by the Control Tent/Area staff. If the child is still not reunited with their parents within a relatively short time after Security Personnel are alerted then consideration should be given to notifying West Mercia Police. (This will depend on the circumstances of the incident, age of child etc. *If there are suspicious circumstances or any doubt, the police should be called immediately).*
* If deemed necessary announcements can be made at the stage. These announcements will be treated as a priority and will be broadcast at the earliest opportunity. Announcements will not refer to the child specifically or give personal details, descriptions or names
* If attempts to locate the missing person prove negative, consideration should be given to making an announcement on the PA system. (Careful thought must to be given to the content of the message relayed as it may highlight vulnerability)
* Once the person has been located, they will be taken to the lost / found area and this movement must be brought to the attention of the designated event lead. Ideally 2 members of staff should be present when moving the person to this location.
* Once the lost child/person lead locates and confirms that the parents/guardians/carers are bona fide, are fit to be in charge of a child (for example are not under the influence of alcohol) and that they have a child matching the description, they will be reunited with their child. Before a child/vulnerable person is allowed to leave, their parent/guardian/carer should have to sign a form and provide some form of identification.
* If a child is reluctant to go with a parent or guardian then a second opinion will be sought from West Mercia Police.
* An information message across each radio channel should then be made to inform that the search is over and police informed (if already contacted and aware).
* If the person is refusing to go with the appropriate adult then West Mercia Police will be called without delay.

**Contact**

**West Mercia Police on 999 if serious concerns about a lost child/vulnerable person**

**or 101 if reporting a found child/vulnerable person**



