

Missing child

Statement of intent

We are committed to ensure the safety of all the children in our care as their well being is paramount.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all children are kept safe and secure while under our care.

Methods

- Staff will ensure that all outside doors are kept closed
- When playing outside, all gates must be securely closed
- There must be an adult present by the main door when the children are arriving
- There must be an adult by the backroom door when children are leaving at lunchtime.
- The exit door in the main hall must be watched at home time.

In the event of a suspected missing child

- The person in charge will appoint 2 people to carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The other children will be gathered in the book corner and the register checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- If it is confirmed that a child is definitely missing, the manager will contact the police and the child's parents immediately.
- While waiting for the police and parents, the previously designated members of staff will begin a search of the vicinity, gradually widening the area. Mobile phones will be taken for contact purposes.

If a child goes missing from an outing where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the setting ensures that there is a procedure that is followed.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The person in charge of the setting contacts the child's parent who makes their way to outing venue as agreed with the person in charge.
- The staff contact the police using the mobile phone and report the child as missing.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

The investigation

- The manager carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time, or who were on the outing.
- The key person/ staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the report;
 - what staff/ children were in the group/outing;
 - when the child was last seen in the group/outing;
 - what has taken place in the group/outing since then; and

- the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
 - If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
 - The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
 - OFSTED is informed.
- The Insurance company is informed