



EYFS Statutory Requirements – page 32 section 3.73

EYFS Key Themes and Commitments

<u>A Unique Child</u>	<u>Positive Relationships</u>	<u>Enabling Environments</u>	<u>Learning and Development</u>
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Policy Statement

At Warwick Community Playschool, children’s safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outings procedure and our exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- ☀ As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the manager.
- ☀ The register is immediately checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- ☀ The manager and deputy will carry out a thorough search of the building, garden and the school grounds.
- ☀ Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- ☀ If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
- ☀ The parents are then contacted.
- ☀ A recent photo and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- ☀ The manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- ☀ The manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to

the setting immediately or give authority for someone else to act on their behalf who is closer to the setting for an immediate response.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the manager and/or other staff back in the setting. If the manager has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- ☀ 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 member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that. This staff member will also alert the management of the facility.
- ☀ The senior member of staff on the outing contacts the police and reports the child as missing. The incident is recorded.
- ☀ The manager is contacted immediately and the incident is reported (if not on the outing).
- ☀ The manager contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the manager. The setting is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the setting.
- ☀ Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- ☀ According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our manager where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive. A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- ☀ 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 manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately or give authority for someone else to act on their behalf who is closer to the setting for an immediate response.
- ☀ If the manager is on the trip, the school office will be contacted to inform them of the missing child so that they can contact the chair of the committee.

- ☀ Our staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The investigation

- ☀ Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- ☀ The manager together with the chairperson or representative from the management committee speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- ☀ The chairperson and management committee, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- ☀ Our manager, together with the chair of the committee speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- ☀ The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
- ☀ Each member of staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - ☀ The date and time of the report.
 - ☀ Where the child went missing from.
 - ☀ Which staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - ☀ When the child was last seen in the group/outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - ☀ What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - ☀ A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- ☀ The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
- ☀ 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. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- ☀ In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- ☀ The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- ☀ Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.

- ☀ The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- ☀ Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Managers need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- ☀ The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the manager and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee or representative. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- ☀ The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- ☀ In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- ☀ Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of: Warwick Community Association

Reviewed on: May 2017

This policy will be reviewed annually in October.

This policy will be reviewed annually, with changes made as required. The manager of the setting will be responsible for maintaining this and sharing with the committee members of Warwick Community Association to be verified. This will be shown in the minutes of the meeting.