

Missing Child Policy

January 2018

The welfare of all of our children is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school appreciates that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Our staffing ratios follow statutory guidelines or above, and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care. Our Nursery teams will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will ensure that exits and entrances are kept secure.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore practitioners will undertake periodic head counts. If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the setting, the following procedure will be activated

Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing from the setting

- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child. Other members of staff will search the immediate environment.
- The Manager and the owner will be informed immediately.
- Any available staff would be mobilised to search the premises and grounds both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc where a small child might hide. Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit. Care should be taken during this time that other children are not left unattended and put at risk.
- If, after thorough searching, the child is still not found the Police should be informed.
- At this stage the child's parents/carers will be informed. Further action beyond this shall be taken in consultation with the parents/carers.
- While waiting for the Police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at Nursery.
- The manager or member of staff will be responsible for meeting the Police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Manager will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the Police, and do all he/she can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the incident is resolved, the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes.
- All incidents of children going missing from school will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. Relevant policies and procedures should be reviewed
- In cases where either the police or social services have been informed, the relevant body (Ofsted) will be informed as soon as is practical.
- Parents will be informed if their child was temporarily missing during the school day.

Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.

- The Party Leader should assess the situation :
 - - Remaining at the venue
 - - The possibility of taking the remaining children back to setting
 - - Number of staff remaining at venue / returning with children
- Inform the Owner by mobile phone.
- The manager would ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the setting at once.
- Contact the Police.
- The Child Protection Officer would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- The Nursery would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- Ofsted would be informed.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate procedures would be adjusted.