

Child Going Missing Policy

Statement of Intent

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.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, the following procedure shall take place:

- Staff will be careful to remain calm and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- The Preschool Manager shall check around the school premises. At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school site, 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 the child is not found, then a member of Senior Management Team should be informed immediately.
- 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 telephoned. 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 preschool.

- The Preschool Manager or a Senior Management Team will be responsible for meeting the Police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Preschool Manager or member of SMT will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the Police, and do all she/he can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the incident is resolved, the SMT and 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. Media queries should be referred to Michelle Wisbey.

Policies and Procedures

Update Sept 13, Jan 16, Oct 16, June 19,

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- 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.
- If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.
- 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.

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 Manager should assess the situation re:
 - Remaining at the venue
 - The possibility of taking the remaining children back to school
 - Number of staff remaining at venue / returning with children
- Inform Michelle Wisbey, Preschool Director and the Child Protection Officer by mobile phone.
- The Preschool Manager or a member of SMT 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 school at once.
- Contact the Police
- Media queries should be referred to Michelle Wisbey.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

The investigation

- Michelle Wisbey, the registered person, 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.

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- 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 preschool would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- 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 Pre-school Insurance Company is informed.
- Relevant policies and procedures should be reviewed.
- 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.

The following procedures and documentation in relation to this policy are:

Preschool Policies

- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Child Protection Policy

Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 2006, 2013, 2015, 2018)

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017

Section 3 – Safeguarding and welfare requirements

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