

Missing Child

Policy Statement

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through carrying out the outings procedures and the exit and entrance procedure, to ensure the security of the children is always maintained. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedure

Child missing on the premises

This describes the procedures that will be undertaken by all the staff team, therefore, some of the actions will be occurring simultaneously.

- ❖ As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, management is alerted
- ❖ The management will carry out a thorough check of the building and garden.
- ❖ A headcount of the children using Famly to note all children that are present to ensure that no other child is missing.
- ❖ The manager will call the police to report the missing child.
- ❖ The parents will then be notified that their child is missing from the Pre-School
- ❖ Doors and Gates are checked to ensure that there has been no security breach, whereby children can wander out.
- ❖ Fences will be checked for any gaps big enough for the child to exit through.
- ❖ The manager will establish when and where the child was last seen by talking to the practitioners.
- ❖ The manager reports the incident to the chair of committee for an urgent meeting with management.
- ❖ Manager will report to Ofsted and Lado.

Written report of the incident is written including statements from any staff that saw the child last / noted the child was missing. Copy of the minutes from the urgent committee meeting are included along with any actions that need to be taken to stop this occurring again. A copy is then placed inside the Ofsted folder.

Child missing on an outing

This is the procedure that staff will follow when on an outing and the lead practitioner of the outing will take charge.

If a child goes missing on a whole setting outing the procedure will be different as the parents attend and our responsible for their own child whilst on the outing.

Procedure to follow

- ❖ As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, practitioners on the outing are to ask the children to stand with their designated practitioner and the lead practitioner carries out a head count to identify who is missing.
- ❖ One practitioner than searches the immediate vicinity.
- ❖ The lead practitioner contacts the manager to inform them of the missing child.
- ❖ The police are called by the lead practitioner on the outing in order to direct to the correct location.

- ❖ Manager will contact the child's parents to inform them and ask them to make their way to the setting.
- ❖ All remaining children return to the setting.
- ❖ Lead practitioner stays in the location of the outing until police arrive then they arrive back to the setting.
- ❖ If the outing is within an indoor facility the lead practitioner is to contact the security for the venue to alert them to the missing child.
- ❖ The chair of committee is contacted for an urgent meeting with management.
- ❖ Manager will report to Ofsted and Lado.

Written report of the incident is written including statements from any staff that saw the child last / noted the child was missing. Copy of the minutes from the urgent committee meeting are included along with any actions that need to be taken to stop this occurring again. A copy is then placed inside the Ofsted folder.

The investigation

- ❖ Practitioners keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- ❖ The manager together with a representative of the committee, speak with the parent(s).
- ❖ The Management along with the committee will carrying out a full investigation taking written statements from all practitioners involved.
- ❖ The Manager / Lead practitioner writes an incident report detailing;
 - The date and time of the incident
 - Where practitioners / children where
 - Named designated person (On outing) for the missing child
 - When they were last seen
 - What took place since the child went missing
- ❖ A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach in security happened
- ❖ If it warrants police investigation all practitioners will cooperate fully with the investigation.
- ❖ Ofsted and Lado are informed of the incident
- ❖ 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 manager will ensure that practitioners that are under investigation are fairly treated and receive support during and after the investigation.
- ❖ When dealing with distraught and angry parents, there should always be two practitioners present and ideally this should be two members of management but at least one.
- ❖ No matter how understandable the parents anger may be any aggression or threats will not be tolerated and the police will be called.
- ❖ Other children may also be sensitive to what is going on around them, the remaining practitioners caring for them should be honest and reassure the children.
- ❖ In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, practitioners may need counselling and support. The manager and Chair person will use their discretion to decide on what action is to be taken.
- ❖ Practitioners must not discuss any missing child incident with the press or on social media without prior consultation from management.

This policy was adopted by
Position within the Pre-School

Katy Platt
Manager & nominated individual