

1.5 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 procedure and the 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 its noticed that a child is missing , the key person/staff alerts the setting leader.

The setting leader calls the police and reports the child as missing and then calls the parent.

The setting leader will carry a thorough search of the building and garden.

The setting register is checked to make sure no other child as gone astray.

Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.

The setting leader talks to staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.

The setting leader contacts the directors and reports the incident. The directors will come to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with the management where appropriate.

Child going missing on an outing.

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on a outing, leaving the setting leader and/or other staff back at the setting. If the leader has accompanied the children on the outing the procedure is adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually may attend and 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 carer and carry out an headcount to ensure no other child has gone astray . One staff member searches the immediate vicinity, but does not search beyond that.

The setting leader or manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.

The setting leader contacts the police and reports the child missing.

The setting leader contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting.

Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.

The setting leader contacts the directors and reports the incident. The director comes to the setting and immediately carries out an investigation with the management (where appropriate)

The investigation.

Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The setting leader together with the directors speak with the parent(s)

The directors together with the setting leader carry out a full investigation with written statements from all staff in the room or on the outing

The key person/staff writes an incident report detailing

-what 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

-what has taken place in the group/outing since the child went missing

- the estimated time 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. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.

This incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see reporting of accidents and incidents policy); the local health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is any warrant for prosecution.

In the event of any disciplinary action needing to be taken Ofsted is informed.

Insurance provider is informed.

Managing people.

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

The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or 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 missing increases.

Staff may be understandable target of parent anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure 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 setting leader. When dealing with distraught and angry parent(s) there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting leader and the other should be another senior leader or director of the company. No matter how understandable the parents anger might be, aggression and threats against staff are not tolerated and police will be informed.

The other children are also sensitive to what is happening 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.

This policy was adopted at a meeting at Little Explorers Nursery

Held on 5/5/15

Review date 5/5/16

Signed on behalf of the provider.....

Role of signatory.....