



MISSING CHILD POLICY

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through carrying out the Outings Procedure to ensure that the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our Missing Child Procedure is followed.

Procedure

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the Key Person/staff alerts the Manager/Deputy Manager.
- The Manager/Deputy Manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is taken, to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- 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 missing child is reported to the Executive Head. Both the Nursery Manager/Deputy Manager and Executive Head will then contact the parents and police.
- The Nursery Manager/Deputy Manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The Executive Head, with the management team, will then carry out an investigation.

Child going missing on an outing

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

- 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.
- The Manager /Deputy Manager is contacted immediately, and the incident is reported.

- The Manager/Deputy manager contacts the Executive Head, who will then contact the parents and police and report the child as missing.
- In an indoor/outdoor venue, the member of staff contacts the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The Manager/Deputy Manager together with the Executive Head, or representative from the senior management team, speaks with the parent(s).
- The Nursery Management team carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all staff members.
- The Key Person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report.
 - Which staff/children were in the group/outing and the name(s) 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 or outing since the child went missing.
 - The time it is estimated that 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, which will include interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Health & Safety procedures).
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident without taking advice.