

Missing Child Policy

Implemented September 2024

It is our intention to maintain children's safety as the highest priority at all times both on & off the premises.

I. Aim

We aim to ensure that every attempt is made 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.

II. Procedure

If a child goes missing from the setting

- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area.
- The register is checked 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.
- The Teacher talks to other children to establish when & where the missing child was last seen and then records this.
- If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- The Teacher contacts Caroline Parry (Principal) and reports the incident.

III. The Investigation

- Staff keep calm & do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The Teacher carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- Caroline Parry (Principal) writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the report
 - what staff/ children were in the class
 - when the child was last seen in the class
 - what has taken place in the class since then
 - 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 will 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.
- 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.
- The Insurance provider is informed.
- Caroline Parry (Principal) needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only treated fairly but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- When dealing with a distraught parent/guardian, there should always be 2 staff members present.
- Aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated & the police will be called.

The other children may too be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs & 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 outcome, staff may need counselling & support.

Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.