



Missing Child Policy and Procedure

Aim

As part of our high regard for the safety of the children in our care we will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Policy

We will ensure that all precautions are properly observed, and will remain aware that emergencies can still arise. Therefore staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions. If for any reason a worker cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session the following procedure will be used:

Whenever a child goes missing, even for a few minutes, this will be recorded as an incident, the parent/carer will be informed when they collect the child and the incident will be reported to the registered person and to OFSTED.

If a child is missing from the premises

- If a child is thought to be missing after arriving at the premises, the preschool manager will be informed immediately. She will make a careful check of all the children present to confirm who is missing.
- The pre-school manager will then organise to check all exit doors, outside area, rooms, cupboards and possible hiding places. This check will be carried out quickly and without panicking the other children.
- The other children should be kept together with an appropriate worker while the check is being carried out.
- If the search is unsuccessful and the child is still missing, after 5 minutes the pre-school manager must contact the police on 999 and the parent/carer of the missing child. The police will be given the following information:
 - The name of the worker
 - The address of the setting
 - What has happened
 - Child's name, age and address
 - Time of incident
- The search for the child will continue after calling the police.

- The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.

Whilst off of the premises

- For each type of outing, providers must carry out a full risk assessment, which includes an assessment of required adult:child ratios. This assessment must take account of the nature of the outing, and consider whether it is appropriate to exceed the normal ratio requirements (as set out in this document), in accordance with providers' procedures for supervision of children on outings. The assessment must be reviewed before embarking on each specific outing.
- On trips away from the setting, children should be divided into groups with no more than 4 children with each worker. We will decide in advance how to arrange the groups.
- Each adult will have details of which children they are responsible for, including their names and what they are wearing. Trip consent forms and contact details for parents/carers will be taken on the trip so that parents/carers can be contacted in an emergency.
- We will make sure that children know who is responsible for them, including the worker's name and what they are wearing, that they know not to stray and that they know if they want to go to the toilet they ask.
- If appropriate, we will give children labels or badges with the setting's name and a contact number on them.
- We will take a regular headcount of the group. This will depend on the children and the activity. If on taking a headcount a child appears to be missing, the pre-school manager will be contacted immediately.
- The group should stay still and keep together. If there is another adult with the group, one of them will retrace their steps (to a pre-agreed distance, for no more than five minutes), to look for the child.
- If the child is still missing after 5 minutes, we will inform the staff of the site and ask for their help in finding the child and contact the police on 999. We will be prepared to give them the following information:
 - The worker's name and 'phone number and where we are.
 - What has happened.
 - Name, age and address of the child.
 - Time of incident.
- We will contact the parent/carer of the missing child and inform them of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child. We will ensure the preschool manager knows what actions have been taken.
- We will continue the search after calling the police.
- The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.