

## Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.



### 1.5 Missing Child

#### Policy statement

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outings procedure and our 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 it is noticed that a child is missing, the child's key person/relevant member of staff, alerts our setting manager.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has gone astray.
- Our manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and outdoor area.
- 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 immediately, our manager calls the police and reports the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
- The parent(s) are then called and informed.
- If possible a recent photo will be provided and a detailed description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- Our manager will talk to staff to find out when and where child was last seen, and records this information.
- The manager will contact the Chairperson and report the incident. Our Chairperson will come to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with our management team if appropriate.

##### *Child going missing on an outing*

This describes what to do when our staff have take a small group on an outing, leaving our manager and/or other staff back in our setting premises. If our manager has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures

are adjusted accordingly. What to do when a child goes missing from a whole group outing may be a little different as parents often attend and are responsible for their own child, unless they are supervising a group, in which case they are responsible for that group.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff members on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- A staff member will search the immediate vicinity, but not beyond that point.
- The most senior staff member on the outing will contact the police and report the child missing.
- The manager is contacted immediately, if not on the outing, and the incident is recorded.
- The manager contacts the parent(s)
- The remaining staff on the outing will speak with the other children and answer their questions calmly, if it is safe to do so the remaining children will be taken back to the setting as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our manager, where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- Where possible a recent photo of the child will be provided and a description of what they are wearing is given to the police.
- The most senior member of staff will contact the Chair and report the incident. The Chair comes to our premises immediately to carry out an investigation with our management team, where appropriate.

■ *The investigation*

- OFSTED are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- Our Chair carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all our staff and volunteers who were present.
- Our manager, together with our Chair or a representative of our management team, speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with the setting and/or Ofsted.
- Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing:
  - The date and time of the incident.
  - Where the child went missing from, eg the setting or an outing venue.
  - Which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing and the name of the staff member who was designated as responsible for the missing child.
  - When the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
  - What has taken place in the premises or on the outing since went missing.
  - The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
- All of or staff will co-operate fully with any police investigation and provide all necessary information requested.

- 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 any staff under investigation are fairly treated and receive support.
- The Bollington Preschool complaints policy will be followed by the Chairperson and most senior member of staff present.
- Any disclosure to the press will be made via the Chair after consultation with all relevant parties and the committee.

This policy was adopted by

**Bollington Preschool**

On

28<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Date to be reviewed

27<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Shirley Sugden

Corrine Grimes

Role of signatory

Manager

Chairperson