

Missing Child Policy

Missing child

- If a child goes missing from the setting:
 - The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
 - 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.
 - Person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened.
 - If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- If a child goes missing from an outing where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the setting ensures that there is a procedure that is followed:
 - 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 person in charge is informed, if she is not on the outing. They then make their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support for the staff.
 - Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
 - The person in charge of the setting contacts the child's parent who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the person in charge.
 - The staff contact the police using the mobile phone and report the child as missing.
 - In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
 - The person in charge contacts the manager or deputy manager who comes down to the setting as soon as possible.

The Investigation

- The Manager/Deputy Manager carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all adults present at the time, or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report;
 - What staff/adults/children were present in the group/outing;
 - When the child was last seen in the group/outing;
 - What has taken place in the group/outing 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 co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services 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.
- OFSTED is informed.
- The Insurance Department at the Pre-School Learning Alliance is informed.
- Croner Consulting for Employment in Small Business' Legal Department is informed.