

Woodcote Pre-School Group CIO

Missing Child Policy

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outing's procedure and our exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times

We use child safety gates for additional security and we bolt the doors once all children have arrived. We have a keypad entry system on our main door, only the staff have access to this code, which we change yearly.

On outings, the children are counted and assigned to a named member of staff. We use safety reins on the younger children.

Procedures

If a child goes missing on our premises:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the member of staff will alert our setting manager, who will carry out a thorough search of the building and outdoor 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.
- If the child is not found, the manager will call the police immediately 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.
- The manger talks to our staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and makes a record of this.
- The manager contacts the chairperson of the management committee and reports the incident. Our chairperson will come to the pre-school immediately to carry out an investigation,

If a child goes missing on an outing:

If a child goes missing from an outing where the parents are not in attendance, the pre-school ensure that the following procedure is carried out:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff members 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.
- Our senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that child as missing.
- Our manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- Our manager contacts the parent(s).
- Our staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our manager if applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- If the child went missing in an indoor venue, the venue security will help with the search.
- Our staff will remain calm and will not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The Investigation

The Chairperson of the management committee will carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all staff members who were present at the time or who were on the outing.

The key person/staff member will write an incident report detailing:

- The date and time of the incident.
- The staff and children present.
- When the child was last seen.
- What has taken place since then.
- The estimated time of the child going missing.

This report is counter-signed by the pre-school manager.

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up to date with the investigation.
- Our manager, together with the chairperson will speak with the parent(s) and explain the process of the investigation.
- The parent(s) may raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, which includes interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address. In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted are advised.
- The insurance provider is informed.

This Policy has been reviewed and agreed by the Woodcote Pre-School Group CIO Management Committee.

Last Updated: March 2021