



Lost Child Policy (Child going missing when away from the daycare setting)

This policy describes what to do when we take the children out of the normal daycare setting for an outing or activity.

What to do if a child goes missing

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, we will carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One of our staff members searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- We will contact the police and report that child as missing, providing as many details about the child as possible.
- We will contact the parent(s) or carer.
- We will take the remaining children back to the day care setting as soon as possible.
- We will follow police advice.
- one of us will remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing will be provided to the police.
- We will keep calm and not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- We will carry out a full investigation into the events that took place, taking written statements where possible.
- Ofsted will be informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- We will speak with the parent(s)/carer and explain the process of the investigation and any conclusions/outcomes.
- The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
- Each member of staff present will write an incident report providing their own account of what happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, we will co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including 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 informed.
- Our insurance provider is informed.



Missing children incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible. Our staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases. They may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. We will ensure that any staff under investigation are not only fairly treated, but receive support while feeling vulnerable.

The parents will feel angry and distressed. They may want to blame our staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at our manager. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against our staff will not be tolerated, and the police will be called if necessary. The other children will also be sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. Our remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly, but also reassure them.

Policy date:

Review date: