



Activities 4 Kids **Missing Child Policy**

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the 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.

What to do:

Child going missing on the premises:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the senior leader.
- The senior member of staff calls the police and reports the child missing and then calls the parent.
- The senior member of staff 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.
- The setting leader talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The senior leader contacts the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Briony) and reports the incident. The staff, with the Senior leadership team, carries out an investigation.
- Parents/carers should be aware of exit areas all times in order to maintain safety.

Step by step:

- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The setting leader or manager is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
- The setting leader contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The setting leader contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the setting leader. The setting is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the setting.
- Staff members take the remaining children back to the setting.
- The staff members check the area, then contact the police if the child is not found.
- The setting leader contacts the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO, and SLT carries out an investigation.
- The setting leader, or designated safeguarding lead may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.
- Staff members keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The setting leader together with DSL speaks with the parent(s).
- The DSL and SLT, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the area.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:

- a. The date and time of the report.
 - b. What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - c. When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
 - d. What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - e. 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. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
 - The incident is reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences) arrangements; the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
 - In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
 - 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 children may also be sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The 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.
- Parents should be informed of any incident involving a missing child by a member of the SLT or DSL.
- Staff may feel vulnerable during this process and will need support. There should always be two members of staff present who are members of SLT/safeguarding team when handling the situation with parents.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The DSL and manager will use their discretion to decide what action to take.

This policy was developed by:

Governance and Accountability Sub Group and rewritten due to renaming of the charity

This Policy was adopted by:

Activities 4 Kids

Date: 01.02.2023

Signed: Briony Jacobs

Next Review Date: 01.02.2028