

LOST CHILD

Procedure

Children's safety is our highest priority at all times. Every attempt is made 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.

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the staff alerts the setting Manager/Owner, the register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.

The setting Manager/Owner will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden, doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.

If after searching the area the child cannot be found the Manager/named Deputy will contact the parents and the police. The police will want to know:

- Where you are (address of setting).
- The next of kin of the child.
- A detailed description of the child, including age, sex and as much information about their clothing as possible working down from head to toe.
- The circumstances of the incident, including anything that may have triggered the disappearance, how long the child has been missing, where they were last seen, if the child had been upset.
- Who is looking for the child, where are they, do they have a mobile with them, what is the number?
- Continue the search, widening the area until the police arrive.

The setting Manager/Owner talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.

Regardless of the outcome a full investigation will be conducted by the Manager/named Deputy taking written statements from all the staff in the setting at the earliest convenience. A full missing child incident report will be completed – this will be reported back to the parents and to Ofsted. Our insurance provider must be informed.

A new risk assessment will be completed to ensure the incident does not happen again.

The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements; the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.

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Staff

All staff must keep calm during any incident that might occur; they must not let the other children become anxious or worried. While a few members of staff may be dealing with the incident the remaining staff caring for the children will focus on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. Staff will answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.

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.

In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted will be informed, and guidance will be taken from LSB.

Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger. The Manager/Owner will ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting Manager/Owner. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.

Policy/Procedure name: Lost Child Procedure	
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Signed:.....(Proprietor/Manager)	
Signed:.....(Deputy Manager)	