



Missing Child Procedure

Last updated 11.04.11

Play Service

To prevent a child going missing we will have in place the following:

- Appropriate staff ratio's: children
- All exits from the premises will be locked or guarded in a way which makes it impossible for a child to leave unobserved or unattended, while allowing rapid exit for the whole group in case of an emergency.
- An accurate and up to date register will be kept for all staff and children and will be checked at regular intervals. In addition children will be signed in and out.
- All visitors must sign in and out.
- All children will be made aware of the boundaries and the rules of the club and reasons for these.
- Prominent notices will alert any visitors of closing doors and gates and reasons for this.
- We will conduct a risk assessment on any hazards or dangers and make all staff and parents aware of them so we can work together to avoid them.

In the event of a child going missing we will make the relevant calls and record any information.

FOLLOW ALL STEPS BELOW:

1. Find out quickly

- Know how many children should be present and make some one responsible for regular counts.
- If we discover a child is missing we will write down as much information as possible.

2. Search systematically

- Staff are responsible for the missing child and also the other children in the group.
- We will gather the other children into one group in a safe area while the other staff conduct a search
- The other children will be supervised whilst staff search for the missing child
- Without alarming them ask the children themselves whether they have seen the child that is missing; they can sometimes be a useful source of information.
- We will make sure that all the staff are aware of the situation.
- We will check every area in the building and any accessible outside area.
- If the premises are used by other people we will inform them and if appropriate, seek their co-operation.

3. Parents

- We will call the child's parents to inform them of the situation.
- We will warn them that their child may be attempting to get home.
- We will require have an alternative number in case of emergencies.
- The child's parents may be frightened, distressed and possibly angry, we may need to advise and support them and provide as much relevant information as we can.

- If we are aware of the child's route to their home a staff member should make the journey to the home.

4. The Police

- If we are unsuccessful in the above we will call the police, they have the resources to conduct the search further and speed is important.

5. Informing other people

- If we have informed the police, we will also inform social services and Ofsted of the incident. You will need to provide all the relevant information to the missing child.

When the child is found

During the time a child is missing, however briefly, all adults involved and others suffer great fear, guilt, and distress.

It is important to remember:

- That the child may also be distressed and afraid and might now be in need of comfort
- The child may be completely unaware of doing anything wrong
- The feelings of the rest of the children

After the event

We will use any such incidents to review our service, and we will carry out a risk assessment to identify any precautions for the future

We will inform all parents of the event and provide reassurance of how we will prevent this from happening again. We will use this opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand they must not leave the premises and why.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, The Out of School Development Team cannot accept responsibility or liability for any errors which may have occurred. This policy has been created as an **example only**. Providers must write their own policy specific to their setting.