



## **Missing Child Policy/ Uncollected Child Policy**

**Cross Policy Links** –Attendance Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Safer Recruitment.

**Cited also in** – Student Induction Pack, Terms and Conditions, Charging Policy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

All schools that provide for early years children within the EYFS framework are legally required to have:

- A policy for the procedures to be followed in the event of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting.
- A procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected at the appointed time.

The policy consists of two parts, the first covering a missing child and the second covering the procedure to be followed by the school in the event of a child not being collected at the appointed time. Parents should have their attention drawn to the existence of both procedures. There are also clear linkages between this policy and policies on Child Protection and Safer Recruitment.

The policy should be kept under regular review and updated to keep pace with changes to the EYFS framework.

## **MISSING CHILD POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The welfare of all of our children is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at Fullbrook Nursery appreciates that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. The staffing ratios follow statutory guidelines or above, and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in the care of the school or Little Explorers

### **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING AT SCHOOL.**

These procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing at, or away from the setting the following procedure shall take place:

- 1) Staff will be careful to remain calm and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- 2) Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can recall when they last remember seeing the child
- 3) Members of staff will check the immediate surroundings. If the child is not found, then a member of the SLT and the Head should be informed immediately and arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school site, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc where a child might hide. Check the doors and gates for signs of entry/exit
- 4) Care should be taken during this time that other children are not left unattended and put at risk.

- 5) If, after thorough search for 10 minutes the child is still not found the Police should be informed.
- 6) At this stage the child's parents/carers will be telephoned. Further action beyond this shall be taken in consultation with the police and parents/carers.
- 7) While waiting for the Police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at school.
- 8) The Head or a senior member of staff will be responsible for meeting the Police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Head or member of SLT will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the Police, and do all she/he can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- 9) Once the incident is resolved, the SLT and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes.
- 10) All incidents of children going missing from school will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. Relevant policies and procedures should be reviewed. Media queries should be referred to the Head
- 11) In cases where either the police or social services have been informed, the relevant body (Ofsted) will be informed as soon as is practical.
- 12) Parents will be informed if their child was temporarily missing during the school day.
- 13) If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.
- 14) A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report (appendix a). If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

## **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING**

- 1) An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- 2) An adult will search the immediate vicinity.
- 3) Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.
- 4) The Party Leader should assess the situation re:
  - a) Remaining at the venue
  - b) The possibility of taking the remaining children back to school
  - c) Number of staff remaining at venue / returning with children
- 5) Inform the Head and the Senior Designated Person/Deputy by mobile phone.
- 6) The Head or a member of SLT would ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once.
- 7) Contact the Police. (Tel: 101) within after 10minutes if the child is not found.
- 8) The Senior Designated Person/Deputy would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board. The school would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- 9) Ofsted would be informed.
- 10) The Insurers would be informed.

11) If the child is injured, report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

12) A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report (appendix a). If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

## **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND**

- 1) The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- 2) The Head and Chair of Governor will lead a full investigation (
- 3) Media queries should be referred to the Head
- 4) The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- 5) The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future (appendix a).

## **Near miss incidents**

All near miss incidents should be reported to the head teacher (DSL) during the same school day. In regards to Missing Child Policy, these are incidents where child(ren) have remained safe, but have breached or had opportunity to potentially breach any of the safety measures put in place to prevent children from going missing such as perimeter fencing, access doors, collection/drop of procedures or educational visit risk assessments. These near miss incidents will then be investigated and recorded by the Head teacher, in order to identify the root cause and preventative measures that may now need to be put in place (appendix A). Resulting in a revision of policy and procedures in order to safeguard children. These near miss investigations are recorded in the Safeguarding file.

## **UNCOLLECTED CHILD POLICY**

### **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME**

1) The Nursery and Little Explorers will ensure that all children are collected by a parent, carer or designated adult. If for some reason a child is not collected at the end of a session, the following procedures will be activated:

a) We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care. If the child has not been collected by 12.40 /3.35 according to the session they usually attend, then they will be taken to the school's wraparound care facility. A charge will be made for this. Office Staff and/or members of the SLT will be informed of all children who have been placed, unplanned, into wraparound care. Contact details for these children will be given to wraparound care staff.

b) A phone call will be made at 12.35/3.40pm by Little Explorers /School Office to the parents / carers in order to ascertain the cause of the delay, and how long it is likely to last. Messages will always be left on any answer phone requesting a prompt reply.

2) While waiting to be collected, the child will be supervised by members of staff who will offer them as much support and reassurance as is necessary.

3) If a child is booked in for the morning session and is not collected at lunchtime a phone call will be made to parents/carers and the school office informed (see Section 1a) while they wait, they will stay with the rest of the group for the afternoon session, for which they will be charged the rate for the session. Staff will continue to try to contact the parents/carers or other designated adults on the emergency contacts sheet.

## **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED AT THE EXPECTED TIME FROM WRAPAROUND CARE**

- 4) If a child who has attended wraparound care but has not been collected, it is the responsibility of the Head Teacher/ Little Explorers Manager to make a phone call to the parents / carers 5 minutes after the end of WAC sessions (2.00 and 4.00 pm) to ascertain the cause of the delay, and how long it is likely to last. Messages will always be left on any answer phone requesting a prompt reply
- 6) If a child is not collected at the end of the wraparound care session, the child will continue to be supervised. The headteacher or a member of the SLT will be informed either directly, or by telephone and they will make the decision to contact the Police. (101)
- 7) The child will not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file, except for Police or Social Services.
- 8) Except on occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are unable to do so, parents advise how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child (normally using a pre-determined password)
- 9) Under no circumstances should staff go to look for the parent or take the child home with them.
- 10) A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- 11) Continual incidents of late collection will be recorded and discussed with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.
- 12) There is a financial cost for late collections and parents /carers will be informed of this on collection, or by the school office.

## **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD HAS UNEXPECTED ABSENCE**

If a child is unexpectedly absent 'missing from their normal session' and their parent has not made contact then attendance safeguarding procedures to locate the child will be followed. Refer to Unexpected Absence Flow Chart – Appendix 1 Attendance policy.

Last date reviewed September 2023

Next date for review MAY 2025

# Appendix A

## Missing Child Investigation Report

<b>Reason for report:</b> Near Miss Incident / Missing Child School / Missing Child Off Site Visit		
<b>Date of incident:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Reported to / when:</b>
<b>Place:</b>		<b>Adult/Child ratio:</b>
<b>Nature of incident:</b>		
<b>Understanding of factors leading up to incident (witness's accounts verbal/written);</b>		
<b>What safeguarding procedures were effective:</b>		
<b>Root cause/ Lessons to learn on reflection (key questions posed):</b>		
<b>Policy / Procedures to be reviewed and possible recommendations for changes: (by when and by who)</b>		
<b>Reported completed by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>