



Missing Child

Policy statement

Children's safety is our highest priority both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made through the implementation of our outings procedures and our exit/entrance procedure is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing we will undertake the following procedures:

Procedures

A child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the member of staff will alert the manager
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has gone astray
- The manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out
- If the child is not found our manager calls the police immediately and reports the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child maybe abducted the police are informed of this
- The Parent(s) are then called and informed
- A recent photo and a note of what the child was wearing is given to the police
- The manager will talk to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this
- The management team Louise Trego (manager) Nicola Coles (deputy manager) will immediately carry out an investigation as to the circumstances of the incident

A child going missing on an outing

- If a parent is attending the outing with their child it they are responsible for their own child
- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the staff members on the outing will ask the children to stand with their designated adult and carry out a head count.

- If it is ascertained that a child is missing. One member of staff will search the immediate area, but will not search beyond that.
- One senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports the child as missing
- The manager is contacted immediately if they are not included on the outing. The incident is recorded
- The manager contacts the parents
- Our staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff or the manager should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- Louise Trego (manager) or deputy manager (Nicola Coles) will carry out an immediate investigation
- The staff will stay calm so as not to make the other children become anxious and worried

The investigation

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up to date with the investigation
- Our management team carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all our staff and volunteers who were present
- The manager together with a representative of our management team speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation
- The parents may also raise a complaint about with us and Ofsted
- Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing
 - The date and time of the incident
 - Where the child went missing from
 - Which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing. Which member of staff was designated as responsible for the missing child
 - When the child was last seen in the premises/on the outing, including the time estimated that the child went missing
 - What has taken place in the premises or on the outing since the child went missing.
 - The report is counter signed by a senior member of staff with the date and time added
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.

- If the incident warrants a police investigation all our staff will cooperate 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 advised
- 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
- Our staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated adult responsible for that child on 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. Our manager ensures that any staff investigation are not only fairly treated, but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry and fraught. They may want to blame the staff and single out one member over others or they may direct their anger at the manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the manager and another senior member of staff. No matter how understandable the parent’s anger maybe aggression and threats towards any members of staff will not be tolerated and the police shall be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too will 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.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome our staff many need counselling and support. If a child is not found or is injured or worse this will be a very difficult time. The owner Louise Trego will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Our staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Signed on behalf of Tiny Feet Preschool _____ Date _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory _____

Policy Updated on 03/08/2020