



Missing Child Policy and Procedures

Aim

As part of our high regard for the safety of the children in our care we will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Policy

We will ensure that all precautions are properly observed, and will remain aware that emergencies can still arise. Therefore staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions. If for any reason a worker cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session the following procedure will be used:

Whenever a child goes missing, even for a few minutes, this will be recorded as an incident, the parent/carer will be informed when they collect the child and the incident will be reported to the registered person (currently Sharon Gordon).

If a child is missing at collection time

NB this information is also included in the arrivals and transfer policy

1. Parents are asked to tell the setting in advance, as well as the school if relevant, if a child will not be attending the session.
2. The register should be taken when collecting children to ensure they are all accounted for, in line with the Arrival and Departure Policy and Procedure.
3. If a child on the register cannot be found at the school, the school contact should be informed that the child is missing. This will often establish that the child has not been at school or was taken home.
4. If the child does seem to be missing, the worker will agree with the school what action to take. The setting is not responsible for children who are missing from

school and cannot go and look for them, but we will ensure that parents/carers are informed.

5. If it is thought that the child has gone straight home or with another child, the Play Facilitator will be contacted immediately. The remaining children will be taken to the setting. The play facilitator will contact parents/carers to advise them what action is being taken.
6. The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.

If a child is missing from the premises

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore members of staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions (in addition to the registration procedures set out in the Arrival and Departures policy). If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the Club, the following procedure will be activated:

- The member of staff in question will inform both the Play facilitator or Deputy and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
 - The Play facilitator or Deputy in Charge will nominate one member of staff to search the area surrounding the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the Club.
 - If after 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the Play Facilitator or Deputy in charge will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
 - While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at the Club.
 - The Play facilitator will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Play Facilitator will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.

- Once the incident is resolved, the Play Facilitator and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the Club's Site Security and Risk Assessment policies).
- All incidents of children going missing from the Club will be recorded in the Incident Record Book, and in cases where either the police or social services have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

Off the premises

1. On trips away from the setting, children should be divided into groups with no more than 5 children with each worker. We will decide in advance how to arrange the groups: it may be sensible to have groups of 10 with two adults, especially if volunteers or are helping.
2. Each adult will have details of which children they are responsible for, including their names and what they are wearing. Trip consent forms and contact details for parents/carers will be taken on the trip so that parents/carers can be contacted in an emergency.
3. We will make sure that children know who is responsible for them, including the worker's name and what they are wearing, that they know not to stray and that they know if they want to go anywhere eg to a shop or to the toilet they ask.
4. If appropriate, we will give children labels or badges with the setting's name and a contact number on them.
5. We will tell the children what to do if they become separated from the group:
 - Stay where you are - we will come back to look for you
 - Look around you - can you see your group or one of the other groups?
 - If it seems like a long time before we find you, whom can you talk to?
 - 4 Someone in uniform from the attraction you are visiting
 - 4 A shop worker if you get lost while travelling
 - 4 A uniformed policeman or woman
 - 4 Someone with other children
6. We will take a regular headcount of the group. This will depend on the children and the activity. If on taking a headcount a child appears to be missing, the Play Facilitator will be contacted immediately.

7. The group should stay still and keep together. If there is another adult with the group, one of them will should retrace their steps (to a pre-agreed distance, for no more than five minutes), too look for the child.
8. If the child is still missing after 5 minutes, we will inform the staff of the site and ask for their help in finding the child and contact the police **on 999**. We will be prepared to give them the following information:
 - The worker's name and 'phone number and where we are.
 - What has happened.
 - Name, age and address of the child.
 - Time of incident.
9. We will contact the parent/carer of the missing child and inform them of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child. We will ensure the Play Facilitator knows what actions have been taken.
10. We will continue the search after calling the police.
11. The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.

Information

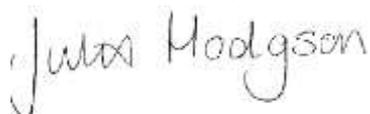
NB. Under the Children Act 1989 parents do not lose parental responsibility except through an adoption order. This means that divorced parents retain rights to have contact with their children unless the courts have made an order that they should not do so. Staffs do not have the right to stop divorced or separated parents from collecting their children unless they are aware of a court order preventing contact between the child and a parent.

Parental responsibility is given to both parents if they are married at the time the child is born or subsequently. Otherwise only the mother has parental responsibility. An unmarried father has parental responsibility if the child was born after 1 December 2003 and his name is on the birth certificate. Unmarried fathers can acquire parental responsibility through a court application.

Parents should be in a fit state to collect their children. If a parent arrives in an 'unfit' state, for example through alcohol or drugs, the senior worker should notify Social Services.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Reference	Author	Summary of changes	Issued
Issue 1	Raquel de Mena	Based on BAND template	2010
Issue 2	Emma Hallett	Separated from the collection/arrivals policy, ensured it matches with related trips and arrivals policies. Formatted	June 2011
	Emma Hallett	policy reviewed and no changes needed	Sept 2012
	Emma Hallett	Reviewed – no changes needed	November 2013
Issue 3	Raquel de Mena	No change	December 2014
Issue 4	Raquel de Mena	No change	November 2016



Date Re-Approved: 20 Jan 2017

Signed:

Position: Trustee

Name: Julia Hodgson

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