

Missing Child Procedure

Statement of intent

We make every effort to ensure the safety of your child whilst using the Nursery, in the unlikely event of a child becoming lost while in the care of our nursery, we have put in place the following practice procedures. These ensure that a systematic approach to find the child is taken and consideration is given to the levels of risk to the child. However in the event that a child is lost, we will ensure a search is made for the child as soon as possible, parents and authorities are notified at the appropriate stage, and a high level of care is maintained to other children in the nursery while procedures are followed.

In the "very unlikely" event of a child being lost, we will follow this procedure:

- On suspicion of a lost child the Nursery Manager or Deputy must conduct a head count without alarming the children.
- Staff will check the register to confirm the child came in to Nursery
- Staff to carry out a quick search of all rooms, cupboards and all areas in the immediate area where the child was within the nursery
- The Nursery Manager and a senior member of staff will search the rest of the building, nursery grounds & immediate vicinity thoroughly.
- The other staff members to settle and care for the children in the room/group gathering them all into the same room if necessary.
- The Management to call round the rooms to alert all the staff
- The staff to report back to the reception area
- While the initial search is made, the management will make enquiries to establish the last sighting and time that the child was last seen, the clothes the child was wearing and how the child was before they went missing (happy, upset etc)
- If the child is not found from the initial search of the rooms, the management will contact the parents/carers and ask them to come to the nursery by using the normal route that the child would take. The management team will report the situation to the police and follow their advice:
- Once the incident is resolved, all information will be recorded as an incident and reported to the relevant authorities ie Ofsted and LADO

The police will require the following information;

- The address of the setting
- The next of kin of the child
- A detailed description of the child
- The circumstances relating to the incident (e.g. anything that may have triggered the disappearance) and how long they have been missing.

- Who is looking for the child, where are they searching for the child?
 - The management will ask the staff to continue to search the surrounding area and to continue to search until instructed otherwise
 - When the parent arrives at the nursery, and the child is still missing, the parent will be asked to return home and wait, in case the child has managed to make their way home. If possible a senior member of staff will accompany the parent home. The management will maintain contact with the family
 - Telephone lines should remain as free as possible so that messages are not delayed
 - The activities for the remaining children will continue as normal and staff not involved in the search will give the children proper attention
 - A full report will be produced and Ofsted and LADO will be informed
 - If the incident was due to lack of supervision this will result in a disciplinary action
 - The incident will be evaluated, a risk assessment will be updated and the policy/procedures will be reviewed
- Staff to always ensure that the building and outside area is secure.**

Missing Child on Outings Procedures

We attempt to minimise the circumstance of a missing child by ensuring they are properly supervised by a member of staff at all times. Regular headcounts are carried out on children during the outing. In the unlikely event of a child going missing the following procedure will be implemented immediately:

- An outing form is completed on the day of the outing
- A risk assessment completed and signed on the day of the outing
- A head count will be made to confirm all staff and children present at the beginning of the outing (have a register of the number and names of children and adults with a copy of this being left with the management team)
- If a child goes missing whilst on the outing the senior staff member call back to the nursery to inform management and ask for them to immediately send as many staff to help look for the child as possible, they will then send all remaining staff and children back to the nursery
- The safety of the remaining children must be maintained and ensured while a search is started
- Adults will write down a description of the child, when the child was last seen and what clothes the child was wearing.
- If the child has not been found within 10 minutes, a senior staff member will contact both parents and police immediately, detailing what's happened. The staff will follow all advice given from the authorities.
- At least one member of staff will remain at the scene at all times through and continue searching for the missing child.
- A full report will be produced and Ofsted will be informed.

- The Nursery Manager will support the family and maintain contact
- If the incident was due to lack of supervision this will result in disciplinary action
- The incident will be evaluated and the policy/procedure will be reviewed

After any incidents of missing children at Bell House Nursery, all relevant policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated accordingly

Reviewed by Clare Hayes and Annie Tolchard

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