

HOLIDAY CLUBS MISSING CHILDREN PROCEDURE

The School has the highest regard for the safety of children in our care. Staff are always aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions, and all precautions will be taken. If a child is missing, systematic approaches will be taken to find the child.

- Periodic head counts will be taken throughout the session by the Playleader
- Individual children identified as having 'boundary limitations' will be closely observed by their Key Person

Procedure for missing child:

1. Check the register to ensure the child actually arrived
2. Raise the alarm by informing all staff of the situation
3. Make a quick search of all rooms and all cupboards in all areas
4. Take a register of the children present to ensure that only one child is missing. This will be done in a calm manner, to ensure the other children do not panic.
5. Playleader/Deputy to assign a staff member to search for the child as quickly as possible:
6. Search outside the entrance of the playscheme
7. Check the road outside
8. Check parked cars and any other visual obstructions
9. Search the whole of the outdoor area of the premises
10. Report immediately back to the Playleader/Deputy
11. Whilst this search is being taken above, the Playleader/Deputy must gather all staff and children to discuss the last known whereabouts of the missing child. They must establish what the child was wearing and the last known mental state of the child.
12. Once staff are certain that the child is no longer on the premises or in the vicinity, they should contact the Police immediately, report the situation and await their advice.
13. The Playleader/Deputy must then call the child's parent/carers and report the situation. They must ask the parent/carer to walk to the club taking the exact route the child would walk home.
14. The Playleader/Deputy should ask another staff member to continue to search until told otherwise.
15. Whilst waiting for the parent/carer and the police, the Playleader/Deputy should call the Headteacher/School Business Manager who should go to support the staff.
16. The remaining staff will remain calm, and continue the session as normal to avoid interrupting the routine of the other children. Where possible, gather the children and remaining staff in a group to manage the number of children.
17. The Playleader will be responsible for co-ordinating any actions instructed by the police, and to do all they can to comfort the parents/carers when they arrive.
18. After the parent/carer has arrived, if the child is still lost the parent/carer should be sensitively asked to return home and wait in case the child makes their way home.
19. Telephone lines should be left clear and free so that messages are not delayed.
20. Inform Ofsted on 08456 40 40 40 and Children's Social care if the child has an allocated social worker.
21. As soon as possible, start to build up a record of events in the Incident File.

Once the Incident is Resolved

Record the incident in the Incident Record Book, and in cases where the Police or Social Services have been involved, Ofsted should also be informed.

The Playleader will review the policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes.

Risk Assessments of the venue (playscheme or outing) should determine the probability of a child being able to 'escape' – and preventive anticipatory strategies should be adopted. Risk Assessments of each individual child should take necessary steps to prevent a child being able to abscond.

Procedure for missing child on an outing:

To minimise the risk of a child missing on an outing, following the Outing Policy at all times.

1. Where transport is part of the outing, head count should be done twice, once each by the Playleader, then Deputy as children get on the transport and get off the transport.
2. If the child is lost at the outing venue, the Playleader will insist all staff and children return to a meeting point and should dispatch staff to search for the child.
3. A count should be made to confirm all who are present. Staff will be asked when they last saw the child, the clothes they were wearing and the emotional state of the child. All staff will be asked to look for the child as they proceed around the outing venue and one staff member will be asked to stay at the meeting point so that if a child is found they can report it immediately to the staff member at the meeting point.
4. The Playleader should alert officials at the venue that there is a missing child and take their advice.
5. At the end of the outing, a staff member should stay at the venue if the child is still missing.
6. If the child is not found, the police should be called and leaders should await their advice.