



Missing child Policy Little Stars Day Nursery

Change Control

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Revision History

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V1	New	October 2012	New
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Missing Child Policy and Procedure.

- Little Stars Day Nursery takes the safety of children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children in their care do not leave a session unaccompanied.
- The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered.
- Staff will undertake periodic head counts using the key person system in addition to the registration procedure.
- This procedure will apply in relation to children playing in the garden areas and for any activities that take place outside of their playrooms. Headcounts should be done upon returning to the rooms.
- If, in the event of a member of staff not being able to account for a child's whereabouts, the following action will be taken:

PROCEDURE FOR IF A CHILD LEAVES THE SETTING UNACCOMPANIED:

- The setting is responsible for the missing child and all the other children in the setting. We will:
- Search systematically.
- Gather the remaining children into one large group, with one/two staff members, leaving the remaining adults to search.
- Ask the children, without alarming them, if they have seen the child that is missing.
- Ensure all adults are aware of the situation.
- Establish who last saw the missing child, where and when.
- Check all rooms in the building.
- Check the immediate outside area.
- Seek the cooperation of other users in the building.

The setting will:

- Call the child's parents /carers to warn them that the child may be attempting to get home.
- If they are unavailable the setting will use the emergency contact number.
- Ensure that, if the child lives within walking distance of the setting, one adult will make the journey on foot in order to catch up with or intercept the child if possible.
- Remember, that as soon as parents are informed, they will need advice and support.
- Contact the GIFHE lead for Safeguarding, Rachel Mumby, on 07920860241.

Call the Police:

- If the above steps do not locate the child, the police will be called.

Informing other people: We will ensure that:

- We make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen, we have all the necessary phone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept together.
- If the police are called then the Local Safeguarding Hub and Ofsted are also informed.
- Manager /registered person is not on the premises, she/he will be informed as soon as possible.
- We will provide the following information to Ofsted/the Local Safeguarding Hub.
 - a) What happened?
 - b) What systems are in place for preventing such occurrences?
 - c) What we did, at what time and in what order.
 - d) Who we informed and when.We will cooperate fully in any investigation.

Recording:

We will start to build a record as soon as is possible in the incident log, this will include:

- The last definite sighting of the child.
- Any unusual behaviour of the missing child or other children.
- How many children were on the premises?
- How many adults were on the premises and who?
- What steps have been taken and when, by whom.

Dealing with people's reactions:

- We accept that the child's parents /carers will be frightened, distressed and angry.
- If the setting shares all policies with parents/carers, the situation will be easier for all because there will be an understanding of working within a framework of mutual trust and understanding.
- We accept that in such circumstances powerful emotions are involved and people's behaviour can be unpredictable. Those who may seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later become angry, threaten legal action or approach the local press.
- We will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions without implications or admission of responsibility.

Responses could include:

- How sorry you are that the incident has happened.
- That a full investigation is in hand.
- That the Local Safeguarding Hub /Ofsted has been informed and will be investigating.

Dealing with the media:

- Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. It is sensible for one person, usually the marketing team and or the manager/ registered person, to be the one who speaks for the setting.
- All adults will be asked to refer all enquiries to the agreed spokesperson.
- The spokesperson for the setting will be someone from the TEC Partnership..

Informing other parents:

- We recognise that other parents will need to be given brief, accurate information as rapidly as possible.
- We will ensure that this happens by our marketing team and communication team.

When the child is found:

- We recognise that during the time a child is missing, however briefly, all involved, parents and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found.
- We will accept that it is important to remember:
 - That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort.
 - Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child's fault.
 - Ensure the child is not hurt.
 - That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

After the Incident:

- We will review our current procedure.
- We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.

Contacts:

- North East Lincolnshire Police: dial 999 for emergency or 101 for a non-emergency.
- Ofsted: Tel: 03001231231
- Local Safeguarding Hub: 01472 326292 option 2.
- GIFHE lead for Safeguarding, Rachel Mumby, on 07920860241.