

Kingsland Pre-Prep

Missing Child Policy

Aim

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times, both on and off premises. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the premises and surrounding site is secure and gates are locked at all times.

Parents sign children in on arrival and the attendance register is taken at the start of each session (including all day afternoon sessions) and the number of children attending recorded. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to be aware of how many children are present and a quick head count should be taken at regular intervals during each session, i.e. before going out to the garden and when they are lining up to come back inside. Children who arrive late must be recorded in the register and those who leave early should be marked out accordingly.

Procedures

In the unlikely event of a child going missing, the following procedure is followed.

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person or member of staff alerts the Head Teacher, Mr Stuart, or the Deputy, Mis Lauren, if absent. Head Teacher will record the name of the child, what he/she is wearing, time and the last known whereabouts.
- The Deputy (or a Senior Member of staff if absent) will arrange for the other children to be satisfactorily supervised while the Head call the police and reports the child as missing (see procedure below). The remaining children should be gathered together, e.g. circle time so staff can be deployed effectively.
- The missing child's key person and at least another teacher should made themselves available to help.
- The register will be checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray (count children)
- Available staff to carry out a thorough check/search of both inside and outside the building and doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- Missing child incidents can be very distressing for everyone, therefore it is important to reassure the staff and children and keep everyone as calm as possible.

The Head Teacher/Deputy will then (no more than 15min after child has disappeared) –

- a) call the police and report the child as missing.
- b) call the parents/carers of the child. If they do not answer the phone a message must be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers. However if parents do not answer the home phone number the POLICE must be called before attempting other child contact numbers.
- c) inform OFSTED. It is important that the Head Teacher/Deputy keeps a record of events and carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the class room or who were on the outing. Report will include date and time of report, where and when the child was last seen in the school's premises or outing and any conclusions drawn as to how the breach of security happened. If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will fully co-operate.

The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents document). Ofsted will also be informed of the outcome of the incident, in writing. As soon as possible after the incident the setting's insurance company should be notified as well as all the parents. It is natural that the child's parents will be frightened, distressed and angry. Other parents will be rightly concerned for the safety of their own children. All emotions and

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reactions must be dealt with in a caring and understanding way. After the incident the Head Teacher and staff will also carry out a risk assessment to ensure this does not happen again.

Child going missing on an outing

When taking the children on outings, a risk assessment is carried out prior to the outing and regular head counts are made throughout the time. Children are allocated to certain members of staff with higher than normal ratios, to ensure the children are safe at all times (see Outings Policy)

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing. In some outings parents might attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their key person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity while the other staff supervise the children.
- The Head Teacher is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident recorded (name of the child, what he/she is wearing, time and the last known whereabouts).
- The Head Teacher contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The Head Teacher contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting. If they do not answer the phone a message must be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers. However if parents do not answer the home phone number the POLICE must be called before attempting other child contact numbers.
- Once informed by the police, staff need to follow their instructions including staff to take the remaining children back to the setting.
- Once back in the setting, children will be gathered and supervised while the key person discuss the details of the incident with the Head Teacher/Deputy as well as dealing with and helping the parents and police. It is important that the Head Teacher/Deputy keeps a record of events and carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the class room or who were on the outing. Report will include date and time of report, where and when the child was last seen in the school's premises or outing and any conclusions drawn as to how the breach of security happened. If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will fully co-operate.

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Signed,
Stuart Bamford
Head Teacher