



29. Safeguarding Children Policy

Missing Child

Aims of Policy

Children's safety is maintained as our highest priority at all times both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our Missing Child Procedure is followed.

Missing child

If a child goes missing:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the Key Person/staff member alerts the person in charge.
- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- Person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened and records this.
- If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police. If a child goes missing from an outing where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the setting ensures that the following procedure is followed:
 - As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
 - The person in charge is informed, if they are not on the outing, and makes their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
 - Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- The person in charge of the setting contacts the child's parent who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the person in charge.
- The staff contact the police using the mobile phone and report the child as missing.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The person in charge contacts the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees who comes down to the setting as soon as possible.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The person in charge, together with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or representative from the Trustees, speaks with the parent(s).
- The Chairperson and/or representative(s) from the Board of Trustees carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The Key Person/staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the incident;
 - what staff/children were in the group/outing;

- when the child was last seen in the group/outing;
- what has taken place in the group/outing since then; and
- the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff cooperate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- Ofsted is informed.
- Our current insurer needs to be informed, Morton Michel Ltd, telephone number 03300 589861, policy number 23348, or email our direct contact, whose details can be obtained from the Operations Manager.

As with all the policies for Seer Green Pre-School, the Operational Plan should be referred to for the specific details of day-to-day operations of the Pre-School. In addition, any issues which arise in the course of a child's time with the Pre-School and that are related to a child's health and wellbeing, parent's or staff's concern, or the overall care and safety of our children, staff, parents and equipment will be dealt with in a professional and confidential manner in order to arrive at an appropriate outcome.

This policy was adopted on (date) _____

Signed on behalf of Seer Green Pre-School (Chairperson) _____

This policy was reviewed as indicated below:

2009 created
2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 reviewed and updated as required
July-Nov 2017 reviewed and updated
June-July 2018 reviewed and updated
May 2019 reviewed
June 2020 reviewed
June 2021 reviewed and updated
July 2022 reviewed
June 2023 reviewed
September 2024 reviewed and updated