



Procedure in the event of a missing child

Key Contacts

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West MAST team: 2506865

Health and Safety (Claire Hallam) 2930911

Procedure in the event of a missing child

Purpose

To locate a missing child as quickly as possible, return the child to safe custody, inform the relevant parties of the situation and invoke a review of the incident.

Background

Annually a risk assessment is completed of the safety and security of children on pre-school and school premises. Central to the measures in place is the provision of pre-school, school and extended care staff supervision of exits at the beginning and end of each session, doors which do not allow children independent access and regular reminders to the parents of the critical role they play. In addition to the ongoing vigilance of the pre-school, school and extended care staff, there are specific times when attendance is checked:

- Register\headcount check at beginning of sessions
- Keyworker group headcount check at group time
- When parent or carer arrives to collect a child

In the unlikely event of a child found to be missing the following procedure is to be followed.

Procedure

1. The onsite staff member in charge delegates a member of staff to search indoor and outdoor areas within the pre-school/school secure area in case a child is hiding. In the event the child is found the parent should be advised of the incident and a review invoked. (11).
2. In the event of (1) above not resulting in the safe location of the child, the headteacher should be informed immediately if on the premises, or if off premises, at the first opportunity. If the headteacher is off the premises then the deputy headteacher should be informed or in her absence, the most senior member of staff onsite.
3. The headteacher would request assistance and ensure staff-child ratios are maintained.
4. The headteacher, whilst maintaining ratios in the pre-school\school\extended care, will delegate at least one member of staff to search the school grounds starting with the exit routes. In the event the child is found the parent should be advised of the incident and a review invoked. (11)
5. If the child has still not been located, the parents, if not already on site, will be contacted, normally by the office clerk.
6. The headteacher will delegate a member of staff to follow, normally on foot, the child's route home, taking a mobile phone with them.
7. If the child is not located after the completion of (6), the headteacher will inform the police (999).
8. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police, but the headteacher will ensure that the school staff make themselves appropriately available to assist further with the incident.
9. In any event, and before leaving the site the headteacher will ensure appropriate reassurance and comfort is provided to children, parents and staff.
10. Alert Local Authority Child Protection team, West MAST team and Health and Safety.
11. As soon as practicable after the incident, the teacher in charge or the headteacher\Co-ordinator will write a report which will be used by the School Leadership Team as part of the incident review. This review will aim to look for improvements to this procedure and avoid any further occurrences of the incident.