

## MISSING CHILD POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

The safety of the children at St. Eval Pre-school is always a primary consideration. Children attending our setting will be looked after, by caring and vigilant adults, in a safe indoor and outdoor environment. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

### AIMS

Our aim is to keep all children safe by having the following security measures in place:

- The front door is kept locked during sessions.
- Children are only permitted to leave the setting if accompanied by a known and accountable adult.
- Children are supervised by appropriate adults at all times.
- During outdoor play, the main gate is kept shut and locked. All children are supervised at all times.
- A Daily Record of attendance is maintained for all staff and children attending the setting.
- Visitors to the setting have their identity verified before being permitted to enter the premises, all visitors must record their time of arrival and departure in the visitor's logbook.
- Parents and carers are asked to inform the Manager if their child is particularly adventurous.
- The Pre-schools designated health and safety coordinator regularly conducts checks of the setting for potential security risks. These are rectified immediately.
- Every staff member is aware of their responsibility to inform the Managerial Team and safeguarding leads immediately should they realise a child is unaccounted for.

### PROCEDURES – Child Going Missing on the Premises

- Manager informed immediately as soon as it is noticed a child is missing
- Thorough search of premises an outdoor area undertaken by available staff
- Entry and exit points checked to ensure security
- Check doors and gates to ensure they are still locked
- Any possible breaches of security identified
- Registers taken to ensure all other children can be accounted for
- Emergency services and parents are contacted by the Manager if the child has not been found
- All staff members are questioned by the manager to establish when and where the child was last seen and details are recorded and passed on to the relevant agency
- Chairperson is informed by the incident by the Manager
- Ofsted are notified
- An investigation is instigated and carried out by the Committee

### PROCEDURES - Child Going Missing on an Outing

*Procedure followed if parents are not in attendance and responsible for their own child:*

- Manager informed immediately, as it is noticed that the child is missing.
- Children to stand in their allocated groups with designated leader and head counts taken to ensure no other children are unaccounted for
- Register completed
- Designated member of staff to undertake search of immediate vicinity
- Parents and Emergency Services are contacted if the child cannot be found immediately
- All staff members are questioned by the Managerial Team to establish when and where the child was last seen and details are recorded

- Chairperson is informed of the incident by the Manager
- Manager remains at the location for the arrival of the Emergency Services and Parents
- Staff members escort the children back to the setting
- Staff members to remain calm and not let other children become anxious or worried, offering reassurance
- Ofsted notified
- Investigation is instigated by the Committee

## Investigation

- Ofsted will be notified immediately and kept up to date with the investigation
- Manager and Committee chairperson speak to Parents and explain the process of the incident
- Parents and Carers may want to make a complaint to Ofsted and will be supported in doing so
- Written statements about the incident are taken from all involved and passed to the Committee
- Emergency services involved as required

*An incident report is written containing the following details:*

- Date and time of report
- Names of staff and children in the classroom group of the missing child
- Name of staff member responsible for supervision of missing child
- Time and location missing child was last accounted for
- Occurrence of events since the child was noticed as missing
- Estimation of time the child went missing

*Outside agency involvement:*

- If the incident warrants a Police investigation, all staff will fully cooperate
- The police will be in charge of all aspects of the investigation, including staff interviews
- If there is a possibility that there is a child protection issue, the Children's Social Care team will be involved
- It will be necessary for the Committee to call for an urgent review of the settings security and risk assessments.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements
- It is likely that the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer will investigate the incident and decide if there is a case for prosecution
- Ofsted are informed in the event of disciplinary action being taken against a member of staff
- The insurance providers are informed of the incident

## Managing People

Incidents involving a missing child are very worrying for all concerned. The Manager will endeavour to keep all concerned parties as calm as possible and will not apportion blame to any individual. The Manager will ensure that all staff members under investigation are treated fairly and are offered support.

When dealing with Parents, the Manager will be accompanied by a member of the Committee. Under no circumstances will threats of aggression towards staff members by Parents be tolerated. In such a case, the Police will be informed.

Staff members will not discuss the incident in front of the remaining children. However, any questions will be answered in a reassuring and honest manner in order to minimise their anxieties.

Adults and children involved in the incident may require support and counselling depending on the severity of the final outcome. The Committee will use their discretion as to what action is deemed appropriate. Staff members may not talk to any press about the incident without taking advice.



## Premises and Security

Daily risk assessments are made in the setting (please see our Health and Safety policy), to ensure that the environment is safe and secure both inside and outside.

Children will only be released to individuals named by the parent.

We take steps to prevent intruders. We have a Visitors book, that all visitors complete before entering the setting. Unfamiliar visitors will be asked to wear a 'Visitor' lanyard. Visiting professionals will have their Identification checked and all staff members are notified of their visit.

On arrival and departure, a member of staff will always be on the designated door, to supervise the children entering and leaving the building and transitioning to their appropriate adult.

