



PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

Policy title: **MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE**

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Document control

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BARTON HILL SETTLEMENT – MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE

Introduction

This policy applies to the whole of Barton Hill Settlement, and is relevant primarily to the Family Centre. As part of our high regard for the safety of the children in our care, we will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions/activities. This procedure explains what we will do if this happens.

Procedure

We will ensure that all precautions are properly observed, and will remain aware that emergencies can still arise. Staff will undertake regular head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions/activities. If, for any reason, a staff member/volunteer cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session, the following procedure will be used:

- If a child is thought to be missing after arriving at the Barton Hill Settlement premises, a staff member will make a careful check of all the children present to confirm who is missing.
- A staff member will then organise a check of all exit doors, outside area, rooms, cupboards and possible hiding places. This check will be carried out quickly, and without panicking the other children.
- The other children will be kept together with an appropriate worker/volunteer while the check is being carried out.
- If the search is unsuccessful, and the child is still missing after 5 minutes, the staff member will contact the police (via 999), and the parent/carer of the missing child.
- The police will be given the following information:
 - The name of the worker
 - The address of the setting
 - What has happened
 - Child's name, age and address
 - Time of incident
- After the police have been called, the search for the child will continue.
- If the child was missing for more than 5 minutes:
 - The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.
 - Family Centre incidents - Ofsted will be informed, as soon as possible, and within 14 days at the latest.
- The parent/carer will be informed of the child's absence, however long s/he was missing for.

For offsite activities -

We will tell the children what to do if they are lost:

- Stay where you are - we will come back to look for you
 - Look around you - can you see your group or one of the other groups?
 - If it seems like a long time before we find you, whom can you talk to?
 - 4 Someone in uniform from the attraction you are visiting
 - 4 A shopworker if you get lost while travelling
 - 4 A uniformed policeman or woman
 - 4 Someone with other children
1. We will take a regular headcount of the group. This will depend on the children and the activity. If on taking a headcount a child appears to be missing, the senior member of staff will be contacted immediately.
 2. The group should stay still and keep together. If there is another adult with the group, one of them will should retrace their steps (to a pre-agreed distance, for no more than five minutes), to look for the child.
 3. If the child is still missing after 5 minutes, we will inform the site staff and ask for their help in finding the child and contact the police on 999 and inform the Barton Hill Settlement Duty Manager. We will be prepared to give them the following information:
 - The worker's name and 'phone number and where we are.
 - What has happened.
 - Name, age and address of the child.
 - Time of incident.
 4. We will contact the parent/carer of the missing child and inform them of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child. We will ensure the senior member of staff knows what actions have been taken.
 5. We will continue the search after calling the police.
 6. The worker involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible.