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NLCA, Aperdele Road, Leatherhead KT22 7QT

M**issing Child Policy**

**Statement of Intent**

Children’s safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off the premises.

In the highly unlikely event of a chid going missing, the procedure is as follows:

**If a chid goes missing on the premises:**

* As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the Manager/Deputy Manager are informed
* The Manager/Deputy will carry out a thorough search of the building and the garden
* The register is checked to ensure that no other child is missing
* Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security and the child has been able to exit the premises.
* If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Manager/Deputy will contact the missing child’s parents/carers and inform the police.
* The Manager/Deputy will talk to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
* The Manager/Deputy contacts the Chair of the Committee who should come to Preschool immediately along with any other Committee members available.

**If a child goes missing on an outing**

* As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff on the outing ask the children to stand still for a headcount.
* One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity but not beyond.
* The Manager (if not present) is notified immediately.
* The Manager contacts the police to report the child as missing.
* The Manager contacts the parents/carers who should make their way to the outing venue or to preschool as advised by the police.
* Staff take the remaining children back to preschool.
* In an indoor venue, the venue security staff will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
* The Manager contacts the Committee Chair. The Chair comes immediately to the preschool.
* The Manager or a designated staff member may be required by the police to remain at the venue until they arrive.

**Investigation**

* Staff should remain calm and take steps to avoid the other children becoming panicked.
* The Manager and Chair speak to parents/carers.
* The Committee Chair will carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all staff who were present at the time.
* The Key Person or designated member of staff writes an incident report detailing: the date and time of the report, which staff and children were in the group and which staff member was designated as responsible for the child, when the child was last seen, what has taken place since the child went missing, the estimated time at which the child went missing.
* If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff must comply fully.
* The local Safeguarding Board and Children’s Services must be notified by the DSL and the LADO and Ofsted must be informed.
* The Committee Chair notifies the insurance provider.
* The local Health and Safety Officer may wish to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.

**Once the child is found**

* Security of the premises to be reexamined.
* A new risk assessment to be undertaken by the Manager, Deputy and Committee Chair.
* If the incident happened on an outing, the risk assessment for the trip to be revised and adult/child ratios looked into.
* A full and thorough reflection process should be undertaken by the Chair and the Manager. What could have been done differently? What can be improved? Were all requirements complied with?

Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. The incident should be managed by the Committee Chair and the Manager.

* Ensure all staff are treated fairly and receive any support they require
* Parents will be angry and upset. Two members of staff should be present when dealing with parents in this situation, one of whom must be the Manager or the Committee Chair.
* Aggression or threats towards staff members must not be tolerated and, if necessary, the police will be called.
* Staff must not discuss the incident with the press or outside of the setting with anyone.

March 2022

To be reviewed March 2023