

Lost Child Policy

Policy statement

This policy aims to ensure that on the rare occasion a child were to go missing during the course of a session at Natural Nurture Nursery or when on an outing, appropriate action is taken to locate the child and the relevant people notified.

For non-arrival at nursery, please see Policies for Arrival and Departure and Attendance.

Who is Responsible?

All members of staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the children in the setting and to ensure that they have accurate information regarding who is attending the setting on any given day and who is to be collected. It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager to ensure that all children on the register are accounted for.

Procedures

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost and these are:

- Where a child wanders off on a nursery outing
- Where a child escapes from the setting
- Where a child is taken from the nursery by an unapproved adult.

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

- Alert the member of staff in charge or Nursery Manager who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
- Ensure that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the immediate vicinity.
- If, during times when the entrance gates are open, the child cannot be found within five minutes then the police must be informed first, and then parents informed. At other times, the police are called after ten minutes.
- Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch with mobile phone or radio. Staff are responsible for searching different sections of the farm so that ground is covered quickly.
- When the situation has been resolved, members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken so that it does not happen again.

- A record of this incident must be made in the Incident Book and where the police have been contacted, the Nursery Manager must also inform Ofsted.

Procedures to prevent children being lost from the setting

- Registers are kept up to date and arrangements are in place for the immediate recording of the arrivals and departures of children.
- Children are taken out in small groups and each adult has the responsibility for their close supervision.
- Agreed boundaries are set out and often demarcated.
- Children are reminded of the boundaries and are constantly checked and counted to ensure they are not straying beyond.
- Staff have procedures for calling all the children to them straight away and practice this regularly.
- Children are encouraged to look after each other and notify adults if they think a child is not close enough to the rest of the group.
- An agreed policy is in place to ensure that no unauthorised adult is able to collect a child (Arrival and Departure Policy) even if the child recognises and is happy to go with the adult that arrives for him or her.
- Visitors to the site are closely monitored with a sign in/sign out system and in the case of users of the public footpath, CCTV.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of The Natural Nurture Nursery Management Committee held on the 3rd March 2016.