**Outings policy / missing child**

We believe that taking children out on trips and local walks are an important part of a child’s development. Children must be kept safe when out therefore thorough planning and risk assessments are carried out beforehand. Before the children are taken out on trips; parental permission is sought, risk assessments are carried out to minimise possible incidents, the children are taught about safety and what to do if they think they are lost, high visible vests are used if we think necessary and extra staff may attend outings to provide an extra pair of hands.

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

We have thorough policies and procedures in place which are an integral part of staff training and should ensure that children do not go missing or get lost whilst in our care. In the unlikely event of a child being lost, we have the following procedures in place:

* We always supervise children.
* We maintain appropriate staff /child ratios.
* We closely monitor children in/out of the building, ensuring that when the children are going out to the play area they are counted out and back in.
* We ensure we have up-to-date emergency contact details and these are taken on outings.
* We ensure that visitors to the nursery are always supervised and they sign in/out
* We carry out risk assessment checks in a morning and afternoon in the play areas and bathrooms and each time before the children go outside to play.
* We carry out risk assessments before going on trips out.

In the unlikely event of a child becoming separated from the group on an outing, the following procedure will be put in place:

1. As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing staff on the outing, we will ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure no other child has gone astray.
2. One staff member (or more if can be spared and not putting the other children at risk) to undertake a thorough search of the immediate area.
3. Phone 999 (give your name, location, the name and description of the child, and any other relevant information e.g., any medical conditions of the missing child)
4. Nursery manager, Deputy & Nursery Owner to be notified as soon as possible (if not already present), and to inform venue (play-gym, shop, library, museum etc)
5. Manager/deputy/Owner to go to venue/ location.
6. Nursery manager to contact parents/ child protection officer and keep them informed of what is happening
7. Staff to return other children safely to the nursery when manager arrives.
8. Manager/responsible person to wait for police/ ambulance in case of injured persons
9. Staff must do a written record of events.
10. Notify Ofsted

Investigation

* Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
* Nursery manager to speak with parents
* Management team carry out full investigation taking written statements from all staff who were on the outing
* The manager writes an incident report detailing
* The date and time of the report
* What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff member responsible.
* When the last child was last seen in the group.
* What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing?
* The time estimated the child went missing.
* A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
* The insurance provider informed.

People management

Missing child incidents are extremely worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incidents is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible. The staff will feel worried about the child; especially the member of staff who was responsible for the child whilst on the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time that the child is missing increases. Nursery Manager should ensure that the staff feel supported while they are feeling vulnerable.

The parents will feel angry and fraught. They may want to blame staff and single out one member over others; they may direct anger at the nursery manager. No matter how understandable the parent’s anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated and security should be called.

The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for the children need to focus on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children’s questions honestly but also reassure them.

Please see **Missing Child Procedure** for if a child was to go missing at the nursery setting