

## MISSING/LOST CHILD POLICY

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off the premises when in our care. Every attempt is made through carrying out the arrival/exit procedure and Risk assessments to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our priority is to find the child and ensure he or she is safe as quickly as possible, whilst ensuring the welfare and safety of all children.

### When a child is thought to be missing:

- The Senior Member of staff is to be informed immediately and all staff will be quietly and calmly informed.
- The Setting leader will allocate designated areas for the staff to make a thorough search of the Nursery Building and garden, whilst ensuring there are sufficient staff to supervise all areas and EYFS ratios are met.
- Doors, gates and boundaries will be checked for a breach of security.
- The remaining children will be led to a secure area and a head count can be made and the register checked, without alarming the remaining children.
- The search will extend to the church and the church garden.
- Quickly establish who was the last adult to see the child and where, what the child was wearing and the mental state of the child (happy, sad etc.) This will be recorded on the Uncollected/Missing Child Information Record.
- If the child has not been found in 15 minutes, the police must be contacted using 999 and parents must be contacted.

### The police will need to know:

- The address of (St. Paul's Church Nursery School)
- The next of Kin
- A detailed description of the child, including sex, age, what they were wearing, any distinguishing features (working from head to toe)
- The circumstances of the incident including any possible triggers before the disappearance i.e. where last seen? Was there an upset? Etc.
- Who is looking for the child? Where are they? Do they have a mobile? What is the number?
- Staff will continue to search as directed by the Head
- The Head Teacher will need to document the incident as it happens, including any conversations with and advice from the Police.
- The Local Education Office must be informed: Area Education Officer 01737 737960 or 07976 924186. If you cannot get through then SCC duty emergency planning officer to be phoned 07831 473039 (24-hour number).
- The Setting Leader contacts the Head of Committee to report the incident.

### When the child is found:

- Their immediate needs must be prioritised. (e.g. Comfort warmth and general welfare) and the child must be checked for injury. Parents must be given a detailed description of the incident.
- All staff implicated need to be kept informed of what is happening.

- The Head Teacher must insure that the whole incident is thoroughly documented following its conclusion.
- The Governing Body MUST be informed and Ofsted must be notified of the incident and outcome by the Head Teacher and all details logged accordingly.
- Following the incident, a full risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure that every effort is made to prevent this happening again and risk assessment amended as necessary.

#### **Public Finding of Missing Child:**

In the event of missing child being found by a member of the public.

- Ensure welfare needs of missing child is met
- Obtain contact details of the member of the public and where the child was found
- Advise them not to talk to press/media or mention the incident on social media for to enable family to be informed and for the details of the incident to be established either by St. Paul's Nursery School and/or the emergency services.
- Safeguarding issues to be considered if member of the public involved

#### **Next Steps and General Advice (from emergency procedure):**

- Parents and relatives will naturally be anxious to establish what is happening, but try to prevent party members (staff or young people) from phoning home until after you have made contact with your duty officer and this has been agreed. (Given the proliferation of mobile phones this will be difficult, but is important, as incorrect information and rumour will make the situation worse.)
- Do NOT speak to the press/media or mention the incident on social media. Refer enquiries to the Local Emergency Services handling the incident on the ground.
- Do NOT admit liability of any sort to anybody
- Do NOT allow anyone, apart from medical services, to see any party member without an independent witness being present
- Try to retain any equipment involved in an unaltered condition
- Keep a written record of all that happens
- Be as compassionate as possible, with anyone involved

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**This policy was adopted at a meeting of St. Paul's Church Nursery School Committee and is reviewed on a three-year cycle in line with the School Development Plan.**

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the Nursery: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the Nursery: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date \_\_\_\_\_