



Meadow Drive, Horringer, Suffolk, IP29 5SB
Tel: 01284 735181 E: manager@horringerpreschool.co.uk
Charity: 1164658

Missing Child Policy

Statement of intent

At Horringer Pre-School, it is our intention to maintain children's safety as the highest priority at all times both on & off the premises.

Aim

We aim to ensure that every attempt is made to follow the relevant policies and procedures already in place to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Method

If a child goes missing from the setting the procedure is as follows:

- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The Manager or Deputy Manager will talk to staff to establish when & where the child was last seen and record this.
- If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- The Chairperson will be contacted by the manager and report the incident.
- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with a designated member of staff, a headcount will be carried out to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- If not there, the manager is informed and makes her way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- The police are contacted and the child reported as missing.



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- The person in charge of the Pre-school contacts the child's parent who makes their way to the Pre-school or outing venue as agreed with the person in charge.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the Pre-school
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm & do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The manager/committee chairperson carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time, or who were on the outing.
- The key person/ staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the report;
 - what staff/ children were in the group/outing;
 - when the child was last seen in the group/outing;
 - what has taken place in the group/outing since then; and
 - the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- OFSTED is informed.



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- The Insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

Part of managing the incident is to try and keep everyone as calm as possible.

Staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves & their feelings of anxiety & distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.

Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. The supervisor needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only treated fairly but receive support while feeling vulnerable.

The parents will feel angry & fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others. When dealing with a distraught parent, there should always be 2 staff members. Aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated & the police should be called.

The other children may too be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs & must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them. In accordance with the severity of the outcome, staff may need counselling & support. Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.



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