

Felixstowe Nursery School

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

Missing child

Statement:-The children's safety is of paramount importance at all times. The setting has rigorous safety policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety and security of the children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing we put this missing child policy into action.

Missing - "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another."

Procedures

Child goes missing from the setting-

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the child's key person/the relevant member of staff alerts our setting manager.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Our manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- If the child is not found, our manager calls the police immediately and reports the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
- The parent(s) are then called and informed.
- A recent photo and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- Our manager talks to our staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- Our manager contacts our chairperson and directors and reports the incident. Our chair person comes to the provision immediately to carry out an investigation, (with our management team where appropriate).
- Concerns relating to radicalisation and child sexual exploitation are acted upon and customer first are contacted immediately.

Child goes missing on an outing/visit

This describes the procedure when a small group are taken out of the setting and the manager or other staff remain at the setting. If all staff go on the visit the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

- The member of staff responsible for the missing child informs the other staff as soon as it is noticed the child is missing.
- Staff will ask staff to stand with their allocated children so a head count can be

- made to ensure no other child is missing.
- A search is made of the immediate vicinity by one member of staff while others stay with the other children.
- Our senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that child as missing.
- Our manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- Our manager contacts the parent(s).
- Our staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our manager where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The manager contacts the settings chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson will be asked to come into the setting and with the manager will carry an investigation.
- Once the incident is resolved the nursery will review policies and procedures and amend as necessary.
- All incidents of children going missing from the setting will be recorded in the incident record book and where police or social services have been informed Ofsted will be informed as soon as is practical.
- Our staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The investigation:-

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- Our chairperson, carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all our staff and volunteers who were present.
- Our manager, together with our directors speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
- Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the incident.
 - Where the child went missing from e.g. the setting or an outing venue.
 - Which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing and the name of the staff member who was designated as responsible for the missing child.
 - When the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - What has taken place in the premises or on the outing since the child went missing.
- The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted are advised.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are worrying for all concerned. Managing the situation by trying to calm everyone is essential.

- Staff will be extremely concerned and worried about the child especially the person responsible for the child. They may blame themselves and will become increasingly distressed as the length of time the child is missing increases. They will be supported at all times.
- Staff understandably may be the target of the parent's anger. They will feel afraid and alone. The staff need to ensure the staff member under investigation is treated fairly and given their full support whilst feeling vulnerable.
- Parents will feel angry and may want to blame staff. Their anger may be targeted at individual members or the whole team. When dealing with distraught and angry parents, there should always be two members of staff present the manager and the chairperson or deputy manager. Their anger is understandable but threats or aggression against staff is not tolerated and the police should be called.
- Children will be affected by what is going on around them and be concerned and worried. The other staff need to be focused and provide for their needs and not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer questions honestly whilst continually reassuring them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may require counselling and support. If the child is not found or is injured or worse it will be an extremely difficult time. The chair person will use their discretion to decide what action is taken.
- Staff will not discuss the incident outside of the setting and will not talk to the press without taking advice.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Felixstowe Nursery School.

Held on

Date to be reviewed.....

Signed by Chairperson.....

Signed by Manager.....