

EMMANUEL CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL

Missing Child Policy

Statement of intent

The Welfare of children in our care is paramount and we operate stringent security measures to prevent children from leaving the nursery unsupervised, unless accompanied by designated adults. In the highly unlikely event that a child goes missing from the pre-school we immediately put into practice agreed procedures to ensure that the child is found as soon as possible and that the relevant people are informed.

Aim

We aim to implement a swift and effective response to the discovery that a child may be missing from the setting. This response is designed to find the child as soon as possible and secure their safety and well being.

Procedures

Systems are in place to minimise the risk of children going missing:

- A member of staff is always in attendance at the door during drop off and pick up times.
- Back and front doors are secured when the last parent has left
- The front gate is closed after the last parent has left.
- We have interior gates to prevent children from accessing unauthorised areas.
- The outdoor area is securely fenced and gated.
- The attendance register is taken at the start of each session and the number of children attending displayed on the information board.
- Children arriving late are accounted for in the register and the headcount number adjusted accordingly.
- Children who leave early are marked out in the register and the headcount number adjusted accordingly.
- Children are made aware of the physical boundaries of the setting.

- Parents are made aware of the need to close the front door after entering and when leaving.
- Staff will always be aware of children's whereabouts ie. key persons will note where their key children are at all times, particularly the younger and more adventurous children.
- Parents are made aware of the need for supervision of children at all times, particularly younger siblings who do not normally attend the nursery.
- Parents are asked to ensure that their child's arrival is noted and their name registered on the board before leaving.
- Children are counted before going outside to play and counted back in again to ensure that the correct number of children in attendance is ascertained.
- A member of staff checks the outside area once the last child has gone inside, to ensure that no child is left behind.

In the event of a child being found to be missing then prompt action will be taken:

1. The missing child will be identified and the last known whereabouts recorded.
2. The senior member of staff will arrange for the other children to be satisfactorily supervised. The remaining children should be gathered together for a storytime /music session. Without alarming them, the children should be asked if they have seen the missing child.
3. A systematic search will be carried out to see if the child can be located in the surrounding area:
 - ❖ All rooms, toilets, cupboards, kitchen, under tables, cushions , behind screens and anywhere a child might hide.
 - ❖ Check all exits for evidence of the doors having been opened.
 - ❖ Check all outside areas including playhouse, sheds, behind cars.
 - ❖ Check that the front gate has not been opened

- ❖ Note any cars or suspicious persons in the outside area.

The search will continue for 10 minutes, after which, if the child has not been found then the police will be called and then the child's parents. If the parent is unavailable, then a message must be left.

Staff will continue to search for the missing child until the police arrive. The senior person will liaise with police regarding the circumstances surrounding the incident and take instruction as to the next steps.

4. Record of events

The following details are noted in order to help as much as possible in the investigation and search.

1. Date, time and location of disappearance
2. Who was responsible for the child at the time
3. What was the child wearing
4. Any distinguishing features
5. Circumstances surrounding disappearance
6. Time that parents / police contacted.
7. A record of events should be logged in the Incident book by the senior person in charge or by another delegated member of staff.

Informing other people:

As soon as possible after the incident the following people should be notified and the time of contact recorded:

- ❖ Ofsted
- ❖ The insurance company
- ❖ All parents
- ❖ Surrey Early Years Team
- ❖ The Duty Social Worker

A full written report of the incident is then recorded.

Dealing with reactions

It is understandable in such circumstances that all concerned will be very emotional and parents are likely to be shocked, distressed and angry. All emotions and reactions must be dealt with by staff in a caring and understanding way. However, until the situation has been fully investigated by all parties, all staff must refer any parent and media enquiries to the Pre-school manager whilst always observing our confidentiality policy.

Evaluation

Once the incident is resolved, the Manager and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes to security procedures.

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Missing Child Procedure

Name of child:

Date.:

Time:

Location:

Who was responsible for caring for the child?

What was the child wearing?

Any distinguishing features?

Circumstances surrounding disappearance? Eg. where was the child last seen?

Police contacted? Yes / No

Time:

Parents contacted? Yes / No

Time:

Outcome: