



Springboard Opportunity Group

Missing Child Policy Nov 2023

A child can be classed as missing or lost if they have been left unsupervised or unaccounted for (staff are not aware of them being within sight or hearing) in a room or the outside area of the setting or further afield for 2 minutes or longer.

If a child goes missing from the setting the following actions will be carried out:

- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden
- The children are assembled and register is checked to make sure child not gone home early or that 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 person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened
- If ratios allow staff members can search the nearby vicinity
- If the child is found parents/carers will be informed when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained and procedures will be put into place to prevent this from recurring.
- If the child is not found within a maximum of 5 minutes, report to the police and then contact the parent/carers.
- The advice of the police is followed

If a child goes missing when away from the setting (e.g. from an outing) where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the following procedure is followed:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, adults stand with their designated child and register is checked
- At least one member of staff searches the immediate vicinity ensuring appropriate adult ratio with remaining children

- If the child is found parents/carers will be informed when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained and processes will be put into place to prevent this from recurring.

- If the child isn't found within a maximum 5 minutes then the lead staff member contacts the venue's security (where appropriate) who will handle the search.
- The lead staff member on the outing contacts the police using the Springboard mobile phone and reports the child as missing (if not already been done by venue security)

- The setting is informed and if a senior member of staff is not with the group she/he must make her way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff. The senior member of staff stays there until the situation is resolved.

- The senior member of staff ensures the child's parent/carers are contacted immediately

- The advice of the police is followed

- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting

The investigation:

- The Setting Manager carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff and volunteers present at the time at and completes the attached form

- Each key person writes an incident report detailing:

- the date and time of the incident
- 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
- the time it is estimated that the child went missing
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened
- Children's comments are also noted if applicable

- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff and volunteers co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including

interviewing staff and volunteers. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address

- The incident 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 within 14 days as a Missing Child can be deemed a significant event.
- Our Insurance company is informed
- A decision will be made as to whether staff disciplinary processes need to be followed
- As a result of the investigation: risk assessments, policies and procedures will be updated and all staff and families will be made aware of the changes made
- The parents/carer of the child involved will be given information about the investigation (whilst maintaining confidentiality of any staff members and other children)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Springboard Opportunity Group's Board of Trustees	
Held on:	20.11.23
Date to be reviewed:	Autumn 2026
Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees:	
Name of signatory:	Jenie Eastman
Role of signatory:	Chair of Trustees

Incident Form to be completed when a child goes missing

To be completed by the Manager and Play Leader concerned

Name of childcare setting: Springboard Opportunity Group	
Address: (Delete as appropriate) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2a Princes Road, Clevedon, BS21 7SZ• Ashcombe Children's Centre, Stepping Stone Walk, WsM, BS23 3JW• c/o For All Healthy Living Centre, Lonsdale Avenue, WsM, BS23 3SJ• c/o Mead Vale Primary School, Kestrel Drive, Weston, BS22 8RQ	
Telephone number:	
Name of child:	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Name of parent/guardian:	
Date, time and location of disappearance:	
Please attach list of staff, volunteers, children and others present on the outing.	
Who was responsible for caring for the child at the time s/he disappeared?	
Circumstances surrounding disappearance: A verbal report should be taken from relevant staff / volunteers which should be noted at the time and attached to this Incident Form. Summarise the circumstances here including when the child was last seen, what has happened since then.	
Suggested reason for disappearance:	
Time parent/guardian informed:	

Time police informed (if child not located after parent/guardian has been contacted):
Details of police contact person and advice given:
What happened next:
Signed by Manager/ Leader
Date:

Follow up actions carried out:

Is any further police investigation required? Give details
Is any Safeguarding action required? Give details
Is any further support needed for children/staff/parents/guardians? Give details
Date Ofsted informed (within 14 days of incident):
Date insurers informed
Do our policies/ Procedures/ Risk Assessments need to be amended as a result of this? Give details
Signed by Manager/ Leader
Date
Signed by Parent / Carer
Date