



LOST CHILD PROCEDURES

Member of staff responsible	Caroline McKellar
Committee member responsible	Steph Gattenby
Date agreed with staff	
Date agreed at Committee	
Signed on behalf of Committee	
Print name & date	
Frequency of policy review	Biennial
Date next review due	April 2012

Document Version Control

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1.0	April 2009	Checked against PSLA guidelines
1.1	April 2009	EYFS Key themes and commitments
	May 2010	Reviewed policy no changes

Statement of intent

Children's safety is of paramount concern to Lydiard Millicent Pre-School. In the event that a child becomes lost while in the care of the pre-school, the pre-school will implement the following procedures. These ensure that a systematic approach to finding the child is taken, whilst other children in the pre-school are kept safe and calm.

In the event that a child is missing, we will instigate an immediate search for the child, notify parents and authorities at the appropriate stage and maintain a high level of care for other children in the pre-school.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe 1.4 Health and well-being	2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	

Procedures

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the Pre-school supervisor must be alerted. The supervisor will carry out an initial search of the pre-school/Early Years premises. This will include:

- Checking doors/gates for a potential breach of security
- All Early Years rooms, including the reception classroom & outdoor play area
- Boys/girls toilets
- Cloakrooms, including behind coats
- Garden area
- Sheds and other storage
- In and around garden play equipment
- All indoor cupboards
- Under seating, under counter areas, behind curtains

While the initial search is carried out, the register should be checked to confirm that the child was in the pre-school that session, that they have not been collected early and to ensure that no other child has gone astray.

The supervisor will then send a member of staff and any extra helpers available to search for the child. The supervisor should contact the school to ask for assistance in searching in and around the school. The search should start with

- Checking up and down the lane
- Checking the school grounds, especially the school field, the pond area, behind the school hall, under and around parked cars etc. This search should include the grounds around the Victorian building
- All other parts of the school

The search should be completed as thoroughly and as quickly as possible, before

reporting back to the supervisor.

While the extended search is being made, the supervisor should establish from staff/visitors/visitors who have since left when the child was last seen, what they were wearing and their emotional state (happy, upset etc) and record this information.

If the child is not found, the supervisor should contact the police, report the child as missing and follow their advice.

The supervisor should contact the parents/ carer and report the situation. The parents/carer should be asked to come to the pre-school by the normal route the child would take, preferably by walking. If the child is still missing when the parents arrive at the pre-school, police advice should be followed. This may include the parents returning home by the normal route and waiting, in case the child manages to make their way home.

The supervisor should contact the chairperson to inform them of the situation and the Chairperson should visit the pre-school as quickly as possible.

Telephone lines should be kept as free as possible so that important information is not delayed.

Pre-school activities for the other children will continue as normal, with staff not involved in the search giving them their full attention, keeping the atmosphere as calm as possible.

The Investigation

The chairperson will carry out a full investigation.

The supervisor must write an incident report detailing

- the date & time of the incident
- which staff, children, other adults were present
- when and where the child was last seen
- action taken to find the child
- what has taken place since then

A conclusion should be drawn as to how the incident occurred

The incident should be reported under RIDDOR arrangements and should be recorded in the incident book. The local authority Health and Safety Officer may also wish to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution

OFSTED should be informed.

The insurance department at the PSLA should be informed.

If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff should co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services may also be involved if it seems likely that there will be a child protection issue to address.

Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to keep everyone as calm as possible. Staff will feel worried and may blame themselves. Parents will be

Lydiard Millicent Pre-school

Lost Child Procedures V1.1

Page 3 of 4

fraught and may be angry. Distraught and angry parents should always be dealt with by two members of staff (The supervisor and the chairperson). Children may also be worried and need reassurance. Depending on the severity of the final outcome, staff and children may need additional support or counselling and the Chairperson should use their discretion to decide what action to take.

Staff and committee members must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.