**Safeguarding Children**

**Missing child**

Policy statement

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure 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.

**Procedures**

Child going missing on the premises.

* As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the Playgroup manager.
* The Playgroup manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
* 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.
* If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
* The Playgroup manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
* The Playgroup manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.

Child going missing on an outing.

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the Playgroup Manager and/or other staff back in the Playgroup. If the Playgroup Manager has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole Playgroup outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

* As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
* The Playgroup Manager is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
* The Playgroup Manager contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
* The Playgroup Manager contacts the parent, who makes their way to the Playgroup or outing venue as agreed with the Playgroup Manager. The Playgroup is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the Playgroup.
* Staff take the remaining children back to the Playgroup.
* 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 Playgroup Manager contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, (carries out an investigation and may come to the Playgroup immediately.
* The Playgroup Manager, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

* Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
* The Playgroup Manager together with the chairperson or representative from the management committee, speaks with the parent(s).
* The chairperson and management committee, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
* The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:

-The date and time of the report.

-What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff

designated responsible for the missing child.

-When the child was last seen in the group/outing.

-What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.

-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; the local authority Health and Safety Office may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
* In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
* The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people.

* Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Greendown Playgroup

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Playgroup.