



## **MISSING CHILDREN**

York Childcare Ltd has the highest regard for the safety of all children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore, members of staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between the sessions of the day.

If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the nursery, the following procedure will be activated.

### **Procedure**

The member of staff in question will inform both the Nursery Manager and the rest of the staff team. A thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The Nursery Manager will inform the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that the child is missing.

The staff team will be extremely careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised by a minimum of two staff members.

The Nursery Manager will nominate two members to each search the area surrounding the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the nursery.

If after 5 minutes of thoroughly searching the premises, the child is still missing, the Nursery Manager will inform the police and the child's parent/carer and the CEO or another member of the Business Management Team.

While waiting for the police and parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children at nursery.

The Nursery Manager will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The Nursery Manager will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police and do all they can to comfort the parents/carers.

Once the incident is resolved, the Nursery Manager and staff team will meet to review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular attention to the security of the premises and site and risk assessments).

Any incidents of children going missing from the nursery will be recorded on an Incident Form, and in cases where either the police and social services have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed as soon as is practicable.



### **Absences**

If a child is going to be absent from a session, parents/carers/guardians must inform the Manager/Deputy Manager/Room Leader in advance.

If a child is absent without explanation, the Manager/Deputy Manager/Room Leader will contact the parents/carers/guardians to try and ascertain the reasons behind this.

Regular absences from Nursery could be an early sign and/or symptom that a child or family may be encountering some difficulties and might need the support of the relevant statutory agencies. The Nursery and its staff will always try to discover the causes of prolonged and unexplained absences. The Nursery manager will liaise where appropriate with outside agencies.