



BS3 Early Education & Childcare

Lost/Uncollected Children Policy

Aims:

- To safeguard children's wellbeing by ensuring that processes and systems exist which mean that Early Years Practitioners and Playworkers will always be aware of the location of all children in their care.
- To ensure that procedures are in place to be followed in the event of a lost or uncollected child, and that all Early Years Practitioners and Playworkers are aware of these.
- To ensure that children and families incur the minimum amount of stress in the event that either of these circumstances should occur.

Procedure for prevention

Parents and carers whose children attend the Southville Centre and Chessel Centre nurseries are required to sign their child in and out of the service, (Staff sign them in, in front of the Parent/ Carer) when they drop off and collect them. A member of staff will remind parents of this requirement where necessary, and ensure new parents are aware of this requirement when they first come in for induction visits. A member of staff will always be present for parent handovers. In the nursery class, where all children are collected at the same time, a member of staff is situated at the door and children are released one at a time to their parent or carer.

During sessions all members of staff will take responsibility for ensuring that all appropriate doors and gates are closed securely in the areas they are using. Lead Practitioners will ensure that ratios are maintained throughout the day and any visitors will be required to report to reception at the Southville Centre or the Office at the Chessel Centre. They will be required to sign in and out of the building and will be supervised by a permanent member of staff (Also see 1. Health & Safety Policy: Security).

During school collections and outings or if a group is moving between two areas within the Southville Centre and Chessel Centre at any point, the person in charge of the group will take responsibility for checking the number of children before, during and at the end of any movement. Registers/outing forms will always communicate the location of all children within the settings.

Procedure to be followed if a child is missing at community centres or on an outing.

1. Consult register
2. Search building and gardens/nearby area if on an outing
3. Phone the police and inform them of the situation if the child is not found quickly (in a 3 minutes)
4. Phone parents/carers and then a senior manager
5. Search surrounding area
6. If the child is found re-contact police and parent and a senior manager
7. Inform Ofsted of a serious incident. Report to be written on returning to the setting).

Practitioners should consult the daily register to confirm the recorded location of the child. As many members of staff as numbers permit should immediately begin searching the Chessel/Southville Centre building, garden and surrounding area, making contact with office staff or visitors to investigate if the child has been seen and recruit further adults to aid in searching. If at the Southville Centre, search all buildings and car park, communicating with front of house and café staff to investigate if the child has been seen and recruit further adults to aid in searching.

The police should be contacted and informed of the situation, followed by the child's parents/carers and then a senior manager. As many practitioners as numbers permit should continue to search the area surrounding the Southville/Chessel Centre. If the child is found then parents and police and senior manager should be re-contacted immediately.

If a child goes missing on an outing, as many members of staff as numbers permit should check the nearby area, especially looking in well-hidden areas. Other staff members to gather all children together and take the register. Ensure enough members of staff remain with the group of children to be in ratio. Follow the procedure above.

Procedure for uncollected children

There will always be a minimum of 2 practitioners on duty at the end of a session in any of the Southville and Chessel Centre Early Education & Childcare services. In the event that a child is not collected at the end of their session one practitioner will check the register for any notes regarding changes to arrangements, and also follow up with the reception desk to check whether any messages have been left. If no further information is available then this Practitioner will then arrange for contact to be made with the relevant parents/carers on all numbers supplied. Meanwhile another practitioner will ensure that the child is given appropriate attention and support whilst they are waiting. If collection does not occur after a morning session then the child will be included in activities with other children who are attending for a full day/afternoon.

If immediate contact with a parent/carer is not possible, then practitioners will ensure that the Executive Head of Early Education & Childcare, or one of the Lead Practitioners is informed. If after a reasonable period of time (30 minutes+) contact cannot be established with a parent/carer, then First Response will be contacted for advice. Police will be informed also.

First Response - 0117 903 6444

*In an emergency outside office hours contact Emergency Duty Social Worker via **01454 615 165***

In the event that a case is passed over to another, we will ensure that they are given full assistance in investigating and resolving this.

N.B. Late collection fees apply, as per our terms and conditions.

Related Documentation:

- 1. Health & Safety Policy*
- 5. Child Protection Policy*
- Risk Assessment File*
- 3 Fee Policy*

Reviewed October 2020