



Missing Child Policy

1. Purpose:

This policy provides a structured procedure to be followed in the event that a child is found to be missing from the School site.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, and visitors of the Forest School.

3. Prevention Measures:

- Regular Headcounts: Conduct regular headcounts during transitions, before and after any activity, and any time the group moves to a new location.
- Buddy System: Implement a buddy system, especially during outings or large group activities.
- Attendance Register: Maintain an updated attendance register and ensure each child is signed in and out daily.
- Secure Boundaries: While the boundaries of the site are not all fenced, each time the group is moved to a new area, expectations are set of how far is appropriate to go and games are played to re-inforce coming back quickly as necessary.
- Visitor Log: Keep a log of all visitors and ensure they are accompanied by a staff member at all times.

4. Immediate Actions:

1. Immediate Search: As soon as it's noticed that a child is missing, staff should conduct a thorough but swift search of the immediate vicinity.
2. Inform Senior Staff: The session leader should contact James or Emily Bradshaw immediately.
3. Headcount: Conduct an immediate headcount to ensure no other children are missing.
4. Gather Information: Determine the last known location and any other relevant details about the missing child.
5. Expand Search: If the child is not found in the immediate vicinity, expand the search to surrounding areas.

5. If the Child is Not Found:

Inform Authorities: If after an expanded search for no more than 10 minutes the child is still not found, the police should be contacted immediately.

Inform Parents/Guardians: The parents or guardians of the missing child should be informed as soon as possible using the emergency contact details on Personal Details form.

Continue Search: Continue searching while waiting for the police and the child's parents to arrive, using additional resources if available. Ensure all other children on site are taken to the roundhouse by a suitable member of staff.

6. After the Incident:

Incident Report: An incident report should be filled out detailing the event, actions taken, individuals involved, timings, and the outcome.

Review: Conduct a review of the circumstances which led to the child going missing. Assess any vulnerabilities or failures in current procedures and rectify them.

Staff Meeting: Organize a staff debriefing to discuss the incident, gather feedback, and reinforce the importance of vigilant supervision.

Inform Relevant Parties: Depending on the severity and circumstances of the incident, it might be necessary to inform local child protection agencies or the local education authority.

7. Training:

All staff and volunteers should undergo training on this policy and procedure.

Training should be revisited regularly and whenever there are updates to the policy.

8. Review:

This policy should be reviewed annually, or after any incident, to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

9. Publicizing the Policy:

This policy should be readily available to all staff and volunteers.

Parents should be aware of the policy and know how the school will respond in such situations.

By adhering to this policy, Ambleford School aims to prevent incidents of missing children and ensure a swift and coordinated response in the unfortunate event that such a situation arises.

Policy date April 2023

Policy Review date March 2024