

Lost Child

Category: Early Years

Risk Management and Legal Implications

Failure to manage risk may impact on the delivery of Service objectives and the outcomes achieved by Service users. Education and Children’s Services aim to mitigate the implications by ongoing management and review of risk in all elements of work activity.

The production of this document is one way in which we aim to reduce our exposure to risk. By providing staff with information on good practice, making reference to other guidance that is available across the Council and providing clarity on how we should do things, we can ensure that the management of risk is intrinsic to what we do.

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Lost Child

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost, and these are:

- Where a child wanders off on a nursery outing. (see Guidance on Trips & Outings)
- Where a child cannot be found within the nursery areas.
- Where a child escapes from the garden or front door.
- Where a child is taken from the nursery by an unannounced or unapproved adult. (see Procedures for Door Security & Collection of Children)

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

- Immediately alert a senior member of staff who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
- Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
- Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the building, garden and immediate vicinity.
- If the child cannot be found immediately after a thorough initial search, then the police and parents must be informed.
- Continue to search, opening the area, keeping in touch with a mobile phone.
- It may be necessary for a member of staff to search the streets in the immediate vicinity of the nursery.
- When the situation has been resolved all members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again.
- To maintain trust with the parents/carers, an honest account of what happened must be shared with the parents/carers.
- This must be recorded as an incident and reported to the Care Inspectorate as soon as possible.

Health & Social Care Standards My Support, My life:

3.25, 4.11, 4.14, 5.17.