

Lost/Missing Child Policy

Statement of intent

Eduplay Services believe that the welfare and safeguarding of children is of paramount importance. We take every precaution to ensure children remain safe at all times. However, even when all precautions are taken, emergencies can still occur.

Mobile crèche and Funky Fun Bus

In the event of a child being lost or going missing from the Eduplay mobile crèche, or the Funky Fun Bus, the following procedure must be followed.

- A member of staff noticing a child is missing should search carefully, all the areas used since the child was last seen. Other staff should continue to supervise the remaining children whilst the search takes place.
- Parents/carers must be informed immediately so that they can be involved with the search. The Eduplay Manager/Deputy must also be informed at this point.
- If the child is not found within 10 minutes the police must be contacted.
- A staff member should help parent/carers to write down a description of the child, including what they were wearing. They should also try and identify the child's last seen whereabouts.
- Staff should continue to search the surrounding areas until the police arrive.
- All staff should offer help and assistance with the police enquiries.
- The Eduplay Manager/Deputy will inform the Health for All Enterprises Operations Manager and keep them updated.

Middleton Family Centre crèche

In the event of a child being lost or going missing from the MFC crèche, the following procedure must be followed.

- A member of staff within MFC crèche, noticing a child is missing should search the main indoor and outdoor crèche areas carefully.
- A staff member should inform the Eduplay Manager/Deputy immediately who will then organise a search of the entire building and the centre grounds. Centre staff will be allocated either to take part in the search or to supervise the remaining children. If the child is not found within 10 minutes parents/carers will be informed. The police will also be informed at this time.
- A designated member of staff will be asked to search the outside surrounding areas, seeking information from passers by.
- An appropriate staff member should write down a description of the child, including what they were wearing. They should also try and identify the child's last seen whereabouts.
- Staff should continue to search the surrounding areas until the police arrive.
- All staff should offer help and assistance with the police enquiries whilst reassuring and comforting the family.
- The Eduplay Manager/Deputy will inform the Health for All Enterprises Operations Manager and keep them updated.

Contacting the police

If the point is reached when the police need to be contacted the following information will be available.

- The full postal address of the setting.
- The child's next of kin.
- A detailed description of the child. (name, age, clothes, general description)
- The circumstances surrounding the child going missing, (time they have been missing, time last seen, any other relevant information - arguments with other children etc)
- Who is currently looking for the child and a mobile number of the Eduplay Manager/Deputy
- A written summary of the telephone conversation held with the police will be completed and will be attached to the incident record form.
- The Eduplay Manager/Deputy will be responsible for meeting the police and parent/carer and will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police while reassuring and comforting the family.

Lost child on an outing

Regular head counts are carried out whilst on any outing. (On long trips an hourly head count is done by a member of staff).

In the event of a child going missing whilst on an outing, the following procedure must be followed.

- All staff present will be informed and a member of staff will carry out a thorough search of the area. Other staff should continue to supervise the remaining children whilst the search takes place.
- If appropriate, on site security will be informed and a description of the child/children will be given.
- If the child is not found within 10 minutes, the police will be informed immediately.
- At this stage a staff member should inform the Eduplay Manager/Deputy. They will then inform the missing child's parents/carers offering reassurance and comfort to the family.
- Additional, appropriate staff will be sent to assist in the safe return of the other children if required.

Conclusion

Once any of the above stages have been completed, the following procedures must be followed to help bring the matter to conclusion.

- Information can be sought from other children in the group, according to their age regarding the situation.
- If the child is located they will be escorted back to the setting by the member of staff who found them, and reunited with their parent/carer.
- The Eduplay Manager/Deputy will complete an incident record form in conjunction with any staff members involved.
- If the police and parent/carers were informed, a detailed incident record form will be completed and OFSTED will also be informed in writing.