

MISSING CHILD POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that in the event of a child going missing or being left unnoticed without staff supervision that is not appropriate to the services being provided. RAFA KIDZ have a clear approach to returning the child to supervision or reuniting the child with the family as soon as possible.

1.2. To ensure child safety so that as far as is possible, the events leading up to the child being missing or unnoticed without supervision can be avoided.

2. SCOPE

2.1 The safety of the child in our setting is paramount. The group provides a variety of services including some open access where children and young people engage in free flow play. The group will take all reasonable measure appropriate to the activity to ensure the safety of children and young people taking part in the activities offered.

2.2 This policy applies to all services provided by the group, all employees, volunteers and any agency/contracted workers involved in those activities.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 It is a requirement of this policy that all reasonable measure be taken to reduce the risk of children going missing or being left unsupervised where it is not appropriate for them to be so.

3.2 **Going missing** means staff are unable to locate a child in the area that they would normally be.

3.3 **Left unsupervised** means when it becomes apparent that a child has been left somewhere without staff supervision.

4 PRINCIPLES

4.1 In the extremely unlikely event of a child or young person **going missing** whilst in the care of the setting, the following steps will be taken immediately:

- Notify the Manager or their Deputy.
- Ensure all adults are aware of the situation.
- If the child is missing from an outing, the project base must be contacted to co-ordinate returning children to a safe place or deploy extra staff to help with the search. Additionally, the remaining groups will make their way to the emergency meeting point.
- An immediate roll call and register is to be taken of all groups or whole group to confirm all other persons are accounted for and their safety is maintained.
- Establish who last saw the child, where and when.
- Ask the children, without alarming them, if they have seen the missing child.

- Complete a search of the whole premises/area including any areas a child could hide.
- If following this search, the child has not been located, a member of staff must visit the local area with a mobile phone to maintain contact.
- Contact the police to notify them a child is missing.
- Call the Child's parents/emergency contacts to inform them their child may be trying to make their way home.

4.2 In the event of a child being **left unsupervised** when it is inappropriate, the following steps must be taken immediately:

- Re-establish supervision of the child.
- Ensure that they are unhurt.
- Notify the Manager or Deputy.

4.3 In both events the person in charge on that day must immediately:

- Inform their Line Manager.
- Inform the Registered person.
- On the same day complete a full investigation/incident report to gather all relevant information. Statements **must** be taken from everyone involved, with clear times, and who did what, where and when.
- Investigating Officer will contact the LADO and inform them of the situation. The registered person with contact OFSTED if the child has gone missing from the registered site.

5 DEALING WITH THE SITUATION

5.1 This type of situation can be difficult to deal with. The following points are an aid to ensure the situation is not escalated unnecessarily.

5.2 **Dealing with reactions** - The child's parents are likely to be frightened, distressed and angry. The staff will share all relevant information with parents/carers about the incident and how it was dealt with. Parents/Carers have a right to see the incident report.

5.3 **Dealing with the media** - Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police have been involved. All media enquiries will be referred to the registered person. At no time will staff speak to a member of the media.

5.4 **After the incident** – Following any incident under this policy, the group will review and evaluate all relevant processes that are in place and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POLICY

6.1 The Director of Children's services, Senior Management Team and the Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy.

6.2 All Managers and staff must comply with this policy. Failure to do so is likely to lead to disciplinary action being taken.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RAFA Kidz Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Royal Air Forces Association.
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- Safeguarding policy
- Outing policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Incident reporting

8 REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed annually, or when procedural/legislative changes arise that impact on this policy.

Date Originated	MAY 2019	Signature
Date Reviewed		