



Registered Charity # 1203754

## Missing Child Policy

### Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. This policy sets out the procedures to follow in the event that a child goes missing, either from the premises or while on an outing, ensuring a rapid, coordinated, and effective response.

### Aim

To ensure that all staff respond swiftly and appropriately to a missing child situation, prioritising the safety and well-being of the child and complying with safeguarding expectations.

### Objectives

We will:

- Conduct immediate and thorough searches
- Notify parents, police, and relevant safeguarding authorities without delay
- Record and investigate any incidents to prevent future occurrences

### Procedures

#### 1. Missing Child in the Building

- The staff member who notices the child is missing informs the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately
- The DSL organises a search of the setting
- If the child is found on-site, their welfare is checked and the circumstances investigated

#### If the child is not found:

- A staff member searches the immediate external area
- The DSL informs the Manager and contacts the police
- Parents are informed as soon as possible

#### 2. Missing Child Off-Site (Outing or Walk)

- Senior staff present carries out an immediate headcount and identifies the missing child
- One staff member searches the immediate area

#### If not located quickly:

- The police are contacted without delay
- The DSL is informed
- Parents are contacted by the DSL
- If safe, remaining children are returned to the setting promptly
- A senior staff member remains at the site to assist the police, if advised to do so

### Recording and Reporting

- A detailed written account is completed by the Manager/DSL on the day of the incident.
- This includes: a timeline of events, actions taken, and all staff observations.
- A template or designated format will be agreed upon and standardised as part of the safeguarding documentation review.
- The Manager/DSL completes the **Confidential Safeguarding Incident Report Form**



- Parents are updated throughout the process

### **Investigation**

- Ofsted is informed of the incident within 14 days, as required
- The designated officer leads a formal investigation into the incident
- The DSL and officer meet with the child's parents to explain the process
- Every staff member involved completes a written report using the safeguarding form
- Staff do not communicate with the press under any circumstances — media handling is managed by the Board of Trustees or relevant authority

### **Preventative Measures**

- Daily registers and headcounts are maintained accurately
- Staff are trained to maintain visual supervision and engage children at all times
- Staff-pupil ratios are upheld during indoor, outdoor, and off-site activities

### **Monitoring and Review**

- This policy is reviewed annually or earlier if an incident occurs or guidance changes
- Any investigation outcomes are used to improve policies, procedures, and practice

### **Legislation and Guidance**

This policy aligns with the following:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2021)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

### **Acknowledgment**

All staff, trustees, volunteers, and parents are required to read and understand this policy. By doing so, they commit to following all procedures and safeguarding the welfare of children in the setting.