

Busy Bees Playgroup Uncollected Child Policy

(Cross reference to Child Protection Policy)

In the event of a child not being collected at the correct time for his/her end of session, the child's welfare remains paramount whilst an investigation into the parents/carers whereabouts takes place.

Busy Bees staff will follow the procedure below:

- Reassure the child at all times that Mummy/Daddy or whoever usually collects will be contacted soon
- Ensure the child is comforted and accompanied by a member of staff at all times, and is kept occupied and distracted
- Depending on timing the child may need a snack
- Check with all staff if any messages have been received, in case a message has not been passed on
- Phone the work/ home/mobile telephone number of the parent/carer who would normally be collecting the child

Phone answered

- If the parent/carer is there, inform them of the situation and ask them to come immediately. If appropriate, remind them of the collecting time and inform them that their child was waiting for them
- Inform the child that we are trying to be make contact and update them with any outcome so far, not unnecessarily worrying them if there was a problem

No answer

- If there was no answer on the usual contact numbers, refer to the emergency contact number/details and explain the circumstances and if possible arrange collection
- If no answer on these numbers, decide a period of time to wait in case there was a delay/accident en route, before trying the numbers again in the meantime
- Inform ALL members of staff within the building so everyone is aware of the situation and can assist if and where necessary
- A staff member remains with the child, doing all she/he can to reassure the child everything will soon be OK and Mummy/Daddy/Carer will soon be here
- Try the telephone numbers again using a staff member's mobile phone so the landline remains available for parents/carers to get in contact
- Try emergency numbers again

- If the child lives within close proximity and there are sufficient staff, it may be possible to visit the house to see if anyone is at home and this could rectify the situation. Minimum of 2 staff members (but ideally 3 staff members) with full suitability checks to stay in the setting with the child while this is carried out
- If still no response from contact numbers and emergency contacts, 30 minutes after the child should have been collected phone The Children's Services Front Door on **01452 426565** for advice and next steps.

After an Uncollected Child incident has occurred, or a parent/carer is more than 10 minutes late collecting their child, and has not telephoned to inform us, Busy Bees staff will complete an Uncollected Child Form and ask the parents/carers to sign it. The incident will be reviewed at the next staff meeting, discussing what worked well and what was difficult. Where appropriate we will review the Uncollected Child Policy, Busy Bees relevant policies, procedures or Risk Assessments.

Busy Bees Playgroup Missing Child Policy

A child can be classed as missing or lost if they have been left unsupervised or unaccounted for (so staff are not aware of them being within sight or hearing) in a room or the outside area of the setting or further afield for 2 minutes or longer.

If a child goes missing from Busy Bees Playgroup the following actions will be carried out:

- The Manager or Group Leader (person in charge) will carry out a thorough search of the building and outdoor area
- The Daily Register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out
- The person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened
- The person in charge talks to children (using wording so as not to upset the children) to establish what has happened
- If ratios allow staff members can search the nearby vicinity
- If the child is found parents/carers will be informed when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained along with what will be done to prevent this from recurring
- If the child is not found, the parent/carer is contacted, and the missing child is reported to the police
- The advice of the police is followed
- All remaining children will be kept calm

If a child goes missing when away from the setting (e.g. from an outing) where parents/carers are not attending and responsible for their own child, the setting ensures that there is a procedure that is followed:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff and adult helpers who are with the group/on the outing will ask the children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray
- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that area
- If the child isn't found, then the lead staff member contacts the venue's security who will handle the search. The venue security will be made aware that parents/carers are about to be contacted so some discretion can be used until this has been done
- If the child is found parents/carers will be informed when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained along with what will be done to prevent this from recurring

- The Manager is informed, if not with the group and (if possible) makes their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff
- The Manager contacts the child's parent/carer (before she makes her way to the venue) who makes their way to the setting or venue as agreed with the person in charge
- The lead staff member contacts the police using the mobile phone and reports the child as missing
- The advice of the police is followed
- All remaining children will be kept calm
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting

The investigation:

The Manager carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time, or who were with the group/ on the outing. Each Key Person writes an incident report detailing: – the date and time of the incident; – which staff/children were in the group/outing; – when the child was last seen in the group/outing; – what has taken place in the group/outing since then; – the time it is estimated that the child went missing. A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and children's comments are also noted if applicable. If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Services may be involved if it seems likely that there is a Child Protection issue to address. The incident is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution. We will ensure Ofsted is informed within 14 days as a Missing Child can be deemed a significant event. Our Insurance company is also informed. A decision will be made as to whether staff disciplinary processes need to be followed.

As a result of the investigation:

risk assessments, policies and procedures will be updated, and all staff and families will be made aware of the changes made. The parents/carer of the child involved will be given information about the investigation (whilst maintaining confidentiality of any staff members and other children).