



Missing Child Policy

Policy Statement

At Pavilion Pre-School (Aigburth), the safety and welfare of children is our highest priority at all times, both on and off the pre-school premises.

We take all reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure children remain safe and secure through our Drop-Off and Collection Policy, Outings Policy, Safeguarding policy and procedures, and site security arrangements.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain effective supervision and appropriate staff-to-child ratios, remain vigilant at all times, and follow the pre-school's procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children.

In the unlikely event that a child is found to be missing from the pre-school, breakfast or after school club or while on an outing, staff will respond immediately and follow the procedures below. The police will be contacted without delay where appropriate, and parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible.

Procedures

Child Going Missing on the setting's premises

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing:

- The child's key person (if applicable) or another member of staff must immediately inform the Manager or most senior member of staff present.
- Staff must immediately check the child's expected location and carry out a thorough search of the premises, including all rooms, toilets, cupboards, quiet areas, outdoor areas, sheds and other areas where a child could potentially be.
- Doors, gates and other access points must be checked immediately to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- The register and attendance records must be checked to ensure that no other child is missing.
- Staff must establish when and where the child was last seen and who was responsible for supervising the child at that time.



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- The police will be contacted immediately if there is any concern that the child has left the premises, cannot be located promptly, or may be at risk of harm.
- The child's parent/carer will be contacted and informed of the situation as soon as possible.
- Staff will continue searching the pre-school and immediate surrounding area while ensuring that the remaining children continue to be appropriately supervised.
- The Manager will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and inform the Chair of Trustees/appropriate senior management.
- A written record of the incident will be made as soon as practicable.
- The circumstances leading to the child going missing will be investigated and appropriate action taken to prevent a recurrence.

Parents/carers attending the pre-school for meetings, groups, sessions or other activities are responsible for supervising their own children unless the child has been formally registered into the care of the pre-school.

Child Going Missing on an Outing

This procedure applies when staff have taken children away from the pre-school premises on an outing.

Before leaving the setting, staff must ensure that appropriate registers, emergency contact details, staff information and arrangements for supervision are in place.

If a child goes missing during an outing:

- Staff immediately alert the Manager or designated senior member of staff.
- Staff ask the remaining children to stay together with their designated adult and carry out an immediate headcount.
- One or more appropriate members of staff search the immediate vicinity, while ensuring that the remaining children remain safely supervised.
- Staff do not leave the remaining children unsupervised in order to search for the missing child.



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- The Operations Manager is contacted immediately and informed of the situation.
- The police are contacted immediately and the child is reported as missing.
- The child's parent/carer is contacted and informed of the situation.
- If the outing is taking place at an indoor venue, staff immediately inform the venue's management/security team and follow their emergency procedures. The venue may assist with the search and contact the police where appropriate.
- Staff continue to follow the instructions of the police and venue management.
- The Manager informs the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Chair of Trustees/appropriate senior management.
- Where possible, the remaining children are returned safely to the pre-school, unless the police or venue management advise otherwise.
- The Manager, or another designated member of staff, may be required to remain at the venue until the police arrive or until the situation is resolved.

If parents/carers are accompanying the outing and are responsible for their own children, the pre-school will clarify individual responsibilities before the outing takes place.

Investigation and Reporting

Once the immediate situation has been dealt with:

- All staff must remain calm and ensure that the remaining children are reassured and appropriately supervised.
- The Manager, together with the DSL and/or Chair of Trustees/senior management, will speak with the child's parent/carer.
- A full investigation will be undertaken to establish the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Written statements will be obtained from relevant members of staff and any other individuals who witnessed or were involved in the incident.



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- An incident report will be completed, including:
 - a. The date and time of the incident and when the child was reported missing.
 - b. The names of the children and staff present.
 - c. The name of the child's key person (if applicable) and the staff member(s) responsible for supervising the child.
 - d. When and where the child was last seen.
 - e. What had taken place immediately before the child went missing.
 - f. The estimated time the child went missing.
 - g. The actions taken to locate the child.
 - h. The time and circumstances in which the child was found, where applicable.
 - i. Any injuries, concerns or other relevant information.
- A conclusion will be reached regarding how the incident occurred and whether there was a failure or breach of the pre-school's security, supervision or safeguarding arrangements.
- Appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring again.
- Where the police become involved, all staff will cooperate fully with any investigation.
- Children's Social Care will be contacted where there are concerns that the incident raises a child protection or safeguarding concern.
- The incident will be reported to the relevant agencies where required by legislation or statutory guidance, including RIDDOR where applicable.
- Ofsted will be notified where required under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements.
- The setting's insurance provider will be informed where required.
- Where the incident identifies concerns regarding staff conduct or safeguarding practice, the pre-school's disciplinary and safeguarding procedures will be followed.



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Managing People Following a Missing Child Incident

A missing child incident can be extremely distressing for children, parents/carers, staff and other members of the Pavilion community. The setting will take appropriate steps to support everyone involved.

Children

- Staff must remain calm and avoid creating unnecessary anxiety among the remaining children.
- Children must continue to be supervised appropriately throughout the incident.
- Staff should not discuss the details of the incident in front of children.
- If children ask questions, staff should respond honestly and appropriately for their age, while reassuring them that adults are taking action to keep everyone safe.
- Any child who is particularly affected or distressed will be offered appropriate support.

Parents and Carers

- The parent/carer of the missing child will be informed as soon as possible.
- Parents/carers will be provided with clear and factual information about what has happened and what action has been taken.
- A member of the management team should be present when discussing the incident with parents/carers.
- The setting will continue to communicate appropriately with the family following the incident.

Staff

- Staff involved may feel distressed, anxious or vulnerable following a missing child incident.
- Management will provide appropriate support and an opportunity for staff to discuss the incident.
- Where appropriate, staff may be offered further support, supervision or counselling.



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- The management team will consider whether additional training, changes to procedures or other measures are necessary following the incident.

Confidentiality and Media

- Information relating to a missing child must be treated as confidential and shared only with those who need to know.
- Staff, volunteers, Trustees and other representatives of the setting must not speak to the press or share information on social media regarding a missing child incident.
- Any media enquiries must be referred to the Chair of Trustees or an authorised spokesperson.
- The setting will seek appropriate advice before releasing any information publicly.

Prevention

Pavilion Pre-School recognises that effective prevention is an important part of keeping children safe. Staff must:

- Maintain appropriate supervision of children at all times.
- Follow the setting's required staff-to-child ratios.
- Complete accurate registers and headcounts.
- Follow the Drop-Off and Collection Policy.
- Ensure children are only released to authorised adults.
- Keep doors, gates and other access points secure.
- Follow the Outings Policy and carry out regular headcounts when away from the pre-school.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities for children's safety and supervision.
- Report any concerns about security, supervision or safeguarding immediately to the Manager or DSL.
- Ensure all staff are familiar with this Missing Child Policy and know what action to take should a child go missing.

The safety and welfare of every child remains the responsibility of all members of staff at Pavilion Pre-School.



Missing Child Policy

This policy was adopted in October 2021.

It will be reviewed annually or as and when required.

Last updated: 06.10.26

Signed by Chair of Trustees:

Signed by Operations Manager: