



Missing child

Policy statement

Ensuring children's safety is a high priority at all times both on and off premises. In the event of a missing child a graduated response will be implemented.

To provide a rich and varied learning activities and experiences children have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities and access the many facilities around the University campus. This enables the children to develop their learning and notice the changes in the environment as well as providing an opportunity to teach road safety.

We ask for help from the LSU Action student volunteers which ensures a higher staff ratio of adults to children

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the staff will alert the Officer in Charge.

The Officer in charge will organise:

- A thorough search of the building and garden including any nooks and crannies.
- The electronic register is checked to make sure the child has not been collected.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could get out.

If the child is not found within the building LSU reception and the University Security will be asked to assistances

The parent will be contacted and the missing child be reported to the police and Trevor Page, the General Manager of the Students' Union (the Proprietor) and Ofsted,

The General Manager with the Nursery Manager carries out an investigation into the incident

The General Manager will inform our insurance company

Child going missing whilst out of the premises

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff will carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. Staff should keep calm and not let the other children become anxious or worried.

One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.

The Nursery Manager is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.

A Deputy Manager will immediately go to the scene.

The Nursery Manager contacts:

- the University security, for help in searching for the child,
- the police, reporting the child as missing.
- the parent, informing them of the situation
- and informs the General Manager of the Students' Union (the Proprietor)

Staff would take the remaining children back to the setting when safe to do so.

A designated staff member would stay at the scene until the police arrive and or the child is found.

The General Manager with the Nursery Manager carries out an investigation into the incident

All near misses must be reported to the management and a near miss form completed and sent to the LSU Health and Safety Officer.

The investigation

Ofsted would be informed and the incident would be reported to RIDDOR (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.

If the incident warranted a police investigation, all staff would co-operate fully. In this case, the police would handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff

If the incident is not externally investigated the Nursery Manager and the of the Students' Union would carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff involved.

The Health and Safety Officer will be kept informed through out the process

- The date and time of the incident
- What staff/children were in the group and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
- When the child was last seen in the group and the estimated time that the child went missing

Managing people

Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.

The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.

Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. The Nursery Manager needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.

The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the Nursery Manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the manager and the other should be the General Manager of the Students' Union (the Proprietor). No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated.

The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.

In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The General Manager of the Students' Union (the Proprietor), and will seek advice regarding what action to take.

Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press. They should refer them to the General Manager of the Students' Union (the Proprietor).

Managers signature

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