



We demonstrate tolerance and respect through child-led play

## Missing Child Policy

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## Missing Child Policy

### **1 Scope & Purpose**

- 1.1 To ensure the safety of all children who attend Croft Playgroup.
- 1.2 To ensure that we are able to find any child that goes missing either in Playgroup or on an activity outside of Playgroup as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- 1.3 To communicate effectively and to an appropriate timescale with everyone concerned.
- 1.4 To follow up incidents and to review procedures accordingly.

### **2 Outline**

- 2.1 Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises.
- 2.2 Children are signed in and out of each session on the room's registers. Children are not permitted to leave the building without a parent, carer or adult who is known to the staff.
- 2.3 Any adults who come to collect a child who are not known to staff are expected to know the child's unique password.
- 2.4 Registers, signing in and out sheets and all contact information is kept up to date.
- 2.5 Management ensure that adult: child ratios are appropriate to maintain safety on outings. When leaving site for bigger outings, parental help is requested to ensure that ratios can be 1 adult: 2 children. On welly walks staff will take small groups of children ensuring that staff to child ratios remain at safe levels; e.g. 1 adult: 3 children
- 2.6 In the unlikely event of a child going missing, all members of staff should be aware of the correct procedures for a missing child and managing children safety in line with our outings policy.
- 2.7 In the absence of the Manager/DSL, the Deputy or Room Leader must assume the role.



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### **3 Procedure if a child leaves the playgroup building unsupervised**

- 3.1 If a child leaves the playgroup building unsupervised and is not found after an initial search; the manager/DSL must:
- Ascertain when and where the child was last seen and record this.
  - Call the police to report the missing child;
  - Call the parent/carer;
  - Contact the Committee Chair to report the incident. The Chair should attend site as soon as possible.
- 3.2 At the same time a designated staff member should continue to carry out a thorough search of the building and garden; including double checking that doors, gates and perimeters are secure.
- 3.3 The registers should be double checked to confirm the names and numbers of all children on site.

### **4 Procedure if a child is lost off site on an outing or trip**

- 4.1 The Manager or member of staff in charge should be informed immediately.
- 4.2 The Manager should ensure that:
- Children are asked to stand with their designated adult for that outing so that a headcount can be quickly carried out;
  - An immediate search is implemented, without compromising the safety of the other children and adults on the outing;
  - Staff undertaking the search take a mobile phone with them
  - If appropriate, the Management of the site are informed.
- 4.3 If the initial search proves unsuccessful the Manager should ensure that:
- The police are informed;
  - Parent/carers are informed;
  - The incident is recorded and appropriately reported.
- 4.4 In the event of a child not being found the trip must be abandoned and everyone returned to the Playgroup as quickly and safely as possible.
- 4.5 It may be necessary for a senior member of staff to remain at a location to help with the search. This person must have a mobile phone and keep the Playgroup Manager up to date at all times.
- 4.6 The Manager must remain in constant contact with the parents/carers and any agencies or people involved in the search for the child.
- 4.7 The Manager should inform the Committee Chair immediately.

### **5 Recording and reporting the incident**

- 5.1 The Manager must write a full report of the incident consulting key members of staff involved and detailing:
- The date and time of the incident;
  - The name and date of birth of the missing child;



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- A detailed report of what happened including timings of the incident and names of staff members and their actions as part of the search.

- 5.2 The report should be shared with the Committee Chair
- 5.3 The incident should be reported under RIDDOR arrangements (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.
- 5.4 The nominated person should inform OFSTED.
- 5.5 The DSL should inform the local safeguarding team of the incident as appropriate.
- 5.6 Staff are expected to keep details of the incident confidential and not to discuss them with members of the local community or press.

## **6 Caring for adults and children affected**

- 6.1 Managers must ensure that children and adults affected by an incident involving a missing child are support appropriately after the event.
- 6.2 It may be appropriate to support staff or children to access counselling or to find other therapeutic treatment.

### **This policy was adopted by Croft Playgroup**

Signed on behalf of the Croft Playgroup

Croft Playgroup Committee

Croft Playgroup Manager

Print Name: Jason Adams

Print Name: Michelle Barrow, Helen Dearlove

Signed.....

Signed.....

Dated.....

Dated.....

*Date policy to be reviewed: April 2025 or earlier if required*