



Putnoe Woods Preschool

Lost / Missing Children Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Early Years Educators at Putnoe Woods Preschool take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care and that it is of paramount importance.

Putnoe Woods Preschool make a commitment to reassure all parents and carers that their children are in extremely safe hands when in our care, the children's needs are always met and will always be put first.

Early Years Educators at Putnoe Woods Preschool have strong relationships and attachments with the children in our care and an extensive knowledge of their welfare. The team at Putnoe Woods Preschool are dedicated, committed, very reliable, vigilant and trustworthy and do not compromise in providing quality care for all the children who attend the preschool environment.

Early Years Educators at Putnoe Woods Preschool have the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care and are always extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will ensure that all exits and entrances are kept secure.

In extreme circumstances even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore, Early Years Educators at Putnoe Woods Preschool will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions.

Putnoe Woods Preschool have a comprehensive Lost / Missing Child Policy and Procedures that MUST be followed by all Early years Educators, students and volunteers should, for any reason an Early Years Educator cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session within the preschool environment.

3.74. Providers must make the following information available to parents and/or carers:

details of the provider's policies and procedures (all providers except childminders including the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent and/or carer failing to collect a child at the appointed time, or in the event of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2023



Supervision of Children

To be competent in effective supervision Early Years Educators will:

- 1.1 Be vigilant and aware of the position of all children at all times including during free flow play.
- 1.2 Be able to see and hear all children at all times
- 1.3 Ensure that a child or group of children are NEVER be left unsupervised.
- 1.4 Ensure that supervision is always operational (staff MUST move through areas with the children) and interactive (staff MUST interact with the children whilst supervising)
- 1.5 Ensure that when a member of staff is required to complete a task which will momentarily take them away from the main group of children e.g. taking a child to the toilet or fetching something they MUST communicate this to their other team members who MUST ensure that supervision and deployment is adapted accordingly
- 1.6 Ensure that if a child is leaving the room with a member of staff e.g. for nappy changing that this is communicated with other members of the room team

Supervision During Arrival and Collection Times

Arrival and collection times are very busy periods of the day in which there is lots of movement from adults and children. During these periods of the day Early Years Educators will:

- 1.7 Be extra vigilant when parents are dropping off and collecting their children
- 1.8 Ensure that during arrival and departure time's children are accompanied with a handover between the parent or carer and a member of staff
- 1.9 Ensure that when parents leave the preschool after drop off the exit point MUST be supervised by a member of staff to ensure that this is secure and a child does not follow the parents
- 1.10 Ensure all children are signed in and out on IConnect

Deployment of Staff

- 1.11 Putnoe Woods Preschool will ensure that staff to child ratios as stated by *The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2023* will be maintained at all times and that Early Years Educators MUST be deployed effectively throughout the rooms and the outside area
- 1.12 Putnoe Woods Preschool ensure that staffing arrangements MUST meet the needs of all individual children to ensure their safety and that staff MUST ensure that children are adequately supervised and decide how to deploy themselves to ensure children's needs are met
- 1.13 Early Years Educators will also ensure that particular areas require more dedicated supervision e.g. entrances and climbing apparatus such as the teletubby mound as do



certain activities when identified through risk assessments such as water play or risky play

- 1.14 Children **MUST** usually be within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing
- 1.15 At Putnoe Woods Preschool it is, under no circumstances permitted for staff to group themselves together whilst supervising children.

Preschool Attendance Records

Within all of the play rooms there is a weekly register on I Connect that is completed when children arrive at the preschool and when they are collected.

It is the duty of the Early Years Educators to ensure that:

- 1.16 The arrival and departure times of all children are recorded on the I Connect system as soon as a child arrives or leaves the nursery this should include children transitioning from room to room
- 1.17 The Preschool Manager **MUST** check to ensure that the registers accurately reflect the attendance of all children on a daily basis by collating the numbers after arrival at the beginning of each session and record these numbers in the main preschool diary
- 1.18 Headcounts **MUST** be undertaken regularly after arrival and collection times to ensure headcount numbers correspond with the register
- 1.19 Headcounts are completed when **ALL** children re-enter the preschool from the garden
- 1.20 Visual headcounts should be completed and communicated every time there is a change to the group
- 1.21 Changes to the group may be
 - a child arrives or leaves the nursery
 - a child arrives or leaves the room on a settling session
 - a child arrives or leaves the room when visiting from another room
 - the group move e.g. between the inside and outside area in settings where free flow play is not possible
 - rooms join together
- 1.22 On outings the Early Years Educator who is coordinating the outing **MUST** undertake a regular basis



Lost / Missing Child on Site

In the event of a child going missing or lost whilst within the preschool environment including the outside areas (car park, rugby field) the following procedure needs to be implemented immediately.

- 1.23 All Early Years Educators within the room/area **MUST** be notified
- 1.24 The Preschool Manager **MUST** be notified
- 1.25 ALL Remaining children within the room/area **MUST** be safely grouped with adequate staff to ensure ratios are maintained at all times where possible
- 1.26 The Preschool Manager, Business and Finance Manager plus another **MUST** conduct a full search of the setting both indoors and outdoors
- 1.27 The following **MUST** be considered when conducting a search:
 - Exits **MUST** be manned
 - Agreed areas to be searched
 - Effective communication

If child is located

- 1.28 The Preschool Manager must be accompanied by another to check the child to ensure he/she is not hurt or injured
- 1.29 IF there are any injuries then they **MUST** be dealt with accordingly and recorded on an Accident form
- 1.30 The Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the parent of the child and inform them of the incident
- 1.31 An Incident Form must be completed
- 1.32 The Preschool Manager **MUST** ensure parents sign and receive a copy of the Incident Report form
- 1.33 Preschool Risk assessments **MUST** be reviewed and amended, with a plan detailing the required actions
- 1.34 This **MUST** be within 1 working day
- 1.35 The Chair of the Board of Trustees must be notified of the incident

If a child is not located

- 1.36 If the child is not located after the initial thorough search, the Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the Police. Staff **MUST** continue to search unless advised otherwise by the police
- 1.37 The following information will be shared:



- Address and contact number of the setting
- Name of child, detailed description of child, including age, sex and details of their clothing
- The next of kin of the child
- The circumstances of the incident including anything that may have triggered the disappearance, how long they have been missing and where they were last seen
- Who is looking for the child

- 1.38 The Preschool Manager **MUST** follow any advice given by the police
- 1.39 All conversations **MUST** be recorded on the Lost/Missing Child Form
- 1.40 The Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the parent of the child and inform them of the incident
- 1.41 An incident form must be completed
- 1.42 Preschool Risk assessments **MUST** be reviewed and amended, with a plan detailing the required actions
- 1.43 This **MUST** be within 1 working day
- 1.44 The Preschool Manager **MUST** ensure parents sign and receive a copy of the Incident Report form

Lost / Missing Child Off Site

In the event of a child going missing or lost while on an outing, the following procedure needs to be implemented immediately:

- 1.45 All Early Years Educators on the outing **MUST** be notified
- 1.46 Whilst undertaking a search the Early Years Educator who is coordinating the outing **MUST** contact the preschool to notify the Preschool Manager
- 1.47 The outings coordinator **MUST** communicate clearly the name of the child missing and exact location and time of the incident
- 1.48 The Remaining children on the outing **MUST** be safely grouped
- 1.49 The Preschool Manager will then proceed to coordinate effective deployment of staff within the setting and whenever possible leave the setting with additional staff members and attend the incident to assist in the search
- 1.50 A second mobile phone **MUST** be taken to ensure contact can be made

If child is located:

- 1.51 The Preschool Manager / a member of the Management team, must be accompanied by another to check the child to ensure he/she is not hurt or injured



- 1.52 IF there are any injuries then they **MUST** be dealt with accordingly and recorded on an Accident form as the soonest convenience
- 1.53 If the Preschool manager is not in attendance, they must be notified that the child has been found
- 1.54 An Incident Form must be completed
- 1.55 If not in attendance but on their way to the incident the Preschool Manager will continue to the outing destination and or premises to provide support to the staff and assist in their safe return to the setting
- 1.56 The Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the parent of the child and inform them of the incident
- 1.57 Preschool Risk assessments **MUST** be reviewed and amended, with a plan detailing the required actions
- 1.58 This **MUST** be within 1 working day
- 1.59 The Chair of the Board of Trustees **MUST** be notified of the incident

If a child is not located:

If the child is not located after the initial thorough search, the Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the Police. Staff **MUST** continue to search unless advised otherwise by the police.

1.66 The following information will be shared:

- Address and contact number of the setting
- Name of child, detailed description of child, including age, sex and details of their clothing
- The next of kin of the child
- The circumstances of the incident including anything that may have triggered the disappearance, how long they have been missing and where they were last seen
- Who is looking for the child

- 1.60 The Preschool Manager **MUST** follow any advice given by the police
- 1.61 All conversations **MUST** be recorded on the Lost/Missing Child Form
- 1.62 The Preschool Manager **MUST** contact the parent of the child and inform them of the incident
- 1.63 An incident form must be completed
- 1.64 Preschool Risk assessments **MUST** be reviewed and amended, with a plan detailing the required actions This **MUST** be within 1 working day
- 1.65 The Preschool Manager **MUST** ensure parents sign and receive a copy of the Incident Report form



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By ensuring that we maintain concrete and accurate records Early Years Educators as able to demonstrate that they have exercised a duty of care and are safeguarding themselves.

Taking Precautions

In order to avoid situations like this happening at Putnoe Woods Preschool we enforce precaution by implementing the following measures:

- 1.67 Ensuring the children hold our hands or the pushchair whilst we are out
- 1.68 Avoid going to places that are too overcrowded
- 1.69 On outings the children wear high visibility jackets
- 1.70 We teach the children about the dangers of wandering off and of talking to strangers
- 1.71 We create risk assessments before leaving the setting about our daily outing including any hazards and how to prevent these

This policy is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018

Putnoe Woods is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, employees, students, volunteers, trustees and parents and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Date of Policy: September 2015	Created By: Jo Skelton	
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Review Date	Reviewer	Amendments	Policy signed off on behalf of the Board of Trustees
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September 2016	Jo Skelton	IConnect added	
November 2019	Nikki Adams	New email address	
November 2022	Jo Skelton		
November 2022	Nikki Adams	GDPR changed to Data Protection	
May 2023	Jo Skelton		
September 2023	Jo Skelton	Ref to EYFS 2023	