

**NETHER GREEN JUNIOR  
AFTER SCHOOL CLUB  
Lost/Missing Child Policy**

**Policy statement**

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times, both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the arrival and departure procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained.

**Non-arrival missing child**

An experienced and trained playworker person will be responsible for doing the register as children come into after school club. At 3.45pm, they will send someone to check with the office to see if the child or children that have not arrived, were in school that day. The office may know if the child is on a trip but it is initially the parent's responsibility to tell us this. The staff member on desk will then phone the parent or guardian to check to see if the child's whereabouts are known by the parent or possible emergency collectors. If a parent is unreachable or does not know their child's whereabouts then that child, who is registered to come to the club that session, becomes deemed as missing. If all possible efforts by staff have been made to find out where the child has gone to (clubs/discussion with teachers etc.), then the police are called on 101. Parents are left a message to say that their child's whereabouts are now being investigated by the police. [Please see arrivals and departures policy]. The manager only needs to be informed, if the police are called or if staff need advice on the matter.

**Missing/lost child during a session**

The following procedure must be adhered to:

If a child goes missing during club time the staff member alerts the SENIOR TEAM, who lets the manager know immediately.

- The Deputy/ Senior will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside area.
- The 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 or if they are hanging around outside the school.
- The Deputy talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- If the child is not found and the parent does not know the child's whereabouts, then the missing child is reported to the police.
- The Deputy contacts the Manager and reports the incident. The Manager, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately, if not already on site.
- Social services and police must be contacted.
- An incident form must be completed (found in the incident file).

**The investigation**

- The Manager or representative from the management committee, speaks with the parent(s). The parents would have been spoke to by a senior member at the time of the incident.
- The Manager and management committee, carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all the staff who were on site.
- The staff member writes an incident report detailing:
  - The date and time of the report.
  - When the child was last seen in the at the setting.
  - What has taken place in the group since the child went missing.

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- The time it is estimated that the child went missing.

### **Investigation procedure**

- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is 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.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

### **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. 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 Manager needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents may 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 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 deputy or chairperson of the management committee. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- 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 chairperson or proprietor will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	NGJASC	name of setting
Held on	<hr/> May 2020	(date)
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> June 2021	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	<hr/>	
Name of signatory	<hr/> Tammy Nelson	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	<hr/> Manager	