

## 13 MISSING CHILD POLICY/PROCEDURE - ROYSTON PLAYGROUP

The welfare of the children registered in our care is paramount and each experienced practitioner is responsible in ensuring the safety of the children and knowing where they are whilst they are registered in attendance.

Systems are in place to minimise the risk of children going missing but procedures have to be planned.

We have two entrance/exit doors to Royston Playgroup, one is our main entrance. The external secure door is a locking door and can only be opened from the inside or by key. The inner door has a bell. We also have a 2<sup>nd</sup> entrance/exit that leads out to our playground from our main playroom. This is also a locking door that can only be opened by key.

On the arrival and departure of children there is an experienced practitioner on duty by the front entrance, this person is responsible for ensuring registered children do not leave once they have entered. The parent/carer must ensure that a practitioner who is on duty is aware their child has arrived. **All other children that are NOT REGISTERED are the responsibility of the adult they have arrived with.**

We ask all adults bringing and collecting children to be punctual as this minimises unnecessary risks and is far less stressful for the attending child.

The doors are closed approximately 10 minutes after opening time and the register is taken. All adults in attendance note the number of children registered. If children are late, entrance can then, only be gained by ringing the outside bell and a practitioner answering it. Register numbers are changed and all adults are informed.

Head counts are taken regularly throughout the session.

During the session we have an outside playtime, this is supervised by at least 2 experienced practitioners and is in a secure part of the school grounds. The children are head counted on the way out, throughout playtime, and again as they are coming in. We occasionally have events and curriculum activities outside the building but still within the school grounds, which are deemed as secure. The same procedure applies as with playtime and the ratio is in compliance with the National Standards.

At the end of each session we ask you wait outside the playgroup building and within the school grounds. The playleader will come out and call your child's name as you request them. The child **WILL NOT** be checked out to anybody other than the authorised parent/carer. If alternative arrangements have been made for collection of a child the **PLAYLEADER (the registered person)** must be given full details in advance.

Whilst the children are being called to be checked out, there will be another practitioner by the inside door to ensure that the child called is the only child released. **Once the child is with their collecting adult they become the responsibility of that person.**

All adults that are working in the group go on the register and visitors will be asked to sign a book.

Cont..

**Immediate action will be taken if a child is deemed missing.**

- The missing child will be identified and the last known whereabouts will be noted. All information must be written to back up actions.
- The registered person (the playleader on duty) will ensure all the other children are supervised and will be responsible for the procedure. The remaining practitioners will organise a circle time activity and may be able to gain some information from the remaining children.
- After an intensive search within the playgroup the playleader will notify the school of the missing child and give a description so an extensive search can be made in the school and the grounds, with additional help.
- Once the full extensive search is being conducted, throughout the school, and its grounds, the registered person (the playleader on duty) should return to the playgroup. They will then organise another experienced practitioner to retrace the walk the child would make if they were making their way to their own home or to a carer's home. The parent/guardians should then be called. A message can be left to return the call immediately.
- If the parent/guardian is not at the parental contact numbers the police must be called before any other contact numbers are informed. They have additional resources to conduct a search outside the school grounds. Speed is important. If you contact the parent/guardian in their home it is essential for someone to remain in the home as the child could be making their way back to them.
- A full record of the event should be logged, witnessed and an evaluation made to ensure the incident does not occur again. This would also throw light on to how the situation arose. The incident should also be entered into the incident book.
- It is essential you inform people of the incident. People that need to know are: Your insurers, the head teacher, Bromley Early Years, the Early Years Alliance and OfSTED 0300 1231231.
- Other parents should be informed in a sensitive way so they can be more vigilant themselves and to inform them that the incident was isolated and ways of rectifying the reasons it happened. After the incident, it would be a good idea to cover this issue within the curriculum along with other safety issues in the coming terms.

Committee signature..... Dated.....

Playleaders signature..... Dated.....

Parents signature..... Dated.....