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Signed -



Missing Child Policy

Building SEND Castles Ltd

1. Policy Statement

At Building SEND Castles Ltd, the safety and wellbeing of all children is our highest priority. We recognise that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), including those with trauma histories or communication difficulties, may be particularly vulnerable if they go missing. This policy outlines the procedures to follow should a child go missing within our premises, ensuring a swift, coordinated response to locate the child and keep them safe.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and visitors within our setting and covers incidents that may occur on the premises, including enclosed outdoor spaces and transitions between rooms.

Please note: We do not undertake off-site trips as part of our provision.

3. Prevention Measures

- A 2:1 staff-to-child ratio is maintained at all times.
- Children are signed in and out on a daily register.
- Staff complete headcounts regularly, particularly during transitions between rooms and when accessing the outdoor area.
- Secure entry and exit points are maintained at all times with restricted access.
- High-risk children have individual risk assessments and enhanced supervision plans where necessary.

4. Procedure If a Child Goes Missing On-Site

Step 1: Immediate Search

- The staff member who notices the absence immediately notifies the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the CEO.
- A quick, coordinated search of all rooms, toilets, storage areas, and outdoor spaces is carried out by available staff.
- Registers and attendance logs are checked to confirm the child's presence earlier in the day.

Step 2: Secure the Premises

- Entry and exit points are checked and secured immediately.
- A designated staff member remains at any potential exit to monitor for the child.

Step 3: Escalation

- If the child is not found within **10 minutes**, the police (999) are called.
- The child's parents or carers are contacted immediately.
- The search continues under police guidance.
- All actions and timeframes are documented in detail.

5. When the Child Is Found

- The child is immediately reassured and checked for injuries or signs of distress.
- Parents/carers are informed promptly.
- A full written report is completed and filed.
- A review meeting is held with relevant staff to assess what occurred and how procedures can be improved.
- A safeguarding referral is made to Suffolk County Council Children's Services if necessary.

6. Reporting and Accountability

The CEO and company directors hold ultimate accountability for ensuring missing child procedures are followed and reported to regulatory authorities as required.

- All incidents are recorded in the Incident Log and reviewed by the CEO.
- If safeguarding concerns arise, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Suffolk County Council Children's Services will be informed.
- If the incident meets the threshold, Ofsted will be notified in line with regulatory requirements.

7. Staff Training

- All staff receive training on this policy during induction and as part of annual safeguarding and health and safety refreshers.
- Staff participate in scenario-based discussions to ensure preparedness for such incidents.

8. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or after any incident involving a missing child. Updates will reflect legal requirements, local authority guidance, and internal lessons learned.

All documentation regarding missing child incidents is confidential and stored securely in line with GDPR and safeguarding regulations.