

# **LOST/MISSING CHILD POLICY**

## **Principles**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that in the unlikely event of a child going missing or getting lost during an outing, staff are aware of the procedure to follow. Mallusk Community Playgroup are committed to ensuring that no child goes missing or gets lost while they have care of the child. We recognise the need to carry out risk assessments on all outings and our outdoor area to ensure that this does not happen.

## **Policy**

This policy has been implemented to ensure that staff and volunteers within the setting are aware of and conform to the important steps to take in the event of a child getting lost or going missing while in the care of the staff at Mallusk Community Playgroup.

## **Procedure to follow**

In the unlikely event of a child going missing, the following procedure will be adhered to:

- The person in charge will be notified immediately (Leader/Deputy Leader).
- A full headcount and roll call will be completed against the attendance register to ensure that the child did arrive in the playgroup.
- All staff/volunteers will be informed and an immediate thorough search will be made, ensuring that all other children remain supervised at all times.
- The Playgroup Leader/Deputy Leader will immediately allocate a member of staff to make an initial search for the child.
- The allocated person will take a mobile phone on the search and any news will be reported back to the Playgroup Leader/Deputy Leader as soon as possible, within a 5 – 10 minute period.
- The allocated person must search inside the playgroup, the outdoor area and the academy grounds.
- While the initial search is taking place, the Playgroup Leader/Deputy Leader will make enquiries as to who was the last person to see the child, what they were wearing, and the emotional state of the child (happy, sad etc.) and this will be noted.
- If the child remains missing, the parents will be contacted and kept informed at all times. Parents/Carers will be asked to return to the playgroup setting trying to come their normal route in the event that the child will be walking home.
- The Playgroup Leader/Deputy Leader will be responsible for contacting the Police, which would be a maximum of 10 minutes, and follow the advice that they are given.
- The allocated member of staff must continue to search for the child, until instructed not to continue.
- If the child is still missing by the time the Parents/Carers have arrived at the playgroup setting, they will be asked to return home in case the child has turned up at home.
- Ask Parents/Carers to keep their mobile phones as free as possible to enable the playgroup to reach them.
- All activities and routines will continue as normal for the other children within the setting and led by other staff members and volunteers who are not involved in the search.

After the incident a full report will be made to Northern Health and Social Care Trust and Leo Larkin of Health and Safety Professionals (HSP).

When children are being taken on outings a risk assessment is carried out prior to the outing and regular head counts are made throughout the time. There will be a higher ratio of children/staff and volunteers. The above procedure will be followed in the event of a child going missing during an outing.

This Policy was Renewed and Adopted by Mallusk Community Playgroup on: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWED ON:	SIGNED: