

MARDEN PLAY SCHEME

27: Missing Children

Our Play Scheme has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

The main gate is padlocked for the duration of each session but even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore members of staff will undertake periodic head counts in addition to the registration procedures set out in the Arrival and Departures policy. If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the Play Scheme, the following procedure will be activated:

- The member of staff in question will inform both the manager and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- The manager will nominate two members of staff, where possible one male and one female, to search the area surrounding the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the Play Scheme.
- If after 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the manager will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer. The Registered person and Parish Clerk will also be informed.
- While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at the Play Scheme.
- The manager will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The manager will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the incident is resolved, the manager and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the Play Scheme's Site Security and Risk Assessment policies).
- All incidents of children going missing from the Play Scheme will be recorded in the Incident Record Book, and in cases where either the police or social services have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.