



## Cornhill Nursery – Missing Child Procedure

### Introduction

At Cornhill Nursery, our first duty of care is the health, safety and protection of our learners. Therefore we must ensure that children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times. This can be achieved by ensuring clear processes, communication and cooperation between the service, families and school if a child goes missing.

This policy applies within the nursery, school building, outside in the playground or garden, and on any community walks or trips.

The following document will detail security measures taken and the procedure that will be followed in an emergency, should a pupil goes missing.

### Staffing, Attendance & Absence Procedures

- Staff check sign in registers as close to 9.15am as possible. Any child not present will be marked as absent and staff will record the total number of children in each class. These numbers will then be displayed on the sign in sheet, lunches sheet and on the 'special number' board by the classroom door. This will enable staff and children to check on numbers before leaving the room.
- Attendance information is then transferred onto SEEMIS, the school administration system, as close to 9.30am as possible, and by 1.30 for the afternoon session.
- If a child is absent, nursery staff will check if there has been a message left with the office. Parents are always advised to contact the school before the session begins if their child will not be attending that day.
- Depending on the vulnerability of the child/family a call will be made to the parent/carer to check on the reason for absence.
- If a child is off for a second day and no contact has been made with nursery, nursery staff will then make a phonecall home to check that everything is ok.
- If the child and/or family is deemed to be particularly vulnerable, then contact must be made sooner.
- A minimum ratio of 1 adult : 8 children will be maintained at all times in nursery.

- A minimum ratio of 1 adult : 4 children will be maintained on trips outwith nursery.
- Further ratio information can be found on Miss Devlin's guidance chart.

### **General Preventative Safety Measures**

#### **Visitors to School Building/Entry to Nursery**

- Cornhill School has a security entry system in the reception area. All visitors must enter via the main school building and report to and pass through the reception area, signing in to the visitors book in the school foyer area.
- Reception staff will inform Nursery staff of any visitors on their arrival. All visitors will be taken to nursery by office staff, PT or a member of the nursery team to nursery.
- If visitors require to leave during the nursery session, nursery staff will show them out and will ensure the security door is closed properly and/or the alarm is activated again after their departure.

#### **Drop Off & Pick Up Arrangements**

- A member of the nursery team will be on hand to greet all parents, carers and children on arrival. The door being manned and families being welcomed in safely ensures there is no danger of children exiting the building before the security doors lock. It also means that unknown adults cannot access to the building.
- Children will get ready with their parent/carer and must stay with their adult while waiting to be signed into the nursery classroom. As soon as the child is signed in and is in the room, they are now the responsibility of the nursery staff. Until then, they remain in the parent's responsibility.
- As part of the induction/personal plan proforma, the nursery team will collate names of people who have parental permission to collect their child. Names of people who are not permitted to collect children are also recorded if appropriate.
- If an adult who is not recorded on the sign in/out sheet arrives at pick up time, then staff MUST call the child's parent/carer to check this is permitted before handing the child over. Parents are advised to inform the school if there has been a change to the person picking up, so this type of situation should be a very rare occurrence.
- Anyone other than 'Mum'/'Dad' must be recorded on the sign in by their first name too ie Grandad Rob, Auntie Lexy etc. Simply writing Granda/Nana/Uncle is NOT sufficient.

- The person dropping off can give the staff the name of more than one person picking up if they are not quite sure for example ; Mum/Dad **or** Mum/Aunt Jenny **or** Dad/Granny Sandy. Only if that person's name is written down on the sign in sheet can they sign the child out.
- If someone new is picking a child up on behalf of a parent, parents are asked to show staff a photo of the person and/or give them a password.
- Only persons age 16 or over are permitted to pick up a child on behalf of the parent.

### **Classroom Management, Routines and Predictability**

The benefits of routines and clear expectations give emotional security to children, making them feel safe, secure and aware of what to expect. The nursery team will deploy consistent, effective classroom management in line with nursery policy. Children will be involved in developing and promoting these routines and will be encouraged to notice and celebrate them being followed by peers.

As a reflective and responsive nursery, the Principal Teacher, SEYP and other nursery staff are encouraged to regularly reflect on and positively challenge any routines that are either not being implemented properly, or are not deemed to be effective, useful or developmentally appropriate for the children. Reviewing practice of classroom management strategies and routines is important and should be carried out regularly. SEYPs will be responsible for ensuring routines are followed appropriately on a daily basis. The PT will monitor these regularly on an informal basis and on a more formal basis during Wednesday Wanders.

### **Use of SIMOA**

The Care Inspectorate SIMOA campaign raises awareness and promotes acting responsibly to safeguard, protect and support children's wellbeing at all times. Posters are displayed in all nursery classes for reference.

#### **SIMOA :**

**Safe** - Be alert to all potential risks in your setting.

**Inspect** - Look around and inspect the environment to make sure a child can't leave an area without staff or their parent/carer.

**Monitor** - Regularly check that all children are accounted for particularly when they are outside, on outings or using transport.

**Observe** - Observe children and think about their feelings and emotional security – use these observations to support children to feel loved and secure.

**Act** - Assess and take action to keep children safe.



## Routines out with the Nursery Playroom

### Visiting the Nursery Garden or school field

- A minimum adult to child ratio of 1 adult to 8 children will be maintained at all times and two members of staff will be present at all times.
- Ratios should also consider the fact that the toilet facilities are inside the school building. If a child requires the toilet, staff may require to take extra children with them to ensure the ratio of 1:8 is maintained.
- Staff must take the sign in sheet when they visit the garden/field to ensure they have a written note/list of the children present in the garden.
- Regular head counts will be undertaken.
- Clear boundaries, routines and expectations MUST be consistently made clear to children, nursery team and any parent helpers before entering the area. Reminders may be given throughout the visit too.
- Any child who is deemed as a flight risk should be shadowed by an adult at all times. The child should also wear a high visibility vest in order so they can be identified easily.

### Outings in the community

- Our Wee Green Spaces project involves the nursery children visiting Hilton Woods. Classes may also venture up to the local library, shop (Aldi) and Local Care Home to enrich their real life learning experiences.
- Excursion specific risk assessments are written ahead of the children leaving the school grounds to ensure children's safety at all times.
- The procedures/measures will be taken when embarking on a trip ;
- Parent helpers are organised in advance of a visit.
- All other parents/carers are informed about the visit beforehand.

- A risk assessment is completed before the visit and a briefing and learning purpose discussion will be carried out with all staff and parent helpers.
- Staff and parent helpers must sign and date the risk assessment prior to leaving the building.
- Any adult/parent volunteers will also have been given the chance to read the 'Useful Dos and Dont's' list.
- Staff discuss the safety rules with the children before they leave the nursery, ensuring the children are involved in the risk assessment.
- The staff member leading the activity will keep a note of the children present.
- A member of staff will take an i-pad with them. The ipad will have photos of the children on it (albums/seesaw)and this will helpfully provide photographic detail in the need of any support required.
- Staff ratios of 1:4 will be maintained at all times and the developmental needs of the children will also be taken into consideration.
- Staff carry a mobile phone at all times so they can contact the school in any emergencies.
- All children wear hi-visibility vests.
- Children are put in well planned pairs/small groups with their adult. As much as possible during the outdoor session, will remain in these groups.
- A headcount will be carried out before leaving the school grounds, at regular intervals during the walk/bus trip and then on arrival at the destination ie Wee Green Space/Library/Care Home/Theatre/Beach. This will be repeated regularly throughout the session itself and during the return journey
- Regular/updated risk assessments of the area/building/activities/resources, will be carried out by the nursery staff prior to the visit.

### **Reactive Measures**

#### ***If a child goes missing in our care in the building...***

- Upon finding that a child is missing, the exact time should be noted down and a search of the nursery will be completed.
- If the child is not found then a member of staff will gather the remaining children and a head count will be carried out to ensure no other children are missing.
- Sign in sheets will be checked to ensure the child has not been picked up early.
- A member of the Management Team will be notified.
- Reception staff at the main office will be notified as to heighten security on the door.

- If after 10 minutes the child is still not found, the police will be called, and the search will continue both inside and out until they arrive.
- A member of the Management Team will notify the parent/carer of the child involved and keep them updated throughout.
- A search for the child will continue from the moment the child is noted missing until they are found, or the police advise otherwise.

### ***In the Playground/School Grounds***

*The same procedure as above will be followed.*

Staff should, in their daily risk assessments, identify any high-risk pupils who may leave the playground, and plan in preparation and responsively for this, in line with school procedures. (e.g. a person centred risk assessment, staff member to shadow, high visibility vests etc)

### ***If a child goes missing in our care during a Wee Green Spaces Session or Nursery Walk/Trip***

- Upon finding that a child is missing, the time should be noted down and a search of the area will be done.
- If the child is not found, a member of staff will gather the remaining children and a head count will be carried out to ensure no other children are missing.
- Another staff member will contact one of the Management Team immediately and where possible they will make their way to the location to assist. (Details/postcode of where the class are going should be left with reception staff prior to leaving the school so the member of staff can locate the class as soon as possible.)
- If after 10 minutes the child is still not found, the police will be called, and the search will continue until they arrive.
- A member of the Management Team will notify the parent/carer of the child involved and keep them updated throughout.
- Continue search.
- If the group are within an enclosed area i.e. a shop or a building then other help will be requested where possible, and the security team, if present, will be notified to seek their assistance.
- The member of staff leading the activity will stay at the area until the Police arrive to pass on the relevant information.
- A search for the child will continue from the moment the child is noted missing until they are found or the police advise otherwise.

- The Locality Lead will also be notified about the event, but only after the police and parents have been informed.
- Appropriate paperwork to be completed and Care Inspectorate to be informed within 24 hours.

### **Managing Children and Adults During an incident**

- A missing child situation is hugely worrying for all involved. Part of managing the situation is to ensure everyone stays calm and the children do not feel anxious or worried.
- The staff dealing with the remaining children should not discuss the issue on front of the children or around them to help reduce the risk of the other children becoming distressed.
- The staff team will understandably feel worried and anxious but as much as possible should try their best to remain calm. Senior members of the team should ensure clear communication and offer support to all involved.

### **After an incident**

- A prompt review of risk assessment procedures will take place.
- Parents are bound to feel angry. When dealing with an upset or angry parent, two members of staff should always be present, and wherever possible a senior member of the staff team should be present.
- If the incident becomes public knowledge, staff must NOT discuss the situation outwith school grounds.
- Staff will have mixed emotions also. This needs to be considered in any debriefing that will take place after any incident.
- If relevant, meetings with parents and/or children will take place. This may enable discussion of certain strategies that were/are in place, such as a person-centred risk assessment, ABC charts, visuals, etc
- Report as necessary.

### **Recording & Reporting**

- The Care Inspectorate ask that any incident as detailed above be reported through their e-forms notification system. This is the responsibility of Gillian Devlin, Principal Teacher and must be completed within 24 hours of the event/incident taking place. Open, honest and prompt staff communication here then is vital.
- Duty of Candour – consideration must be made if this triggers the Care Inspectorate Duty of Candour.
- Near miss/incident reporting should take place using Council procedures – currently on Aberdeen City Council Sharepoint, linking to “The Zone”.

<i>Policy written</i>	<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>Changes Made</i>
<i>Nov 2022</i>	<i>September 24</i>	<i>N/A</i>