



Missing Child Policy and Guidelines September 2015

At St Edmund's Nursery School and Children's Centre we believe children thrive in a setting where they feel safe and secure and where they are allowed to take risks within a safe and controlled environment. As practitioners we appreciate children need routines and clear boundaries. We undertake regular and comprehensive Risk Assessments in order to make the environment as safe and secure as possible and have clear and understood policies and procedures in place for all staff.

Aims

1. To promote an environment where children and adults feel safe and secure by ensuring that site premises and equipment are of a high standard.
2. To promote an environment where children and adults feel safe and secure by ensuring that rigorous systems and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly.
3. To ensure all staff, parents and visitors are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. See also policies on Admissions, Attendance, Safeguarding/Child Protection and Site Safety & Security

Objectives

- To agree clear expectations and boundaries for children to develop within a safe environment
- To ensure staff make children aware of the boundaries of the setting
- To ensure clear systems and procedures are in place and followed by all staff, students, visitors and volunteers.
- To encourage children to take risks within safe parameters
- To ensure staffing ratios are maintained in line with the Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To ensure parents/carers understand the importance of adhering to agreed procedures when registering and collecting their children.

Procedures

Staff

- The school/centre has a thorough induction and new starter/user checklist to ensure staff/users are aware of policy and procedures (see Induction Policy) regarding the safety of children on site.
- On arrival all staff must sign in and out to work in the signing in book located in the Reception Area.
- All members of staff are issued with identity badges which must be worn at all times.
- During the "room set up" period staff check that emergency exit routes are free from obstruction and that safety gates are closed.
- The designated member of staff in each room ensures that all children are marked on the register as they arrive and leave the setting.
- The number of children present in the room is displayed on a whiteboard to keep a visual register check.
- Ensure that doors (exit doors: main room entrance, corridors) are kept closed at all times.
- Staff must undertake a visual risk assessment both indoors and outdoors to ensure all areas are safe and secure for children to use.
- Staff must ensure that only agreed adults are allowed to collect children as stated on the "Admissions Form". Under no circumstances should children be allowed to leave with an unidentified adult.
- In the case of an emergency verbal consent will be allowed for an alternative collection – staff should ensure that the person is identified upon arrival eg name, clothing, distinguishing features.
- Staff working with children must create opportunities to discuss in an informal way the possible dangers around them eg being approached by a stranger, getting lost, appropriate play – when to hide
- Staff must ensure that any visitors to their room are displaying the appropriate badge and if not are requested to return to main Reception.
- Staff should make themselves aware of events taking place in the school/centre and challenge any unrecognised and/or unaccompanied adult who is in the building/site.

Supply/Casual staff, volunteers and students working with children

- All visitors must sign in and out in the Black signing in book located in the Reception area.
- All visitors are issued with the appropriate badge which must be worn throughout their stay.
- All visitors are made aware of the school/centre procedures for ensuring the safety of children on site

Additional School/Centre Service Providers (eg Midwife, Job Centre Plus)

- All Service Providers must sign in and out in the Black signing in book located in the Reception area.
- All Service Providers are asked to wear their corporate identification badge (eg NHS) or are issued with the appropriate badge which must be worn throughout their stay.
- All Service Providers are made aware of the school/centre procedures for ensuring the safety of children on site
- Visitors to on-site Providers must sign-in and out on the appropriate signing-in sheets in the Reception area.

Parents/Carers

- Awareness is raised at the initial home visit about the school/centre policies and procedures relating to children's security.
- Written details of adults who will be authorised to collect children will be recorded on the "Admissions Form".
- Parents must ensure that children are taken into the correct room and that a member of staff is alerted to their arrival. Children must not arrive in the rooms unaccompanied.
- Parents are encouraged to be aware of room security and that doors are closed behind them and that other children are unable to exit the room.
- In an emergency a parents must telephone the school/centre to give details about the change of adult collecting their child, this must include the person's name and description.
- When collecting their child parents must ensure that staff record them leaving and that room security is again considered.

Open Events eg Stay & Play, Family Activity Days

- Security of the children is paramount and be extra vigilant on these days, particularly when children are moving from area to area eg lunchtime.
- Staff organising an event must ensure that attendees register upon arrival and when leaving.

Actions to take in the event of a child going missing

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be missing:

1. Where a child wanders off or is hidden from view, either in the building or on a nursery outing
2. Where a child manages to get out of the garden
3. Where a child is taken from the nursery by an unapproved adult

When it is discovered a child is missing, the following action will be taken:

- Alert a senior member of staff who will enquire as to when the child was last seen and where, and organise an immediate search of all areas
- Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes, then the police and parents must be informed
- Continue the search, opening up the search area and keeping in touch by mobile phone with the school/centre

Following any incident of missing child we will:

- Review our procedures in relation to missing children
- Inform Ofsted of this incident
- Inform the parent(s) of the missing child about the outcome of the policy and procedure review