



SIMPLY PENDOYLAN

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR A CHILD WHO IS LOST, MISSING OR NOT COLLECTED

Policy Statement

The safety, welfare and protection of children are paramount at all times. We are committed to ensuring that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment and that robust procedures are in place to minimise the risk of a child becoming lost, missing or uncollected.

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.
- The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for Children up to the Age of 12 Years.
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and to act immediately if a child is believed to be lost, missing or uncollected.

A child may be considered missing where:

- They leave or escape from the premises without staff knowledge.
- They become separated from the group during an outing.
- They are removed from the setting by an unauthorised person.
- Their whereabouts cannot be accounted for during the session.

CHILD MISSING FROM THE PREMISES

Immediate Action

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing:

1. The staff member concerned must immediately inform the Person in Charge/Playleader.
2. Staff must ensure the continued supervision and safety of the remaining children.
3. A rapid search of all indoor and outdoor areas will be conducted.
4. The register and attendance records will be checked.
5. Doors, gates and boundaries will be checked for signs of unauthorised exit or breach of security.
6. Staff will establish where and when the child was last seen.

Where possible, at least two members of staff should participate in the search while appropriate supervision ratios are maintained.

Escalation

If the child is not located immediately:

1. Parents/carers will be informed without delay.
2. The police will be contacted by dialling 999 if there is an immediate risk to the child, or 101 where appropriate.
3. The Responsible Individual and Person in Charge will be informed immediately.
4. Staff will continue searching areas identified by the police while following police instructions.
5. A written record of all actions taken, times and communications will be maintained.

Following the Incident

Once the child has been found or the incident has concluded:

- A full written incident report will be completed.
- Parents/carers will be kept fully informed.
- CIW will be notified of any serious incident affecting the welfare or safety of a child.
- Any safeguarding concerns will be referred to Children's Services in accordance with Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- Risk assessments and procedures will be reviewed and amended where necessary.
- Staff debriefing and support will be provided.

CHILD MISSING ON AN OUTING

Prevention

Prior to any outing:

- A written risk assessment will be completed.
- Emergency contact details will be available.
- Registers and headcounts will be maintained.
- Children will be briefed regarding safety expectations appropriate to their age and understanding.

Immediate Action

If a child is discovered missing during an outing:

1. Staff will immediately conduct a headcount of all children.
2. One member of staff will search the immediate area.
3. Remaining staff will supervise the other children and move them to a safe agreed location if necessary.
4. The Person in Charge and Responsible Individual will be informed immediately.
5. Police will be contacted without delay.
6. Parents/carers will be informed as soon as practicable.
7. Venue security staff will be asked to assist where appropriate, including reviewing CCTV where available.

Investigation

A full investigation will be undertaken by the Responsible Individual and Person in Charge.

The incident report will include:

- Date and time of incident.
- Location of outing.
- Staff and children present.

- Last known sighting of the child.
- Action taken by staff.
- Time police and parents/carers were contacted.
- Outcome of the incident.
- Recommendations and actions to prevent recurrence.

CIW will be notified where the incident meets notification requirements.

CHILD TAKEN BY AN UNAUTHORISED PERSON

If there is reason to believe that a child has been taken by an unauthorised person:

1. Police will be contacted immediately by dialling 999.
2. Parents/carers will be informed immediately.
3. The Responsible Individual and Person in Charge will be informed.
4. Staff will preserve any information or evidence that may assist the police.
5. CCTV footage, visitor records and signing in/out records will be secured where applicable.
6. CIW and relevant safeguarding agencies will be notified as required.

MANAGING THE INCIDENT

Supporting Children

Children remaining in the setting will continue to be supervised and reassured.

Staff will:

- Respond honestly to children's questions.
- Avoid discussing distressing details in front of children.
- Provide emotional support appropriate to the child's age and understanding.

Supporting Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will be treated with sensitivity and kept informed throughout the incident.

Meetings with distressed parents/carers should, wherever possible, involve two members of staff, including a senior member of staff.

While parents' concerns will be treated with understanding and sensitivity, aggression, abuse or threats towards staff will not be tolerated and may result in police involvement.

Supporting Staff

Staff involved in the incident may require support and supervision.

Management will:

- Ensure staff are treated fairly during any investigation.
- Provide appropriate welfare support.
- Arrange additional training where required.

Media Enquiries

No member of staff may discuss a missing child incident with the media.

All enquiries must be referred to the Responsible Individual or nominated spokesperson.

PROCEDURE FOR A CHILD WHO IS NOT COLLECTED

Late Collection

If a child has not been collected at the agreed time:

1. The child will remain supervised by at least two members of staff wherever possible.

2. Attempts will be made to contact the parent/carer immediately.
3. If unsuccessful, all emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form will be contacted.
4. A record of all attempted contacts will be maintained.

Failure to Contact

If no authorised adult can be contacted within 30 minutes of the agreed collection time:

1. The Person in Charge will inform the Responsible Individual.
2. Advice will be sought from the local authority Children's Services Duty Team.
3. The child will remain supervised and reassured at all times.
4. Staff will follow any instructions provided by Children's Services or the police.

Under no circumstances will a child be left unsupervised or released to an unauthorised person.

Recording

A written record will be made of:

- The child's name.
- Date and time of late collection.
- Attempts made to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.
- Advice received from external agencies.
- Time the child was collected.
- Name and relationship of the person collecting the child.
- Any follow-up actions required.

Repeated late collection may result in a meeting with parents/carers and further action in accordance with the setting's policies and procedures.

Record Keeping and Notifications

The setting will maintain records of all missing, lost and uncollected child incidents.

Records will include:

- Incident reports.
- Witness statements.
- Communications with parents/carers.
- Communications with police, Children's Services and CIW.
- Actions taken and outcomes.

Where required by legislation and CIW guidance, notifications will be submitted without delay and within the prescribed timescales.

Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP): ____ **AMANDA BAKER** ____

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person: ____ **JANET ROBINS** ____

Responsible Individual: ____ **AMANDA BAKER** ____

Policy Review Date: ____ **June 2026** ____

Next Review Date: ____ **June 2027** ____