

Keeping Children within the premises/Lost Child Policy NMS Standard 24

Smarties setting will:

- Undertake a comprehensive risk assessment:
 - to ensure that the children cannot open or shut outside doors themselves – handles or bolts should be fixed out of the children's reach
 - to ensure that windows are safe and cannot be opened by the children.
 - to ensure that any outdoor play area is securely enclosed and that any doors/gates cannot be opened by children
 - to inspect the room/building before each session starts to ensure that the place is secure, e.g. to ensure that emergency exits are securely closed, that low windows are not open
- to establish a system of registering children as they arrive
- to establish a system of keeping a record of the children as they leave- in the care of a named responsible adult (named on the admissions form)

There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost and these are:

- Where a child wanders off on an outing
- Where a child escapes from the Setting premises
- Where a child is taken from the Setting by an unapproved adult

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

- Alert the member of staff in charge who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
- Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
- Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the building, outdoor area and immediate vicinity.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the Police and parents must be informed.
- Continue to search, opening up the area, and keeping in touch by mobile phone when available.

When the situation has been resolved members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again. It should also be recorded in the Setting Incident Book. The Responsible Individual/Registered Person and CIW should be informed.

NON COLLECTION

1. In the case of a parent(s)/guardian failing to collect the child, the setting Leader will call the emergency contact(s) to arrange for them to collect the child.

2. If a child has still not been collected after half an hour from the end of their session and if no communication has been received from any of the main or emergency contacts then the local Social Services duty office will be contacted.
3. The Local Social Services Department will take responsibility for the child.
4. No child will ever be left unsupervised because a parent/guardian has failed to collect them.
5. Two members of staff must be with a child who has not been collected and no member of staff will ever attempt to take the child home with them.

NB. Under the Children Act 1989, parents do not lose parental responsibility except through an adoption order. This means that divorced parents retain rights of contact with their children unless the courts have made an order that they should not do so. Leaders therefore do not have the right to stop divorced parents from collecting their children unless they are aware of a court order preventing contact between the parent and the child/ren.

This situation would apply in the same way if the parents were in the process of separating. A mother's request that the children do not go home with their father cannot be guaranteed unless there is a court order preventing him from having contact with them.

Parents should be in a **Fit state** to collect their child. If a parent arrives in an "unfit" state, through, for example, alcohol or drug abuse, the worker should notify Social Services immediately.

This policy was reviewed by:	Date: January 2024
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