

# Bertie's

## NURSERY SCHOOL

Wraxall

### 5.1 App 4

### BERTIE'S MISSING CHILD POLICY

This policy is written with reference to the DfE documents:

- Children Missing in Education
- Advice on School Attendance

and North Somerset LA Missing Child Policy 2020

#### Aim

The welfare of every child at Bertie's Nursery is the responsibility of every member of staff. The aim of this policy and its procedures is to ensure all the children at Bertie's Nursery are safe and receive a suitable education.

#### Objectives

- To record attendance
- To record the reason for absence;
- To act early to address patterns of absence;
- To communicate effectively with parents and the LA
- To act collectively in the case of a child going missing during the school day

#### Admissions and Attendance Registers

- All children in the school are registered on the Childcare connect information management system, from the date their contract is agreed
- They are entered on the attendance registers, from the date of their first settling in visits
- The Nursery administrator is responsible for keeping the Admissions and Attendance Registers up to date, booking extra sessions and marking children off for planned absences.
- The Admissions Register takes note in full of each child's details;
  - Name in full
  - Gender
  - Name and address of both parents – as far as practical – and note of with whom child lives
  - Changes of address and in which case note of whom the child will normally live in the future. Date of change
  - Telephone number of at least one parent in case of emergencies and at least one other person's details who can be contacted in an emergency

- Day, month, year of birth
- Date, Month and year of admission
- Name and address of Play Group or Nursery last attended – if any
- Destination Playgroup, Nursery or Reception Class and first date of attendance

### **Local Education Authority**

Good, effective communication with the LA (North Somerset) is essential to make sure children are safe and to check the status of the Funding used by the family. If a child is removed from the register for a particular reason, the school notifies the LA as soon the grounds are met and before the child's name is deleted. In the case of a child leaving Bertie's Nursery without the school knowing of their destination, the DSL is informed and the matter becomes a safeguarding issue which would be reported to the LA.

### **Attendance Register**

- The school Attendance Register is managed by the Head of Nursery.
- The Attendance Register takes full note of each child's attendance and is completed for each individual child upon arrival and upon departure (given that children may either be in for sessions, standard days or full days).
- Registration is recorded electronically (by hand if system is down) and returned to the school office. The Head of Nursery checks that all absentees are accounted for - parents may have phoned in reporting illness etc. Parents are called as soon as possible, for those children not accounted for, when expected.
- The Attendance Register illustrates if a child is

Present- checked in

Absent-marked off

Where a child is 'marked off' a brief reason for the absence is recorded on I-connect

Regular head counts will take place throughout the sessions and particularly when children move between areas e.g Forest school.

### **Actions to be taken if a child goes missing after registration:**

It is our intention to maintain children's safety as the highest priority at all times both on and off the premises. All staff who work with the children understand their responsibility to help keep the children safe at all times; this is done by meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

- the person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the setting
- the register will be taken to ensure all other children are present
- doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security
- the person in charge will talk to the staff to establish what happened
- the person in charge will sensitively talk to the children to establish what happened
- providing there is adequate supervision for the other children, some staff members may be able to search the nearby vicinity. They will take with them a mobile phone to ensure they are contactable
- if the child is found they will be supported as comforted as necessary

- if the child is found parents/carers will be informed at the latest when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained and what will be put into place to prevent this from recurring.
- if the child is not found, the person in charge will ring the police, provide details and follow their advice. A clear record will be made of the circumstances surrounding the disappearance in order to help the police as much as possible with their investigation
- the parents will be contacted to let them know the situation
- all staff will support and reassure the other children

From this stage, the Crisis Management Policy will apply (see Health and Safety manual). A written record will be made in the Pastoral Care book. This should state the details and timings, the outcome and the reasons why the child was missing. This will be signed and dated by the Head of Nursery and a member of the Leadership Group.

#### **Actions to be followed when a child is found:**

- The most appropriate member of staff to talk to and comfort the child. A talk delivered to the children to ensure they understand why they need to tell someone where they are and the importance of keeping safe. Information will be delivered to parents and an investigation will follow including statements from staff. Points should be noted for the future to ensure this risk is minimised.

#### **Actions to be followed if a child goes missing on a school trip:**

If a child goes missing when away from the setting (e.g. from an outing) where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the following actions will be carried out:

- children will stand with their designated person and a headcount will be taken to ensure all other children are present
- the lead staff member will search the immediate vicinity
- if the child is not found then the lead staff member will contact the venue's security and ask for assistance in searching for the missing child
- if the child is found they will be supported as comforted as necessary

if the child is found parents/carers will be informed at the latest when the child is collected that day. The situation will be explained and what will be put into place to prevent this from recurring.

- if the child is not found, the lead staff member will inform the person in charge, if they are not with the group
- the lead staff member will ring the police, provide details and follow their advice. A clear record will be made of the circumstances surrounding the disappearance in order to help the police as much as possible with their investigation
- the person in charge of the setting will contact the child's parents
- all staff will support and reassure the other children
- staff will take the other children back to the setting

The DSL will be contacted . The Chairman of Governors will be informed and the school's insurers will be informed. If a child is injured a report made under RIDDOR is sent to the Health and Safety Executive.

**Actions to be followed when the child is found:**

- The most appropriate member of staff to talk to and comfort the child.
- A talk delivered to individuals and small groups of children to ensure they understand why they need to stay with their group and group leader and keep safe. Information will be delivered to parents and an investigation will follow including statements from staff. Points should be noted for the future to ensure this risk is minimised.
- staff will not discuss any missing child incident with the press or any other person outside of the Nursery Media inquiries should be referred to the head of Nursery.

**The Investigation**

- the setting leader with support from the Headteacher or Bursar will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff and any volunteers who were present at the time
- the setting leader will speak with the parents and explain the process of the investigation.
- each staff member and any volunteers who were present will write an incident report detailing: the date and time of the incident, what staff/children were present, when the child was last seen including the time it is estimated that the child went missing or what subsequent actions were taken, a conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened, children's comments are also noted if applicable
- if the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address
- the incident is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution
- Ofsted will be informed within 14 days
- The Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership will be informed
- North Somerset Early Years Team will be contacted for advice and support
- the incident will be reported under RIDDOR if it is deemed necessary
- our Insurance company will be informed
- a decision will be made as to whether staff disciplinary processes need to be followed
- as a result of the investigation: risk assessments, policies and procedures will be updated and all staff and families will be made aware of the changes made
- the parents of the child involved will be given information about the investigation (whilst maintaining confidentiality of any staff members and other children)
- staff will not discuss any missing child incident with the press or any other person outside of the school. Confidentiality will be upheld at all times.

**Actions to be followed when a child is not collected at the end of the day (See Collection policy):**

- Contact parent or main carer by telephone, if neither is available use any other emergency numbers held on the Nursery Information System, 'Child

Care Connect' for that child. During this time the child will be cared for and kept safe. Inform the Head of Nursery or a member of the Leadership team.

- At their discretion and relative to the time of absence, the Head of Nursery or in their absence, a member of the Leadership team to contact Social services and the police. The school will make a written report of the timeline of events. The nursery will continue to look after the child until either one of the designated people collects the child or Social Care take the child into their care. The DSL will keep a record of any such events for future reference. If a pupil is injured a report made under RIDDOR is sent to the Health and Safety Executive.

### **Missing Children and Safeguarding**

- The school is aware that a child who runs away or goes missing from an education setting can be a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. We have in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

This policy and associated procedures is monitored by a member of the Leadership Team. Monitoring is generally ongoing but at least termly. Evaluation is made by the Education Committee each term.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>13/02/2020</i>	H Fulton	<i>1/11/2020</i>
<i>A full revision took place on 1/04/2021</i>	M Wookey	<i>01/09/22</i>
<i>Review 01/07/22</i>	M Wookey	<i>01/09/23</i>
<i>30/6/23</i>	Maggie Wookey	<i>01/07/24</i>

Overview required by Safeguarding & Risk and Regulatory Committee - date	Policy upload to ISI Portal - date	Policy uploaded to website(s) - date
<i>01/11/2021</i>	<i>08/06/21</i>	<i>08/06/21</i>