

## **Lost or Missing Child Policy**

Your child's safety is the number one priority and I do everything I can to ensure they remain with me and are safe at all times. I do everything I can to ensure children are safe when they are in my home and when we are on trips. My house is secure, with a gated and locked garden and I pay close attention to any potential hazards with regular safety assessments. Equally, I take every step to avoid children going missing while out and about. However sometimes children can become lost in busy places so as a responsible Childminder I have prepared a procedure to put in place in the unlikely event of this happening.

If a child goes missing I will:

- Raise the alarm to all around and search the area, enlisting help from anyone nearby
- Give a description of the child to everyone involved with the search
- In secure areas such as a shopping centre, I will quickly inform any security personnel so they can close exits and use CCTV surveillance
- Reassure any other children with me to avoid distress
- Call the police after 2 minutes, providing a full description of the child
- Phone the parents or emergency contacts to let them know of the situation and that the police are involved. (Once the child is found I will contact the parents immediately)
- Document the incident in writing and obtain a signature from the parents
- Inform Ofsted within 14 days of the incident occurring and review my risk assessments to see if any further precautions could be implemented

Children will always be under my close supervision but to help prevent any such incident from occurring I will take the following measures:

- I will avoid overcrowded areas
- Travel during quieter times of the day
- Children will hold my hand or the pushchair while we are out
- Children will wear wristbands with my mobile number when on outings
- I teach my children how to be safe, for example never to speak to strangers, not to wander off and to stay in my sight and/or sound at all times
- Children are given safety advice that is appropriate for their age, and a meeting point is agreed should they get separated from the group
- Children are never left unattended or left in a car or at the school gates etc.
- My house is securely locked with a gated and bolted garden
- Each outing will be risk assessed and I will complete daily visual risk assessments on my house and garden

If a child does not arrive at the appointed time I will:

- After half an hour, call the parents to find out where the child is
- Keep a signed record to monitor for any patterns emerging in line with my safeguarding policy
- If the child does not turn up or at all or is late, the parent will still be charged for the full agreed session

If a child is not at school or nursery when I arrive to collect them I will:

- Alert the teachers or nursery staff
- Call the parents to inform them of the situation and check there has not been a misunderstanding with collection arrangements
- If the child is lost while at school, then it is the school's responsibility at this point so I would help them to form a search party and contact the police – If I have other children I would have to go home and stay in contact with the school to keep up to date with the situation
- If the child has been collected by someone else and the parent has not given me sufficient notice or forgotten to let me know, I will have to charge them for the agreed session time
- All such incidents will be recorded in writing and a signature obtained