



# HARLINGTON VILLAGE PRE-SCHOOL AND WRAP AROUND CARE

## Missing child and Site Security

### Policy statement

Children's safety is Harlington Village Pre-School (HVPS) and Wrap Around Care's (WAC) highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, pre-school's missing child procedure is followed.

### Procedures

#### *Children's personal safety*

- HVPS ensures all employed staff have been checked for criminal records via an enhanced disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.
- All children are supervised by adults at all times.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
- We carry out risk assessments to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises, nor by any activity.

#### *Security*

- Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. A member of staff remains at the main door to supervise the entry and exit of children. They ensure that no children can 'tailgate' any parent. When exiting at home time, children are called individually when parent/carers arrive for collection. This prevents children from leaving our premises unnoticed.
- When registering at HVPS/WAC, parents are asked to provide authorised contacts on the registration form. They also provide a password which can be used in case of an emergency where an unauthorised person is required to collect the child. We still require notification by telephone or email, naming the person collecting the child.
- The arrival and departure times of visitors - are recorded.
- Our external and internal main door are coded and our outside gates are combination padlocked to prevent unauthorised access to our premises. We have a lockdown procedure in place which is implemented in the case of unauthorised people on the whole school premises.
- Parents/Carers are reminded by email, newsletter and verbally to ensure they close any doors behind them. This is to ensure that no child can get lost or go missing.
- During WAC sessions, parents MUST sign in or sign out their child, giving the time, when they are brought to WAC or collected.
- Full registers are maintained at all times with the child's name and time in and out.
- Children are counted back into building after outdoor play.
- When collecting/ delivering children between HLS and WAC, we take a register and count the number of children. We confirm the numbers again at destination.

#### *Child going missing on the premises*

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the sessions leader alerts Suzanne Bumfrey, HVPS/WAC Manager.
- The session leader will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden, ensuring all other children are supervised by other attending staff. Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.

- The register is taken to confirm that all other children are present.
- The session leader or manager calls the police and reports the child as missing and then calls the Parent/Carer.
- The session leader talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and an incident report file is opened, including all records from each member of staff.
- The session leader contacts the Chairperson of the Committee and reports the incident. The Chairperson comes to HVPS/WAC immediately to carry out an investigation, with the management team where appropriate.
- The session leader informs Ofsted of the incident.

### *Child going missing on an outing*

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the session leader and/or other staff back at HVPS/WAC. If the session leader has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

Every child will wear a wristband on outings to identify that they belong to HVPS/WAC. The wrist band will provide the HVPS/WAC telephone number so if the child is found by another party, they can call us.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child is missing. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity, but does not search beyond that.
- The session leader or staff Manager is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- The session leader contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The session leader contacts the parent, who makes their way to HVPS/WAC.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the building.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The session leader contacts the Chairperson and reports the incident. The Chairperson comes to pre-school immediately to carry out an investigation, with the management committee, (where appropriate).
- The session leader or member of staff may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.
- The session leader informs Ofsted of the incident.

### *The investigation*

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The session leader together with a representative of the management team, speaks with the parent(s).
- The Chairperson carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
  - The date and time of the incident;
  - What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child;
  - When the child was last seen in the group/outing;
  - What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing;
  - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.

- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff 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 reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed of the decision taken.
- The insurance provider is informed.

### *Managing people*

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Session leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the session leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the session leader and the other should be the Chairperson or Manager. No matter how understandable the parent’s anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children’s questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The Chairperson will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with any outside agency, including the press unless given express permission by the local authority, police or manager/committee chairperson.

**This policy is followed in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy and the guidance from the LCSB.**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Harlington Village Pre-School and Wrap Around Care Committee
Held on	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Date to be reviewed	September 2020
Signed on behalf of HVPS & WAC	
Name of signatory	Nina Biscoe
Role of signatory	Chairperson

### **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection**

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.