



## Goldstone Federation Together we SHINE.



### Lost or Missing children policy

#### Physical Lost Child:

All practitioners across the Federation have the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. The nursery teams will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will ensure that exits and entrances are kept secure and that locks and buzzers are in working order. Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore nursery practitioners will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions (in addition to the registration procedures set out in the Arrival and Departures policy). If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the setting, the following procedure will be activated:

- The Headteacher or person in charge and/or the rest of the nursery team must be informed that the child is missing.
- A thorough search of the entire premises will commence.
- The staff will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- The Headteacher or person in charge will nominate as many staff as possible to search the area surrounding the premises.
- All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the nursery or school grounds.
- If after 10 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the Headteacher or person in charge will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
- While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other staff members will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children attending the setting.
- The Headteacher or person in charge will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer.
- The Headteacher or person in charge will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers. Once the incident is resolved, the Headteacher or person in charge and/or the nursery team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any



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necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the settings Risk Assessment policies).

- All incidents of children going missing from the setting will be recorded on an Incident Record Sheet, and in cases where either the police or social care have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

### **Child Missing from Education: (Taken from Safeguarding Policy Sept 2020)**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. School and college staff should follow their procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. Where reasonably possible the school will hold at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergency and in case there are welfare concerns at home.

Schools and colleges should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance or Shropshire Council Learning Gateway.

There are many reasons why we want young children to have regular attendance at our nursery. As well as supporting their learning and development, we want to try to make sure that children are kept safe, their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. In a small minority of cases, good attendance practice may also lead to the earlier identification of more serious concerns for a child or family and may have a vital part to play in keeping a child or other family members safe from harm.

In our setting, we have procedures for recording and following up any unexplained non-attendance and know how to respond to different problems and where to access advice, support or whom to alert if concerns arise.

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