

# Missing Child Policy



In the event of a child's whereabouts being unclear, or unknown whilst the child is attending H.O.P.S., our procedures are as follows:

- To gain as much information, as quickly as possible from all members of staff / volunteers i.e. last sightings etc.
- To seek out all contact numbers as per registration documents, to ascertain if there has been an unscheduled pick up.
- After 15 minutes inform the police of the urgency of the situation
- To telephone parents/ guardians/ carers to inform them of the situation.
- To make an immediate sweep of the surrounding area.
- To co-operate fully with the authorities for the safe return of the child.
- We will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children at the session
- The Team Leader will liaise with the police and the child's parent or carer.
- The incident will be recorded in the Incident Log. A review will be conducted regarding this and any other related incidents along with relevant policies and procedures. We will identify and implement any changes as necessary.

## **Absconding**

Staff to be fully aware of children at setting who are known to abscond or who may take advantage to abscond if left unsupervised closely. The volunteer assigned must be briefed with regard to close supervision needs and to seek help immediately such an incident should arise.

A note of what the child is wearing should be recorded on arrival at scheme. If they change clothes this record should be amended.

Until a child is well known to HOPS a Play Leader and Volunteer will be assigned to set boundaries.

Staff/volunteers to always hand over supervision responsibility for a child known to abscond, and not to leave the child without close supervision. This includes meal, snack and toileting times.

Staff and volunteers to restrict the use of the toilet cubical to the bathroom with no window access for absconders.

The volunteer who is supervising may need to be rotated more frequently to maintain high levels of vigilance.

## **Staff deployment should a child abscond from the HOPS enclosure**

All Play Leader staff to know the combination of the gate locks

Staff to carry walkie-talkies fit for purpose, due to unreliable mobile phone signal.

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4 staff in pre-assigned roles will form the external HOPS search party. (Hi visibility vest are to be worn by these staff) and they will deploy as quickly as possible to the locations indicated (See map attached for deployment)

- A) On road east toward village
- B) On road west towards A140 – car user
- C) Rear car park on edge of playing field
- D) Bridge over ditch to north west of HOPS

One staff member to have a car on site this to be deployed on road towards west direction of the A140.

If child is not located within 15 minutes the police should be contacted by the Team Leader or allocated person.

It is essential that the police know that the child has a disability and has no sense of danger and may not be able to communicate verbally.

Parents should be contacted to inform them of the incident and standing with regard to the situation after the police have been notified.

The designated search party should remain vigilant at external locations until told to return to HOPS by the team Leader.

The staff member/Volunteer assigned to the child should write an account as to the events prior to the absconding in order to highlight anything that can be changed to prevent further incidents.

Information from the findings and action points to be briefed out to all staff prior to the child accessing the setting again.

If persistent absconding continues then a full risk assessment should be completed with regard to safety of other Children and Young people on site, balanced against one child's actions.



This policy was adopted by: HOPS	Date March 2018
To be reviewed annually	Signed: 