



Lost Child Policy

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Lost Child Policy

There are two possible ways in which a child could be considered “lost or missing”:

- 1) They may disappear during an on-site session.
- 2) They may disappear while off-site.

To avoid this, Autism Bedfordshire has the following procedures: (this information is also provided in an emergency flowchart which should be easily accessible when on-site or offsite)

- 1) Each child with autism is allocated a member of staff on arrival, who is responsible for that child. They will stay with that child throughout the day and notify the Senior Team Leader and Team Leader/s if they need to leave the child for any reason. If a parent remains then they may be the named person responsible for the child.
- 2) There will be key staff responsible for siblings at the appropriate ratio, in addition to the staff allocated to children on the Autistic Spectrum. Siblings also have access to all staff members on site at any time of day.
- 3) For off-site activities the siblings will be allocated a staff member who is responsible for them during the offsite activity.
- 4) Key areas of the venue will be supervised by staff at all times.
- 5) Access to the activity schemes is restricted at all times.
- 6) Each child (those with disabilities and their siblings – i.e. all children) are checked onto the register:
 - On arrival at the activity scheme.
 - On departure when on the bus, or in a car to go off site.
 - On arrival at the off-site activity.
 - On arrival back at the activity scheme venue.
- 7) Each child when going off-site will wear an Autism Bedfordshire label with Senior Team Leader and Team Leader/s telephone numbers.

Should a child disappear the following action should be taken:

- 1) Check the register;
 - Did they arrive that morning?

- Have they been signed out and left with the named person collecting?
- 2) Check with all members of staff when they last saw the child.
- 3) Organise a thorough and systematic search of the building and surrounding playground.
- 4) Try not to worry the other children.
- 5) Telephone the parents or emergency contact number to explain the situation and double check that the child has not been collected.

If still unable to locate the child:

- Notify the Police of a missing person.
- Inform the Manager and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the situation and the action that you have taken.

Monitoring

- Should a child be lost while in the care of Autism Bedfordshire, there would be a full investigation including the time leading up to the event and how we managed the situation.
- There should be actions points with lessons learnt on how to avoid this happening again.
- This should include 'near misses', for example should a member of staff leave a security door open, it should be reported and discussed at the de-brief as a potential safety hazard.