

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Policy Statement:

Child care staff have a responsibility to ensure that all children are accounted for at all times. It is crucial that all staff are aware of the whereabouts of each child in their group and appropriately document as children arrive and depart St Andrew's Little Saints and Outside School Hours Care (LS&OSHC).

Aims:

- For staff to have a clear procedure to follow should they discover a child to be missing from LS&OSHC.
- To ensure that all staff minimise the possibility of a child in care going missing from the service.

Rationale:

Staff are to do a head count at least every 15mins and additionally as required whilst out in the yards during morning and afternoon and are required to do a roll call check each morning. A headcount should also occur as exiting the building for outdoor play and when entering the building. In the event of a missing child, staff will follow the following procedure.

Strategies/Practices/Procedures:

- ✓ As soon as a staff member becomes aware of a missing child they are to inform the Lead Educator.
- ✓ Assistant is to gather remaining children and do a head count and read a story to keep children calm and in one place.
- ✓ Lead Educator to inform Person in Charge.
- ✓ Person in Charge and Lead Educator to search premises, checking all rooms, cupboards etc. and calmly notify other staff of situation. Other staff should assist in the search where possible.
- ✓ After a comprehensive search the Person in Charge, will contact the College. If it is out of school hours, the Principal, Deputy Principal or Manager of Business Services are to be contacted.
- ✓ Available staff to remain calm and assist with search under instruction from the Person in Charge or senior College staff.

- ✓ Assistant to stay with other children until notified by Person in Charge.
- ✓ After a comprehensive search, has been conducted, Person in Charge is to call Coolum Police on 5446 1877 and say:
 - We request help at:*
 - St Andrew's Anglican College*
 - Little Saints Early Learning Centre or St Andrew's OSHC F Block*
 - 40 Peregian Springs Drive*
 - Peregian Springs*
 - We have a _____ year old child missing.*
 - Our phone number is: 54715600.*
- ✓ Staff member to record time of call and name of police officer spoken to and follow all instructions.
- ✓ Person in Charge to contact parents of missing child and explain that the police are on their way to assist with the search.
- ✓ Person in Charge to notify Department of Education and Training on 1800 134 486 and complete appropriate documentation as soon as is practicable.
- ✓ Support to be provided to the once located to foster emotional wellbeing. See 'Interactions with Children Policy' sections: 'Supporting children through difficult situations' and 'Coping mechanisms' and 'Sources and further reading'.
- ✓ Families will be encouraged to see their GP to discuss any emotional concerns the experience has caused themselves or their children. Local support services can be accessed for families if required.
- ✓ All staff will be offered support after the incident in the form of Employee Assistance Program - EAP (College Counselling Service).

Measuring Tools:

Marking of rolls as children arrive and depart

Ensuring families complete attendance records daily and accurately – staff to check by 10am and sign children in, if their parents have failed to do so.

Families are to ensure that they inform staff upon arrival and departure.

Staff to be aware of placement of educators in playgrounds to ensure appropriate supervision.

Ensure equipment is not moved into areas where they can be used as footholds e.g. chair near fence.

Sources & Further Reading:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations

National Quality Standard

Early Years Learning Framework

My Time Our Place

Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline

Links to Other Policies:

Greeting Children Arriving and Departing Policy

Supervision Policy

Interactions with Children Policy