

Wild Arts: Missing Child Policy

Aim

- To ensure that there is a clear procedure which is understood and implemented effectively by all staff.
- To enable a missing young person to be located as quickly as possible, minimising risk to them.

Policy:

Young people's safety is always the highest priority, both on and off the premises. This occurs through robust arrival and departure procedures, regular head counts, appropriate supervision levels, talking to young people about how to keep themselves safe and positive relationship building to enable young people to come to staff with concerns if they are upset. We have established boundaries with the children, where this is part of the learning experience throughout demonstrations, practices and games.

Procedure:

If, for any reason, a staff member cannot account for a young person's whereabouts, the following procedure will be used:

- If a staff member believes a young person is missing, they will inform the other facilitator immediately. A whistle signal has been established if staff members are not together. Each staff carries a mobile phone
 - The staff member will then check all the present young people to confirm who is missing and take the children to the Atelier in a calm manner
 - The other staff member will check the site, exits and possible hiding places. This check will be carried out quickly, calmly
 - If this has happened during an outdoor activity, and if appropriate staffing levels permit, the facilitator may have to retrace their steps
 - If the search is unsuccessful and the child is still missing, the senior staff member will contact the police on 999 and the parent/carer of the missing child. This contact will take place as soon as the search has been concluded, and must take place within 20 minutes.
-
- The police will be given the following information:
 - The name of the staff member
 - The address of the setting
 - What has happened
 - Young person's name, age and address
 - Time of incident
 - Any further supportive information, such as if the young person has any medical or additional needs, what the young person was wearing and any distinguishing features.
 - The search for the young person will continue after calling the police.

- An Incident form will be created and our policy will be reviewed considering any learning or changes to make for the future.
- If a child insists on leaving and is not accordingly to our behaviour policy, and we can't keep it safe, we will have to remove the child from the program as written on contract.
- If the young person is thought to be a danger to themselves or others, after being spoken and tried to be persuaded, then physical intervention may be used to return the young person to the premises. We will consider the age, ability and vulnerability in making this judgement. In all cases, the parents/carers will be contacted immediately.
- Where a young person is known to be liable to run off the premises or to go missing on trips, we will work within our Behaviour Management Policy to formulate an individual Behaviour Management Plan in partnership with the parents/carers and child to explore the strategies and actions needed to reduce the risk of the young person going missing. We will consider the benefits of the young person's participation as part of this process.