

Pioneer Childcare

Missing Child Policy

At Pioneer Childcare our staff are experienced in running successful and safe sessions in a variety of childcare settings and we are always alert to the possibility that a child can go missing during a session. To minimise the risk of this happening staff will carry out periodic head counts, particularly when transporting children between locations (e.g., walking from club to school and from school to club). Head counts will also be carried out periodically during outdoor activities. All staff are made aware of the number of children in their care at the start of every session.

We understand that from time to time a child may not attend a session they have been booked in for (either due to illness or different collection arrangements). In these instances, it is vital that parents cancel their child's session for that day, and any subsequent days they may not be attending. If sessions are not cancelled the child will remain on our register, and we will expect to collect them from school. If we are unable to establish where the child is, we will call the police following our procedure set out below.

Our prime concern is for the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

If a child cannot be located, the following steps will be taken:

- All staff will be informed that the child is missing.
- Staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and surrounding area. If the child is missing from collection at school, the Club Manager will consult booking information and correspondence with the child's parents/carers to eliminate the possibility of errors. The Club Manager will also liaise with the school to try and determine the child's last known whereabouts.
- If the child is still not accounted for the Club Manager will then contact the child's parents/carers.
- If the child's parent/carer is unavailable, the Club Manager will contact all the named emergency contacts held in our booking system for assistance. They may also seek the assistance from the school in checking for additional emergency contact numbers, to help in locating the child's parent/carer quickly.
- If we are unable to establish the whereabouts of the child, and if the child is still not accounted for after 10 minutes the police will be informed by the Club Manager.
- Staff will continue to search for the child whilst waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive.
- If a child goes missing during camp, we will establish when the child was last seen. A register will be taken to establish that no other children are missing.
- If staff are involved in the search for a child, they will be permitted to use their personal mobile phones to keep in touch with the Club Manager. The Club Manager will keep in regular contact with staff who are searching for the child, using their personal mobile phone, so that the club phone can be free for communication with the parent/carer or the police.
- The Club Manager should consider whether anyone else can help in the search for the child (e.g., office staff).
- We will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children at the club, ensuring they are supervised.
- The Club Manager will expect the assistance of all staff in acting quickly and professionally to locate the child and to ensure the continued smooth running of club, this may mean some staff stepping up to perform the Club Manager's duties, while the Manager deals with the incident.
- In all cases the Club Manager will liaise with the police and the child's parent/carer and have information ready to provide as requested.
- The Club Manager will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

The incident will be recorded on an **Incident Form** and a full investigation will be conducted. The investigation will include what happened in the lead up to the child going missing, how it happened and what preventative measures can be implemented to ensure there is no repeat of the incident. Our policies and procedures will be updated accordingly.

Contact numbers:

West Sussex

West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD): 01403 229900 (between 9am-5pm)

Out of hours number: Emergency Duty Team: 0330 222 6664 (5pm-9am), 07711 769657 (no texts)

Email: WSChildreasureservices@westsussex.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0330 222 6450 (9am-5pm) (Miriam Williams and Donna Tomlinson)

Out of hours LADO number: 0330 222 6664 (5pm-9am, weekends and Bank Holidays)

Email: LADO@westsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership: wsscp@westsussex.gov.uk

Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove Front Door for Families (FDFF): 01273 290400 (between 9am-5pm)

Out of hours number: Emergency Duty Service: 01273 335905/335906 (5pm-8.30am)

Email: frontdoorforfamilies@brighton-hove-gov.uk

East Sussex

East Sussex Single Point of Advice (SPOA): 01323 464222 Mon-Thurs 8.30am-5pm & Fri 8.30am-4.30pm

Out of hours: 01273 335905/335906 (5pm-8.30am)

Email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Amanda Glover 01323 466606/07825 782793

Email: amanda.glover@eastsussex.gov.uk

Other numbers

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Police: 999 or 101

Related policies: Safeguarding Children

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare Ltd	Date: 25 th January 2025
To be reviewed: 24 th January 2026	Signed: <i>J. Wilkins</i>

Written in accordance with the EYFS welfare requirement: *Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.*