



# **YOUNG PEOPLE MATTER CHARITY'S Lost Child and Late Collection Policy**

**Dated: June 2023**

**The Policy will be reviewed every three years or in  
line with changes in government legislation and  
updated guidance**

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## **Aim**

The aim of the policy is to ensure that all staff and volunteers are fully aware of the procedures to follow if a child is lost, uncollected or missing, ensuring that the safety of all other children on site is not compromised.

## **Collection for After School Club Session**

- ***Staff will check our voicemail during set up for the session to see if we have been informed of any child who won't be attending (though we ask all parents to cancel via Young People Matters Online booking service or alternatively parents may text or phone).***
- Staff will check with the school office before the session starts to see if any children are not in attendance that day, e.g. they have gone home from school due to illness or scheduled appointments.
- Staff will have printed registers of children attending that day, this should be amended in regards to any updates from parents or school office that a child will not be attending that day.
- All KS1 Children will be collected from their classrooms or designated line within the playground, children will be ticked in on the paper register before bringing them to club, then signed in on the tablet upon arrival.
- All KS2 children will line up at the designated point and will be ticked in upon arrival.
- The late collection area within the school MUST be checked to ensure no child meant to be attending is there.
- We will do a search of the premises, checking the school office before and after premises search.
- If the child who is meant to be attending club is not located, staff MUST contact the parent/carer to establish the whereabouts of the child (if the parent informs us they are not in club and they have forgotten to cancel we should mark the child off Young People Matters Online register and remind the parent of the importance of letting us know or cancelling).
- If the parent does not know the whereabouts of the child, staff will follow the lost child procedures.

**If a parent cannot be spoken to immediately a voicemail should be left straight away and a text sent immediately. In the vast majority of cases a parent responds very quickly to a text or voicemail message when they are at work as they may be unable to answer the phone.**

## **Uncollected child from After School Club Session**

- Authorised collectors list will be held on the sign, ONLY authorised collectors are permitted to collect the child.

- Parents who wish for older siblings to collect their child/children MUST ensure they are 16 years old.
- Any parent wanting their child to walk home alone must complete a “Walking Home Alone Form” and return to team leader, this will only be permitted if the child is in year 5 and after term 4 of the academic year.
- If parents ask someone else to collect their child and they are not on the authorised collectors list they must inform Young People Matter by phone, text or email and the adult who arrives to collect the child will be expected to know the password. If the password is not known, the parent will be contacted by phone before the child will be released.
- Through the Parent/Carer’s handbook, parents are made aware that if they are unable to collect a child on time then they should contact Young People Matter as soon as possible and they should attempt to make alternative arrangements for the collection of the child.
- All children must be collected by 6:00pm. Any children not picked up by 6:25pm will be classed as uncollected.
- From 6:00pm onwards staff will try to contact alternative contacts, from numbers given on the registration form.
- The child will be re-assured and kept calm during this process.
- 2 staff members will always stay on the premises.
  - **Up to 15 minutes late**
- When the parent or carer arrives, they will be reminded that they MUST call the Club to notify us if they are delayed.
- The parent or carer will be informed that penalty fees will have to be charged (unless the delay was genuinely unavoidable).
  - **Over 15 minutes late**
- If a parent or carer is more than 15 minutes late in collecting their child, the manager will try to contact them using the contact details provided online.
- If there is no response from the parent or carer, messages will be left requesting that they contact the Club immediately. The manager will then try to contact the emergency contacts listed on the child’s registration form.

- While waiting to be collected, the child will be supervised by a 2 members of staff.
- When the parent or carer arrives they will be reminded that they must call the Club to notify us if they are delayed, and that penalty fees will have to be charged.
  - **Over 30 minutes late**
- If the manager has been unable to contact the child's parents or carers after 30 minutes, the manager will contact Lambeth's First Response Team on 0207 926 5555 for advice.
- The child will remain in the care of the Club's staff, on the Club's premises if possible, until collected by the parent or carer, or until placed in the care of the Social Care team.
- If it is not possible for the child to remain at the Club's premises, a note will be left on the door of the Club informing the child's parent or carer where the child has been taken (e.g. to the main officer or into the care of a safeguarding agency) and leaving a contact number. A further message will be left on the parent or carer's telephone explaining events.
- After one hour, the child will be considered uncollected and after doing everything possible to contact parents and emergency contacts, we are legally required to contact Social Services.
- The contact numbers for Social Services will be on display for all staff. During Office Hours 0207 926 3100 Out of Office Hours 0207 926 5555.
- In the event that you do not have access to Lambeth's Social Services, staff will call 999
- Parents will be made aware of the financial penalties for late collection of children. A £10 charge for the first 10 minutes and £1 for every minute thereafter.
- After the event, it will be logged and recorded.
- Management will hold a meeting with parent to address the persistent late collection: The manager will record incidents of late collection and will discuss them with the child's parents or carers. Parents and carers will be reminded that if they persistently collect their child late more than 3 times in 1 term, they may lose their place at the Club. However if it is an extremely late collection (30mins), a meeting will need to take place prior to the child attending the provision, management reserve the right to withdraw the child's place with immediate effect.

**Child out of setting - If a child leaves the setting voluntarily a member of staff will**

- Ensure that the child is in view and safe at all times.

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- If the child walks/runs further away or if there is a risk to the child they will follow the child and try to encourage them to return. The staff member will ensure other staff members know that they have left the premises and will take a walky talkie, mobile phone and Parental Contact details with them.
- If the child will not return after 15 minutes or there is a risk to the child then the parents will be contacted.
- If the child disappears from view and cannot be found the parents will be contacted immediately.

If the parents cannot be contacted, the Police will be contacted for assistance.

- All staff will record any Missing/Lost/Uncollected Incidents in the Incident and concerns log.

### **If a child goes missing during an after school club session**

- The team leader will carry out a thorough search of all rooms within the building and the outside areas.
- The remaining children should be gathered together in one area, the register will be taken again as will a head count. Each child must then be sensitively asked the last time they saw the missing child the staff will also be asked when they last saw the child to establish who saw the missing child last and where they saw them.
- Doors and gates must be checked to see whether there has been a breach of security.
- The team leader in charge must talk to all staff to establish what happened in the moments leading up to the disappearance.
- If the child is found the team leader must sensitively talk to the child to find out exactly what transpired to result in the child being separated or separating themselves from the group. They will also discuss the importance of letting a member of staff know when they are leaving the ASC area and for what reason. When the parents come to pick up their child they should calmly be inform of what has taken place.
- All incidents of this nature should be logged on the incidents and concerns log.
- If the child is not found the lost child procedures will be followed.

**If a child goes missing from an outing, staff and volunteers must ensure the following steps are taken:**

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing must gather all the children and stay together at a designated point, carry out the register and a head count.
- A member of staff will immediately check the surrounding areas/exits/lost child points.
- Staff and volunteers are to take the remaining children back to the base.
- If the child cannot be found, the senior staff member will contact the police to report the incident and follow their advice
- The leader in charge must contact the parent or carer (alarming them as little as possible).
- The leader will fully record the incident in line with Young People Matters policies
- Management will inform Ofsted.

### **When the child is found**

- Two members of staff will care for and talk with the child, bearing in mind that the child may be unaware of having done anything wrong or, alternatively may also have been afraid and distressed and may now need comforted.
- Staff will take the opportunity to speak to the remaining children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises and why.

### **After the incident**

- A senior member of staff will sensitively discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.
- If appropriate, a short meeting will be held at the end of the session/start of the following session or a letter sent home with the children to give parents brief, accurate information about the incident, as soon as possible, for reassurance.
- Liability should not be discussed until the incident has been fully investigated by the senior manager, school and social services where applicable.
- Staff and parents should be asked to refer any enquiries they have or any enquiries from the media about the incident to the management committee.

### **Information Finding**

- The management committee carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time or by those who were on the outing.
- The leader in charge/key person must write a report about the incident detailing:

- The date and time of the incident,
- What staff/children were in the group/outing,
- When the child was last seen in the group/outing,
- What has taken place in the group/outing since then,
- The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, include interviewing staff. Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a safeguarding concern to address.
  
- The incident reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) arrangements and is recorded in the incident and concerns spreadsheet; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution. OFSTED
  
- Young People Matters insurance company is informed.