



MISSING CHILD POLICY

This policy was reviewed on:	2 nd November 2025
Date to be reviewed:	2 nd November 2028
Signature of person responsible:	M. Wittenberg
Name of signatory:	Michelle Wittenberg
Role of signatory:	Manager



POLICY STATEMENT:

The safety of the children and young adults in KEF KIDS' care is always our highest priority, both on and off premises.

Every attempt is made to ensure their security. Each participant is risk-assessed to determine the level of care required.

For many users this will mean a dedicated full-time carer; some participants may require two full-time carers. Higher-functioning users are placed in small groups of up to four with a joint carer who supports them. Children are reminded to stay with their assigned carers and are helped to understand the dangers of leaving a KEF KIDS programme without permission, and what to do if they become lost or attempt to run away.

Before each residential programme, the local police force is notified of our planned stay and provided with any required information for their procedures. In the unlikely event that a child goes missing, staff must follow the KEF KIDS Missing Child Procedure exactly.

PROCEDURES FOR A CHILD GOING MISSING / RUNNING AWAY:

CHILD GOING MISSING ON THE PREMISES:

- As soon as a child or young adult is noticed missing, the carer immediately alerts their Division Head, who then alerts the Head of Programmes. KEF KIDS uses instant walkie-talkie communication to support rapid coordination.
- The Head of Programmes and on-site security conduct a thorough search of the building and premises with all available staff.
- The Head of Programmes contacts the police to report the child missing, then contacts the parent/carers, providing a staff contact name and regular updates.
- A register is taken to ensure no other child is missing.
- Doors and gates are checked for any breach of security.
- Staff provide details of when and where the child was last seen, and this is recorded.
- A description of the child, their clothing, medical needs, medication, and any relevant behavioural information is prepared for authorities.
- The Head of Programmes notifies the Manager, who begins an investigation.

CHILD GOING MISSING ON AN EXCURSION:

- Staff immediately gather all children with their designated carers and conduct a headcount.
- One staff member searches the immediate area but does not go beyond it.
- In enclosed venues, staff contact venue security, who coordinate the search and call police if needed.
- The Head of Programmes or Manager is contacted immediately (if not present), and the incident is recorded.
- The Head of Programmes coordinates with venue security and police, and contacts the parent/carers.
- The Manager begins an investigation and informs the Management Committee where applicable.
- Police may instruct a staff member to remain at the venue until they arrive.



THE INVESTIGATION:

- Staff remain calm and avoid causing anxiety among participants.
- The Head of Programmes and Manager coordinate with parents/carers.
- The Manager collects written statements from all relevant staff.
- The staff member responsible for the child writes an incident report including:
 - Date and time of the report
 - Staff/children present and the carer responsible
 - When the child was last seen
 - Activities taking place prior to the incident
 - Estimated time the child went missing
- A conclusion is drawn regarding any breach of security.
- If police are involved, they lead the investigation. Social care may be contacted if a safeguarding concern is identified.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR where required; the local authority may investigate.
- If disciplinary action is necessary, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

MANAGING PEOPLE:

Missing child incidents are highly distressing. KEF KIDS ensures appropriate support for all involved.

- Staff may feel distressed or responsible; leadership must ensure they are treated fairly and supported.
- Parents may be extremely anxious or angry. Meetings with parents should always involve two senior staff (Head of Programmes and Manager). Aggression or threats towards staff will not be tolerated, and police may be called.
- Other children must be reassured and protected from hearing inappropriate details. Staff answer questions honestly but sensitively.
- Depending on the seriousness of the incident, staff may require additional support or counselling.
- Staff must not speak to the press. All media communication must be authorised in writing by the Trustees or Manager.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

Relevant staff and volunteers will receive induction and ongoing guidance on the contents of this policy to ensure they understand their responsibilities and follow best practice.

REVIEW OF POLICY:

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by legislative changes or the operational needs of KEF KIDS.

Responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy rests with the KEF KIDS Executive Committee and Board of Trustees.