



# Absent and Missing Children Policy

## POLICY STATEMENT

The Centre will ensure the safety and welfare of the children by ensuring clear communication and co-operation between the centre, families and the school is maintained at all times.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Service policies and documentation	Other
R88 r158-161, r168, 176	Advising of Children's absence 5.3.4 2.3	Constitution Service Philosophy Quality Improvement Plan Family Handbook Staff Handbook Fee Policy Providing a child safe environment policy Confidentiality Policy Supervision policy	Network record Keeping Factsheet Child Care Service Handbook (DEEWR) Work, Health and Safety Act (2011)

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Absent Children

In the event of a child being or intending to be absent from any normally booked sessions due to illness or any other reason, it is essential that the Centre staff are advised by a family as soon as possible. To avoid paying full fees for the missed session, 7 days' notice must be given (see cancellation policy). If it is not possible to give 7 days' notice (for example in cases of illness) the centre must still be informed prior to the session via phone or by marking absent on My family lounge. Fees for the missed session will still be due.

Written notice prior to the session is preferable however, if this notice is provided by telephone call, families are required to leave a message on the LOOSH answering machine (4708 1850) or talk to a staff member who will make a note in the communication book or mark the child absent on My family lounge. In general, verbal messages by persons other than families will not be accepted by Centre staff.

If a child does not arrive for the morning session, it is assumed that they are absent.

### 2. Missing Children at after school pick up



If a child is booked in and does not arrive for the afternoon session of care, staff will use the following procedure:

- a. Staff will ask the children if the missing child attended school that day, if they were in attendance, staff will then proceed to contact the family to enquire about their attendance
- b. If contact is unsuccessful, staff will try to contact the emergency contact persons (as per enrolment form).
- c. If the above steps do not result in gaining contact, staff will enquire at the school office and check the entrance of the school.
- d. It is noted that the school will assist in the location of the child; if the child cannot be found on school grounds and parent is unsure of location, 000 will be called by the Responsible person or school staff
- e. The Responsible person will remain in contact with the parent, school staff and police until the child is located
- f. The coordinator or responsible person will notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the incident. All efforts will be made to leave messages for the families to ensure the child's safety / wellbeing.

### **3. Acknowledgment of arrivals during after school pick up**

Staff will acknowledge children's arrival at the service during afternoon sessions by recording the child's name and arrival time at the service by way of QK Kiosk. If using transport to deliver children to the service, the service will ensure procedures are in place to record that children have been collected and that educators address children by their name to ensure the correct children have been collected. This is particularly important when employing new or casual staff.

### **4. Missing the School Bus**

If a child is booked in and is found out to have missed the bus, the following procedure will be followed:

- a. The parent will be contacted to make other arrangements for the collection of the child/ren;
- b. If the parents are not contactable, then the emergency contacts will be contacted to make other arrangements for the collection of the child/ren.

### **5. Missing or unaccounted children during booked session**



At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision is provided to ensure children are protected from harm or hazards. However, if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for, removed from the LOOSH premises that breaches the National Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of any part of the Service, a serious incident notification must be made to the Regulatory Authority.

A child may only leave the Centre in the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee or because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or other emergency.

For After School Care, educators will check that all children booked in for a session of care arrives at the expected time. If a child does not arrive at LOOSH or the nominated collection point, at the expected time educators will follow procedures outlined in the *Delivery and collection of children policy*

Educators will regularly cross-check the attendance record to ensure all children signed into the Centre are accounted for. Should an incident occur where a child is missing from LOOSH, educators, and the Nominated Supervisor will:

1. attempt to locate the child immediately by conducting a thorough search of the premises (checking any areas that a child could be locked into by accident or hiding)
2. cross check the attendance record to ensure the child hasn't been collected by an authorised person and signed out by another person
3. if the child is not located, emergency services will be contacted on 000 and the Nominated supervisor or Responsible person will notify the parent/s or guardian
4. If safe to do so, contact the Parent committee president to inform them of what has occurred or as soon as reasonably possible
5. educators will continue to search for the missing child until emergency services arrive whilst providing supervision for other children in care
6. provide information to Police such as: child's name, age, appearance, (provide a photograph), details of where the child was last sighted.

The Approved Provider or Nominate supervisor is responsible for notifying the Regulatory Authority of a serious incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

## **Revisions**



<b>Date of review</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Endorsed by</b>	<b>Date of next review</b>
June 2022	LOOSH parent committee and LOOSH staff	LOOSH parent committee	June 2023
	<b>Modifications:</b> additional steps added to "missing children at after school pickup". Added entire new section for missing or unaccounted for children during booked session		
	<b>Modifications:</b>		
	<b>Modifications:</b>		