



MISSING PERSON POLICY

Policy title	Missing Person Policy
Issue date	April 2025
Review date	April 2026
Author	Karen Double
Agreed by	Board of trustees

Missing Person Policy

This Policy is written and should be read in conjunction with LEAPS Suffolk Health and Safety policy. It contains guidance for all staff and volunteers on the emergency procedures to be enacted should an attendee be discovered to be missing.

Communicating the policy

Staff, existing parents/carers and prospective parents/carers will be informed of the policy via LEAPS Suffolk website. The policy folder is also situated at the front desk. Copies are available at the request of parents/carers.

Purpose of Missing Person Policy

The purpose of this policy statement is to give all staff and volunteers a clear understanding and framework of actions with which to respond if an attendee goes missing.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a clear procedure for each potential scenario that is understood and effectively implemented by all staff immediately if an attendee is found to be missing.
- Enable the missing attendee to be located as quickly as possible and given the appropriate level of safety and security

Standard Preventative Measures

In accordance with LEAPS Suffolk's Health and Safety policy the potential risks of an attendee going missing during the session have been minimised by the following measures.

- A risk assessment is carried out before the start of the session. Any concerns regarding the security of the building is reported to the session lead and the appropriate action taken
- All exits and entrances to the premises are secure.
- Attendees are accompanied at all times by a member of staff or two where appropriate depending on numbers and the attendee's needs.
- Risk assessments are in place for all routine activities at the session.
- All members of staff have up-to-date safeguarding training.
- Some members of staff have recognised First Aid qualifications
- Most members of staff have charged walkie talkies with them at all times and the session lead and deputy have a charged mobile phone.
- Designated members of staff have access to the written emergency contacts for each attendee. The emergency contact numbers are stored on the Club's mobile phone. On outings an emergency contact information sheet is kept by the lead.
- Staff are required to carry out head count with each attendee's name, time and whereabouts every 45 minutes throughout the session and record where each attendee is. Or whenever a transition takes place, whichever is sooner.
- At the start of the session a member of staff mans the external gate of the building to ensure each attendee is safely delivered to the session.

- At the end of the session a member of staff is on the external gate to ensure each attendee is safely returned to their parent or carer.
- During a session when transitioning from one area to another (e.g. indoors to outside) the team in that group must be adequately positioned in the group to ensure no one is left behind or can go too far ahead. The Group Lead is responsible for nominating a member of staff and ensuring everyone is clear on their role during that transition.
- On outings, a minimum of two separate head count sheets that include the attendee's name will be carried out and recorded by two members of staff every 30 minutes, detailing time and whereabouts at that time. A head count will be carried out and recorded sooner if a transition takes place.

First Steps Emergency Procedure

Upon discovering that an attendee is missing it is important that there is a clear plan of action. The following steps must be taken.

- If a voluntary helper discovers that an attendee is missing, they must immediately notify the Group Lead or the nearest available member of staff. The Session lead must also be informed. They must give the name of the person, their last-known location and when the attendee was last seen. They should then assist in the organised search for the attendee as directed by the Group Lead or Session Lead/Deputy
- If a member of staff discovers an attendee is missing, they will immediately notify the Group Lead. The Group Lead must notify the Session Lead. They must give the attendee's name, their last location and when they were last seen. They will then assist with the search as directed by the Group Lead. One member of staff will check the headcount sheet to see the area where the person was last recorded to be.
- If the manager is not present, she must be informed immediately by telephone by the Session Lead that an attendee has gone missing. The Session Lead will take charge while the search continues, taking advice from the manager if she is unable to attend

Emergency Procedure in the Premises

If an attendee is found to be missing the following action must be taken immediately:

- One member of staff will immediately leave the room to check the lavatories and all other rooms that are accessible to the attendees.
- Designated staff will stay with the other attendees. These staff will check under desks and in other possible places such as cupboards within the main room where the attendee may be concealed. They must not alarm the other attendees
- The attendees should be asked when they last saw the missing person to determine whether they witnessed anything that will assist in the search.
- The third member of staff and other staff that are available will immediately leave the building in order to check the surrounding streets in case the attendee has left via the exit.
- The first member of staff will call the third staff member outside as soon as a search within the building has been completed.
- If the attendee has not been found at that point the police must be called.

- The parents must then be informed that their child has gone missing and the police have been called. The emergency phone numbers for each attendee's parents and carers and their nominated emergency contacts are kept on the Session Lead's clipboard and on a password-protected document on the laptop.
- The third member of staff and other available staff will continue conducting the exterior search until the attendee has been found or the police have arrived.
- If the Manager is absent, she must be informed as soon as possible

Additional Emergency Procedures

Once the police have arrived in any of the above circumstances the supervisor will ensure that all staff and volunteers follow the instructions of the police officers in attendance. They can be given a photograph of the attendee from the folder kept in the locked cupboard in the room. On advice from the Police in attendance, the supervisor will also inform Social Services and any other relevant agencies of the attendee's disappearance.

Resolution Procedures

When a missing attendee has been located and safely returned to Club, their parents or carers must be informed of the incident. The manager and deputy will conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the attendee's disappearance. This will assist in identifying any factors that need to be addressed by the organisation or communicated to the parents to prevent a recurrence of an attendee going missing.

This review process must be documented, and the report saved in both hard copy and password-protected electronic copy to ensure best practice. Any changes to the organisation's policies and procedures considered necessary by the manager and must then be instituted immediately. Ofsted must be notified if a person goes missing for an extended period or there are concerns for their safety.