



ReConnect

Missing Children Policy

1. The Missing Children Policy of ReConnect outlines the procedures and responsibilities to be followed in the event that a child under our care goes missing. This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and aligns with applicable laws and regulations concerning missing children.
2. Children missing education (CME) is defined as those who are of compulsory school age but are either not registered at a school or not receiving suitable education in place of a school setting. CME may be at significant risk of not meeting their academic potential and underachieving.
3. Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)
The Designated Child Protection Officer for ReConnect is Chris Sodey. The DCPO is responsible for implementing and overseeing the procedures outlined in this policy, as well as coordinating with relevant authorities and providing support to staff, volunteers, and families.
4. Prevention Measures
 - a) Registration and Identification: All children participating in our programmes or activities must be registered, and their essential information (including emergency contacts and any relevant medical conditions or special needs) must be collected and maintained in a secure and up-to-date manner.
 - b) Supervision and Accountability: Adequate supervision measures will be implemented to ensure children are under the constant care and supervision of responsible adults during activities. Staff and volunteers will be assigned specific roles and responsibilities to monitor and track the presence of children.
 - c) Check-In/Check-Out Procedures: Clear check-in and check-out procedures will be implemented to accurately record the attendance and departure of children. These procedures should include verification of authorised individuals picking up children and ensuring all children are accounted for at the end of activities.
 - d) First Day Calling: If a child is absent without prior notice, a first-day call will be made to the child's emergency contacts to confirm their whereabouts and ensure their safety.
5. Immediate Response to a Missing Child
 - a) Alerting Staff and Volunteers: In the event that a child is discovered missing, all staff and volunteers must be immediately notified. A search of the immediate vicinity should be conducted to ensure the child has not wandered off within the premises.
 - b) Contacting the DCPO: The Designated Child Protection Officer must be notified without delay. They will take charge of the situation, coordinating the necessary actions and contacting the child's emergency contacts.
 - c) Contacting Authorities: If the child is not located within a reasonable timeframe, local law enforcement and child protection agencies should be contacted to report the missing child. The DCPO will facilitate communication and provide the necessary information to these authorities.
 - d) Reporting to the Local Authority: If a child is absent and not receiving suitable education for 10 consecutive days, the Local Authority must be informed, and the child should be officially reported as 'missing education.'

6. Communication and Support

a) Communication with Families: The child's emergency contacts and parents/guardians must be informed immediately about the situation and efforts taken to locate the missing child. Clear and accurate information should be provided while maintaining sensitivity and empathy.

b) Support for Staff, Volunteers, and Other Children: Adequate support and counselling services should be made available to staff, volunteers, and other children who may be affected by the incident. Confidentiality and privacy should be maintained while addressing their emotional needs.

7. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Missing Children Policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective. Any lessons learned from incidents or near-misses will be taken into account to improve prevention measures and response procedures.

8. Reporting and Contact Information

If you have any concerns about a missing child or require further information regarding our Missing Children Policy, please contact the Designated Child Protection Officer, Chris Sodey, at 07929 279129

Signed: Chris Sodey

Position: Lead Coordinator

Date: 16.10.24