

Policy Statement

Activity Centres Inc. aims to ensure the safety and welfare of the children by ensuring clear communication and co-operation between the Service, families and School. The Service is not responsible for children's welfare until they have been placed into their care. Clear procedures on absent children will be followed at all times.

Considerations

- ✓ Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018
- ✓ Education and Care Services National Quality Standards 2018
- ✓ Children Legislation Amendment Act 2009 (Wood Inquiry Recommendations)
- ✓ ACI Policies and Procedures

Procedures

Absent Children

- ☐ Families must advise the Service if their child will be absent on a day that they are booked into care via email, text message or phone.
- ☐ Parents must indicate the expected amount of days the child will be absent.
- ☐ Families will be informed of this requirement on enrolment and through the family information booklet detailing the importance of Educators knowing of a child's absence.
- ☐ Educators must note any absence in the diary, on the day the child is to be absent - Am/Pm/all day
- ☐ Should a child not be present when booked in, the Educator marking the roll will ensure that:
 - the other children are asked if they know where the child might be.
 - an Educator approaches the School office and /or teaching Staff for information regarding the child's attendance at School.
 - all the other children are well supervised during this time.
- ☐ If the School / teaching Staff can confirm the child was absent from School:
 - Educator will note in the diary for follow-up with family
 - Coordinator /Responsible Person will inform the family within a reasonable amount of time the importance of informing the Service in advance of any absences
 - the current non notification fee will apply.
- ☐ If the child was at School, the Educator marking the roll will ensure the family is contacted at the earliest time possible to find the whereabouts of the child:
 - If the child is with the parent, or they can confirm the safety of their child, the Educator should remind them of their responsibility to contact the Service if their child is absent on a booked day.
 - the current non notification fee will apply.
 - If the Educator cannot contact the parent:
 - call all phone numbers and leave messages on any answering machines/voice mail for parents/guardians.
 - call any emergency contacts listed on the child's enrolment form.
 - continue to try and make contact with the child's family.
- ☐ If the parent / guardian or emergency contact person states that the child should be in care they are considered Missing Children.

Missing children

- ☐ Should a child not be in care when parents have stated they should be the child will be considered missing.
- ☐ The Responsible Person will ensure that either they or another Educator ensures the following steps are taken:
 - ask the other children of their knowledge of where the child might be.
 - approach the School office and teaching Staff for any leads on where the child may be.
 - follow any leads on where the child may have gone, home with friends, training, music lessons etc.
 - keep the family well informed of the situation.
 - ensure all the other children are well supervised during this time.

- ☐ If the child is still not found then the Responsible Person will:
 - contact the Police.
 - continue to keep in contact with the School and child's family.
 - ensure all the other children are well supervised during this time.

Run away children

- ☐ On advice from Regulatory Authority, Educators are not to chase children who run away from the Service as it puts the remaining children with incorrect Staff:child.
- ☐ The following steps will be taken:
 - Families are informed on enrolment that Educators will not chase a child who runs away from the Service.
 - Educators will be informed of any special needs children that may wonder away from the Service.
 - If the family is unable to be contacted an authorised person listed on the child's enrolment form will be contacted.
 - If Educators are unable to contact a parent, guardian or authorised person then the Police will be informed.
 - If the child is hurt or injured in anyway outside the Service grounds, the Organisations Management, Educators or any other authorised person will not be held liable as it is our Organisations Policy that children must remain within the boundaries set out by the Educators.

Checklist for Staff

- ☒ Document any absence in the diary; on the day the child is to be absent, stating if it is AM, PM or all day.
- ☒ If a child is not at roll call, you must locate their whereabouts.
- ☒ If Educators cannot find the child and the child's family has said they should be in care, Staff need to:
 - Ask the parent to contact any of the child's friends and families to find the whereabouts of the child
 - Educators need to ask the other children and School Staff if they know where the child may be.
- ☒ The Police and Regulatory Authority will need to be contacted if the child cannot be found within a reasonable amount of time.

_____ end of policy _____

Policy is only endorsed if initialled by 2 members of the Management Committee

Endorsed by the Management Committee on the 27th March 2019

Absent and Missing Children Policy is to be reviewed by the 27th March 2022