

Menadue Camps

MISSING CHILDREN POLICY (EMERGENCY PROCEDURES)

Emergency procedures when a child is discovered to be missing

This policy is written and should be read in conjunction with the both the Menadue camps safeguarding policy.

Purpose and aims of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to give all camp leaders guidance on how to respond and who to inform should they discover a child is missing and the subsequent procedures to be followed when a child is located.

Missing child – Onsite

Upon discovering a child is missing immediately notify the Camp Manager and/or DSL. If they are not available for whatever reason they must inform another leader.

The following procedures shall then be followed:

Stage 1: Organise an onsite methodical search of the following areas:

- Inside **all** tents
- Both fields (including walking the perimeter hedge) – especially around the top area of the large field
- In, around **and under** all vehicles (including caravans)
- All toilet and shower blocks (including leader facilities)
- Barn, studio and other outbuildings – All area must be checked even if they are ‘locked’
- Farmhouse, the cottage, and dormitories should be fully checked
- The area around the back of the farmhouse and cottage, including the footpath area
- Fenced area around the gas storage cylinders
- The lane and adjacent gates – top to bottom

If appropriate, contact the individual on their mobile phone to ascertain their location and ask known friends/tent group of their knowledge of the whereabouts of the young person.

Stage 2: Contact parents/carers, conduct an offsite search and contact the police

If this search does not discover the missing child within a reasonable time and the Camp Manager and/or DSL are satisfied that the child is not on the premises, the child’s parents/carers will be contacted and informed of the situation.

At the same time as contacting the child’s parents/carers an immediate search of the area around the site will be started, this should include:

- Adjacent fields
- Local roads, within a one/two-mile radius

If the child is not found after stage 1 is complete, the Camp Manager and/or DSL will inform the police of the child’s missing status, an up-to-date description of the child and provide to them the camp photograph.

Thereafter the camp leader will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

Missing child – Offsite, children in supervised groups

Upon discovering a child is missing immediately notify the Camp Manager and/or DSL. If they are not available for whatever reason they must inform another leader.

The following procedures shall then be followed.

Stage 1: An organised search of the area in which the group has recently been should be immediately undertaken.

If appropriate, contact the individual on their mobile phone to ascertain their location, and ensure they return in a timely manner. (It may be appropriate to organise a leader to meet them).

Stage 2: Contact parents/carers and police - offsite search

If the child is not found within 30 minutes the Camp Manager and/or DSL will inform the child's parents/carers and police with an up-to-date description of the child.

Thereafter the camp leader will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

Missing child – Offsite, children in unsupervised groups

If a child is later than 15 minutes arriving back to an agreed meeting point inform the Camp Manager and/or DSL.

The following procedures shall then be followed.

Stage 1: If appropriate, contact the individual on their mobile phone to ascertain their location, and ensure they return in a timely manner (it may be appropriate to organise a leader to meet them).

Stage 2: If other members of the group have returned, take time to ascertain the last known location of the individual. An immediate search of the local area shall be undertaken.

Stage 3: Contact parents/carers and police - offsite search

If the individual is not found within 30 minutes the Camp Manager and/or DSL will inform the child's parents/carers and police with an up-to-date description of the child.

Thereafter the camp leader will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

Missing child – Offsite, children at supervised facilities

Upon discovering a child is missing immediately notify the Camp Manager and/or DSL.

The following procedures shall then be followed.

Stage 1: An immediate search of the facilities (and if appropriate the area outside the facilities) shall be undertaken and a leader to inform the facilities management to enable them to implement their policies and procedures.

Stage 2: Contact parents/carers and police - offsite search

If the individual is not found within 30 minutes the Camp Manager and/or DSL will inform the child's parents and police with an up-to-date description of the child.

Thereafter the camp leader will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

Investigations:

Parents/carers and police to be notified of child's return if they have been reported missing.

Safeguarding Lead or Camp Manager to complete a 'safe and well' check followed by a return to camp interview to understand the reasons for the child going missing and to identify any factors that need to be addressed by the camp or communicated to the parents to prevent a recurrence of the child going missing and any further support needed by the child

Suggested questions for a 'safe and well' check:

- Are you well?
- Why did you go missing?
- Where did you go?
- What did you do during the time you were missing?
- Did you meet up with anyone?

Incident form to be completed by DSL or Camp Manager who has dealt with the matter.

Informing the camp trustees:

The camp trustees must be informed in all cases where the police had to be contacted.

Policy Review:

This policy was first produced in July 2017 and reviewed in subsequent years.

Update	Areas updated	Update by
July 2017	Policy first written	Annabel Harris Louise Gregg
February 2021	Reviewed	Andy Curtis Hazel Bennett Annabel Harris Louise Gregg
January 2022	Reviewed	Andy Curtis Hazel Bennett Annabel Harris Louise Gregg
20/1/2024	Safeguarding policy updated around safeguarding training, facilities, key contact details and flow diagram	Andy Curtis Hazel Bennett Annabel Harris Louise Gregg

17/5/2025	Added some suggested questions for the 'safe and well' check	Andy Curtis Hazel Sercombe Annabel Harris Louise Gregg
11/6/2026	Reviewed	Louise Gregg Annabel Harris