

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures



Title of Policy: Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults

Effective Date: December 2018

Review Date: December 2021

Policy Number: 1

Policy Administrator: Tracy Kinghorn

Policy authorised by: Nicola Williams

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

Introduction

Allsorts Support Services CIC & Allsorts Community (Which will be referred to as the organisation throughout this policy).

We want all service users to have successful and fulfilling lives.

This policy document should be considered in conjunction with all other relevant duties, policies and guidance.

Aim of the Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning the organisation's approach to risk Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults for all staff.

The policy has the following aims:

- To maintain a safe and healthy environment for all service users and employees.
- To comply with applicable laws and legislation.

This policy is informed by the organisation's understanding of its statutory duties as an employer.

Policy Statement

This policy sets out the values, principles and policies underpinning this organisation's approach to the discovery that a service user is missing.

Through its policy and procedures the organisation also seeks to comply with the requirements to report serious instances through the local Adults Safeguarding Board's procedures and take the appropriate actions in the event of accidents or in the event of a service user going missing from the setting or outing.

Some of the service users in this organisation may be limited in their mobility. Some may also be confused or easily disoriented and therefore become easily lost. For these reasons a service user going "missing" would be an obvious cause for concern. However, it is accepted that we have many active residents who value their mobility and independence and spend time out in the local community supported by Allsorts Support Services CIC without raising concern. Thus, service users need for close supervision must always be

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

balanced against their rights to make their own decisions regarding their movements and whereabouts.

Preventing Missing Persons Incidents

Staff must remain vigilant at all times and try to be aware of exactly where vulnerable service users are at any given time. Service users who are prone to wandering, or who may be at risk of getting lost by reason of their mental state, will have this identified during risk assessment and a suitable entry made in their care plan. Such service users are kept under observation as appropriate to the level of risk identified.

Raising the Alarm

Staff should raise the alarm immediately they suspect that a service user may be missing by informing the person in charge or manager.

Situations where a missing persons report should be made include the following:

- Where a resident cannot be found in the setting or grounds and no arrangements have been made for an outing, activity or walk.
- When a service user is out in the community and has wandered off.

Procedure in the Event of a Service user Being Reported as Missing

When it becomes clear that a service user is missing it is vital that all the members of staff work as a team and follows a clearly defined procedure. Upon receiving a missing persons report the person in charge or manager should carry out the following procedure.

- The person in charge or manager should:
- Alert all staff to the possibility of the service user being missing and ask for information/sightings
- Ascertain who last saw the service user and question them about the service user.
- Where necessary tactfully question relevant service users about the missing service user.
- Arrange a thorough search of the setting and grounds, checking that the service user has not become lost or trapped. Knowledge of the service user and their usual movements and habits should be employed (ie staff should search their favourite places) and staff may be dispatched to tour

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

the vicinity. It is important here that the person in charge or manager has a structured plan to their search and does not just send staff off in a haphazard way. At the end of the search the person in charge or manager must be confident that the setting and its grounds have been systematically searched, including the toilet and favourite spots.

- On no account should other service users be allowed to involve themselves in any search of the grounds and sufficient staff should always remain in the setting to ensure its proper running and the safety of other service users.
- If the settings manager is not at the setting, contact her to inform of the missing service user and give details of the search thus far.
- If no sign of the service user can be found, or if information is provided from either staff or other service users that raises concern that the service user may be at risk, then the local police should be alerted and their advice and assistance sought.
- Contact members of the missing service user family if they have not already been contacted.
- The person in charge or manager should, at the earliest opportunity, fill out an incident form and make a suitable note of events in the service user's notes. Times of actions and decisions should be noted as accurately as possible.
- Once the service user has been found, it is essential that all the parties who were advised of the emergency are contacted again and informed that the search has been concluded.

If at any stage the person in charge is unsure of what to do then the manager Nicola Williams should be contacted immediately for advice.

Procedure to Follow after a Missing Persons Incident

Staff must record any significant incident on the service user file and the accident/incident records, which should be made available for inspection. The recording should include the times the person went missing and was returned and the actions taken for the person to be returned.

If the service user was injured or harmed or was seriously at risk of being harmed as a result of going missing the management will notify the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Unit, who might wish to investigate further depending on the circumstances.

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

If a complaint is made against a staff member as a result of a service user going missing, the matter will be investigated through the complaints procedure. The investigation will include any possible misconduct by the staff member responsible as a result of the person going missing through its established disciplinary procedures.

All staff is made aware of the possible consequences of a service user whom they are supervising going missing.

Having effective, up to date and easy to follow policies and written documents minimises risk to service user's, employees and the organisation itself and can ensure that statutory requirements, standards and regulations are understood and provides a framework to monitor compliance. To ensure the organisation provides a robust and clear framework, the organisation has developed this policy to manage processes to achieve compliance and effective co-ordination across the organisation.

Through this policy the organisation will ensure that there is a process whereby all policy documentation is consistent. In addition, there will be an effective process for managing and reviewing policies and any associated written documents on a regular basis, to ensure that documentation remains legally compliant and actions are undertaken in a safe and efficient manner.

This policy will ensure that the organisation meets its legal responsibilities and provides a clear organisational approach to documentation.

Policy Statement

The organisation will provide a structure for the development of policies and other written documents.

This will include:

- Ensuring that staff has access to the most recent copies of the organisation's documents.
- Establishing a control procedure for all policies and other written documents to ensure that those in use are current and relevant.
- Ensuring that the equality impact assessment process is completed on all policies and procedures.
- Ensuring systems exist to monitor the use of, and compliance with, all written documents

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

- Developing and maintaining a central database of policies, procedures and written documents
- Maintaining an archive of past written documents, for reference and to meet legal requirements.

All policies and other written documents

It is the responsibility of the Policy administrator to ensure that when a document is revised, a copy of the original is forwarded to the Manager. Once revised policies and other written documents are approved, the Manager will pass on to all employees.

Staff will be notified of newly approved/revised policies, procedures and guiding documents within one week of approval by the manager.

Non-compliance with this Policy

In the unlikely event of a member of staff not respecting the policy, the organisation's manager should attempt to resolve the situation informally in the first instance. Ultimately, repeated breaches of the policy will result in disciplinary procedures and may lead to dismissal.

Policy Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Policy administrator to keep all policies and procedures up to date. The manager will identify how any policy or written document will be implemented. This will include liaising directly with the policy administrator in order to ensure that staff training requirements have been highlighted. Overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed rests with the organisation's Manager.

Information on the policy will be:

- Circulated to all staff
- Provided to all new employees

Training

All new staff will be required to read all policies as part of their induction process.

Missing Child / Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

Review Process

The Manager requires that certain policies must be reviewed annually. These are:

- Safeguarding policy
- All other policy documents must be reviewed no later than three years after initial approval and regularly reviewed on the same basis thereafter.
- Documents will be reviewed more frequently if changes in legislation or the service requires it.
- It is the responsibility of the policy administrator will ensure that documents are reviewed in line with their review dates.

Where a review necessitates considerable change to the previous document, the process will be treated as though it is a new document.

Minor amendments can be notified by distributing copies of the policy to appropriate recipients, with a cover sheet with the changes are and their implications. This sheet should be kept with the original.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or at an earlier date if changes are required due to changes in government advice.

