



SUPPORT SERVICES

REGISTERED NUMBER CIC 11373253
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MISSING CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY & PROCEDURES

Title of Policy: Missing Child/Vulnerable Adults

Effective Date: October 2019

Review Date: October 2020

Policy Number: 2

Policy Authorised by: Nicola Williams

Introduction

Allsorts Support Services CIC (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.

Policy statement

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

Through this policy and procedures, the Organisation also seeks to comply with the requirements to report serious instances through the local 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 disorientated 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 service users who value their mobility and independence and spent time out in the local community supported by the Organisation without raising concern. Thus, service users need for close supervision must always be 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 if they suspect that a service user may be missing by informing the person in charge or Manager.

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

- Where a service user 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 follow 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 (i.e. staff should search their favourite places) and staff may be dispatched to tour 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 toilets 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 raise 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's family/carers if they have not already been contacted.
- The person in charge or the 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.

Procedures to follow after a Missing Person Incident

Staff must record any significant incident on the service user's 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.

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 and as a result of the person going missing through its established disciplinary procedures.

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

Training

All staff are trained in the missing persons procedure and know their role in the event of a search.

New staff are introduced to this policy and procedure in their induction training.