

## **UNCOLLECTED/LOST CHILDREN/VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

In the event of anyone not being collected by their parent / carer every effort will be made to resolve the situation with the minimum of distress to the individual concerned.

- A Health & Information form will be completed by parents/carers for all children/vulnerable adults giving their own contact details and whenever possible a further two emergency contacts and a mobile phone number should also be provided. These forms will always be available when any member attends any Forest Pulse activity without their parents/carers.
- The child/vulnerable adult will be reassured, and distracted to reduce anxiety.
- Attempts will be made to contact parents/carers using all land and mobile numbers available.
- Attempt all other known emergency contacts.
- Wait reasonable amount of time (up to 30 minutes), and check phone lines working, before taking further action.
- If Forest Pulse staff are able to remain on site the child can stay with them whilst efforts are made to contact parents.
- The close working relationship senior staff have with families means it may be appropriate for them to provide short-term care for the child/young person which may necessitate them taking the child to their own home, or an alternative community venue, in an emergency. If appropriate this may be delegated to another Forest Pulse representative, providing they meet all the criteria (e.g. DBS, insurance cover etc). However, continued efforts will be made to contact parents/carers to obtain verbal permission for this at the earliest opportunity.
- In the event that the individual's parents/carers cannot be located the relevant Gloucestershire County Council Care Team, the Children's or Adult Helpdesk or the Emergency Duty Team will be informed. With their approval, it might be appropriate for the child to remain with an authorised Forest Pulse representative until parents/carers are located.
- Take advice and direction from Gloucestershire County Council on further action at this point.
- Notify Ofsted of the situation if a child under eight years of age is involved if parents cannot be contacted and alternative child care arrangement are required.

In the event of a child/vulnerable adult being lost during a Forest Pulse activity when the parents/carers are not present all efforts to find the individual will be low-key to avoid other children becoming distressed.

- The situation will be reported immediately to the person in charge.
- All attempts will be made to locate the child as a matter of urgency.
- If using an outside facility, the staff of the facility will be notified.
- If the child is not located after this initial search the parents will be contacted to inform them of the situation and find out if they have any suggestions, e.g. places the child might have hidden before etc.
- The police will be contacted, informing parents as soon as possible if this has not already been done.
- Charity Manager/Director to be informed at earliest opportunity if not present. The Trustee Management Committee, through the Chair, Vice-Chair or Safeguarding Trustee, to be informed of the situation if the child if cannot be found and the police are involved.
- The relevant Care Team within the appropriate Local Authority, and Ofsted (if child under 8), to be informed as appropriate.
- Procedures and policies to be reviewed and risk assessment put in place if required.

**Reviewed and Approved by Trustees 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Signed on Behalf of the Charity ..... Name/Role .....