

Lost Child Policy

Statement of Intent

This is the Lost Child Policy Statement of the:

Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam (Registered Charity no. NIC107983)

The Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam Trustee Board is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and young people attending its events. This Lost Child Policy outlines the procedures to be followed in the event that a child is found without their parent or guardian, or is reported missing during an event.

The Trustee Board recognises the importance of responding promptly and calmly to such situations and has designated the event's front desk as the collection point for all lost children. All incidents involving lost or found children must be recorded in the Lost Person Log.

Volunteers are expected to follow the established procedures, which include gathering identifying information, searching the venue using discreet communication methods, and escalating to venue security or police where necessary. If a child is reluctant to go with an adult, steps must be taken to verify the adult's identity and ensure the child's safety.

This policy applies to all volunteers and trustees at Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam events and is designed to provide a clear, compassionate, and effective response to safeguard every child in our care.

Signature of Chair:



Name: James Dougan
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Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

Signature of DSO:



Name: Adam Cunningham
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Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

In the event of a child going missing or a child is found without a parent/guardian they are to be directed to a collection point. This is the front desk of the event location. Once the lost child has been found and returned to their parent/guardian an entry must be made in the Lost Person Log book.

If a child is found without a parent/guardian

- When a child is found without a parent/guardian, they should be approached and asked if they know where their parent/guardian is.
- If they do not know where their parent/guardian is, they should be escorted to the collection point at the front desk, while other volunteers search for the parent/guardian.
- While escorting them to the front desk the volunteer should ask gently for as much information for identifying the parent/guardian as possible. Such as:
 - Name
 - Name of parents/guardians
 - Where they last saw them
 - Identifying clothes and features of the parent/guardian
- If a person other than a volunteer brings the lost child to the collection point they should be asked for as much information as possible also.
- A search will then be started to find the child's parent/guardian, this can be done through these means:
 - Walkie talkies
 - Mobile phones
 - Word of mouth
- It would be ideal to outline a simple code system for events like this so that the parent's and child's information are not divulged to anyone who could overhear
- In the event that the parent/guardian is not found within the building and cannot be contacted, this may require escalation to the police.

If a child is reported missing

- First and foremost it is important to reassure the parent/guardian that there is a procedure for this that will be put into effect immediately
- The volunteer must ask for as much identifying information about the child as possible. The following are examples:
 - Name
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Ethnic Origin

- Hair Colour
- Eye Colour
- Build
- Distinctive physical features
- Clothing
- Last seen location
- Where the child was supposed to be
- Who they were last seen with
- The parent/guardian should be encouraged to return often to the collection point at the front desk, if they decide to continue searching for their child, in case the child has been found.
- A search should then be started and communication with other volunteers should be done through the following means throughout the search.
 - Walkie talkies
 - Mobile phones
 - Word of mouth
- It would be ideal to outline a simple code system for events like this so that the parent's and child's information are not divulged to anyone who could overhear
- If the child is not found within 15 minutes, then this should be escalated to the venue security staff.
- If the child is still not found within a further 15 minutes, the police should be called.

Finally if a child is reluctant to go with an adult

- Speak gently to the child, away from the adult and ask why.
- Ask for proof of ID and booking email address from the adult
- Escalate the matter to the police if necessary

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any significant changes in the safeguarding legislation.

For further guidance, contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).