Guidance Note (GUI) **6**

**Lost and Found Children**

**Accommodation**

Where possible, provide a highly visible and signed Lost Children Point that is weatherproof. It is suggested that this should also be secure, with no direct access to the public, separate from first aid area, having dedicated toilets and a collection point that is separate from where there are other children being cared for.

**Staffing**

At least one person should have 2 years relevant experience in looking after children. You should also consider whether staff need to have the appropriate DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check (formerly CRB) or have attended safeguarding training. All staff must receive briefing and written instructions relating to emergency procedures in case of evacuation. A minimum of two people is required to staff the lost children area at any one time – a team of three will allow rotation to give sufficient cover over a long time.

**Child Protection Awareness Training**

All staff should have attended a course that includes information on:

* Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
* Defining abuse and neglect.
* Myths and realities in child protection
* Signs and symptoms of physical sexual abuse emotional neglect.
* Helpful responses when a child confides – what to avoid and protecting yourself.

**Care Guidelines**

* Children should not be left in the sole care of one person.
* No food or drink, except plain water should be given to children in case of allergies.
* The person claiming a child should complete a form to include their name and address and show relevant form of identification.
* If using radios for communication at the event, a dedicated radio channel for lost children should be assigned on the radio network.

**Found Child Procedure**

* Police/stewards should make immediate contact with the lost children point in case the parent/guardian is there, to advise that a child has been found.
* The child is then to be immediately escorted by a steward/Police officer to the lost children point.
* A form must then be completed in the presence of the steward/Police officer to detail where the child was found.
* Details of the child are to be forwarded to Event Control (via mobile phone).
* Event Control must request a message to be relayed over the PA system. (No details of the lost child should be relayed over the PA system without the permission of the Police officer in charge).
* Event Control should also issue details to all Police/stewards regarding the lost child in case they are contacted by a parent/guardian.
* If the child is reluctant to go with the collecting adult, then a second opinion should be sought, and / or a form of identification should be requested (preferably showing their name and home address) before the child is released. In the event of any uncertainty, it will be the responsibility of the Police to determine if the child should be allowed to go with the person who is claiming them.

**Lost child procedure**

* If a missing child report is made to Police/stewards, then they should contact the lost children point to ascertain whether the child is there.
* If the child is there, then parents/guardians should be directed or escorted directly to the lost children point.
* If the child is not there, then parents/guardians should be directed to the lost children point to complete a missing child form with a description of the child. Details of the missing child should then be forwarded to event control (via mobile phone).
* Event Control should then issue a message to all Police/stewards so that they can remain vigilant. No details of the lost child should be relayed over the PA system without the permission of the Police officer in charge.
* Any Police officer/steward finding the lost child must contact the lost children point immediately. The child must then be escorted immediately to this point.