

LOST CHILD PROCEDURE

This procedure outlines the steps to take if a child goes missing or if there is an emergency while off-site (e.g. walks, toddler groups, farm visits, school runs, etc).

HOW DO WE REDUCE THE RISK OF A CHILD GOING MISSING?

We will:

- Always stay within legal ratio
- Know the area well, and plan the route in advance
- Know the children well and assess which ones may need extra supervision
- Bring safety equipment such as high-vis jackets, ID bracelets, reins, or wrist straps
- Use bracelets with my contact number if we're in an unfamiliar area
- Regularly count the children throughout the outing (on arrival, after transitions, and before returning)
- Talk to the children before we go, explaining where we're going, what to expect, and how to stay safe and stay together
- Encourage older or more confident children to model good behaviour for others

From September 2025, the EYFS framework emphasises building a culture of safety by helping

children understand and assess risk themselves. We support this through regular conversations and routines.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF A CHILD WERE TO GO MISSING?

We would:

- Immediately look around and call the child's name loudly
- Keep the other children close and reassure them
- Raise the alarm to others nearby, asking for help searching
- Inform security staff if in a public place (e.g. shopping centre), who may assist with CCTV
- Give a full description of the child to anyone helping in the search
- Continue checking on the other children to ensure they remain safe and calm

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE CHILD WAS NOT FOUND WITHIN 5 MINUTES?

We would:

- Call the police immediately, giving the child's name, age, last known location, clothing and description
- Contact the child's parents/carers to inform them of the situation and that the police have been notified

INCIDENT REPORTING & NOTIFICATIONS

We Would:

- Any time a child goes missing (even briefly), we will complete an **incident form** as soon as possible, detailing what happened, how it was resolved, and what action was taken.
- Parents/carers will be asked to sign the form to confirm they've been informed.
- We will report the incident to **Ofsted** or my registering agency **within 14 days**, as required by safeguarding regulations.
- We will also notify my **insurance provider**.
- If any complaints arise from the incident, We will follow our **Complaints Policy** in full.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT OFF-SITE?

- We always carry emergency contact details and essential medical information when off-site.
- We will follow the same procedure as above in any emergency situation, including informing parents and calling emergency services if needed.

- A travel first-aid kit is always taken on outings.
- Any emergency medication (e.g. allergy pens, inhalers) is also brought with us, provided it has been signed for by parents/carers.

If parents are called during an emergency, they are expected to come immediately or send one of their agreed emergency contacts. While waiting, a child may be left with another responsible adult who is known to us and listed as backup cover.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE CHILDCARE PRACTITIONER HAD A SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR HAD TO LEAVE URGENTLY?

An adult from the list at the end of this document will be called in where possible, but others may be used if these people are unavailable.

Children cannot be left with backup cover for longer than is absolutely necessary.

Parents will be informed as soon as possible who is the designated adult.

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