

OUTINGS POLICY

It is our policy to keep children safe when going outside the setting—whether that's picking up from school, walking to parks, or travelling by car or public transport.

Outings are also an important part of children's learning and enjoyment, and we make sure they're both safe and meaningful.

HOW ARE CHILDREN KEPT SAFE WHEN TRAVELLING OR ON OUTINGS?

- Car seats are checked regularly to make sure they're properly fitted and are replaced if damaged or showing signs of age.
- Our car is regularly serviced, fully insured for business use (including childminding), and has a valid MOT.
- We carry emergency contact details for every child whenever we're out.
- We talk to children (and parents) about road safety, staying together, and 'stranger danger' in an age-appropriate way.
- Any damaged or unsafe equipment in public play areas will not be used and will be reported to the local authority.
- Children always stay with their key person.
- Younger children are fastened into buggies. Depending on their age and confidence, others may hold hands, hold the buggy, or wear wrist straps or harnesses.

Children must normally use a car seat until they're 12 years old or 135 cm tall, whichever comes first. (gov.uk)

HOW ARE CHILDREN KEPT SAFE ON OUTINGS?

- We carry out a risk assessment before each outing. We think about the children attending, how we're getting there, the location itself, the weather, and any other specific risks—and we plan how to reduce or remove those risks.
- Parents are asked to provide suitable clothing depending on the weather (coats, hats, gloves, waterproofs, sun hats, sun cream, etc).
- While we're no longer legally required to ask for permission for outings, we do our best to let you know in advance. Sometimes, we may go out spontaneously if we think it will really benefit the children's learning or wellbeing.
- We take spare clothes, wipes, and any other essentials with us every time we go out.

WHY OUTINGS MATTER (SEPTEMBER 2025 UPDATE)

From September 2025, the EYFS highlights that outings support children's independence, curiosity, and connection with the world around them.

Children learn practical life skills, like how to behave in public places, cross roads safely, and interact confidently with others.

We build children's confidence by involving them—like helping to find signs, notice nature, or talk about where we're going.

Risk is managed, not avoided. Children are supported to take small, safe risks—like climbing, balancing, or trying new things—while being carefully supervised.

WILL MY CHILD TRAVEL BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT OR CAR?

- There may be occasions where we travel outside the local area. If using public transport or the car, parents/carers will be informed in advance.
- We have valid car insurance that covers childminding business use and have completed a detailed travel risk assessment to ensure the children's safety.
- All children will have age-appropriate car seats or booster cushions, correctly fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

HOW ARE CHILDREN KEPT SAFE AROUND ANIMALS?

- Children are taught to respect all living creatures, be sensitive to their needs, and avoid disturbing their habitats.
- We always wash our hands after handling animals, regardless of the type.
- Children are taught not to feed animals without adult permission to ensure it is safe.
- If your child has a fear of animals or has had a traumatic experience, please inform us in advance. We will be sensitive to this and avoid certain animals where possible.
- Children will be taught about potential risks, like sharp teeth or claws, and how to behave safely around animals, such as being quiet, moving slowly, and not grabbing.
- We will discuss the difference between wild animals and pets, and children will learn to always ask an animal's owner before stroking or handling it, even if the animal appears friendly.

"A happy dog does not necessarily mean a safe dog. For example, a dog may be happy when playing with a toy, but that doesn't mean it's safe to approach." (Source: PDSA)

HOW ARE CHILDREN KEPT SAFE AROUND DOGS?

- If approached by an unfamiliar dog, children are taught to:
 - Stay calm and quiet.
 - Stand still and avoid running or turning their backs.
 - Keep their hands close to their body, fingers in a loose fist.
 - Ask the dog's owner for permission before petting it.
- If a dog is off-lead and a child is nervous, I will ask the owner to recall the dog. We will avoid eye contact with the dog and follow the steps above.
- If a dog becomes aggressive, I will protect the children as best I can, call for help, and use distraction techniques if necessary.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF A CHILD WENT MISSING?

If a child were to go missing, I 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 in searching.

- Alert any security staff, who can assist with the search, potentially using CCTV (in secure areas like shopping centres).
- Provide a detailed description of the child to those involved in the search.

If the child is not found within 5 minutes:

- I will alert the police, providing the child's name and full description.
- Contact the child's parents/carers to inform them of the situation.

Any incident where a child goes missing, whether on an outing or from the setting, will be recorded on an incident form. Parents/carers will be asked to sign this form to acknowledge they've been informed. I will also report the incident to Ofsted/my registering agency and my insurance company. Complaints, if any, will be handled according to our Complaints Policy.

UPDATED: JUNE 2025
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