

**Missing Child Policy**

At Little Acorns Kindergarten, the safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We take every precaution to ensure children are safe and secure at all times, both on-site and during outings. In the unlikely event that a child goes missing, the following procedures will be followed immediately and rigorously.

**Prevention Measures**

* Secure entry and exit points at all times
* Regular headcounts throughout the day
* Accurate attendance registers
* High staff-to-child ratios and active supervision
* Clear handover procedures at drop-off and collection

**Procedure if a Child Goes Missing On-Site**

1. **Immediate Alert**: The staff member who notices the child is missing will alert the Preschool Manager.
2. **Search**: A thorough search of the building, outdoor areas, and surrounding premises will be conducted.
3. **Containment**: Remaining children will be gathered and supervised to ensure their safety.
4. **Security Check**: All doors, gates, and exits will be checked for breaches.
5. **Contact Parents**: The child’s parents/carers will be contacted immediately.
6. **Contact Authorities**: If the child is not found promptly, the police will be notified.
7. **Incident Recording**: A detailed incident report will be completed and shared with relevant authorities, including Ofsted.

**Procedure if a Child Goes Missing During an Outing**

1. **Headcount**: Staff will immediately conduct a headcount and confirm which child is missing.
2. **Search**: One staff member will search the immediate area while others supervise the group.
3. **Venue Alert**: Staff will notify venue security and request assistance.
4. **Contact Manager**: The Preschool Manager will be informed and will contact the child’s parents.
5. **Contact Police**: If the child is not located quickly, the police will be contacted.
6. **Return to Setting**: Remaining children will be returned to the setting as soon as safely possible.

**Post-Incident Actions**

* A full investigation will be carried out by the Preschool Manager.
* Written statements will be collected from all staff involved.
* Risk assessments and procedures will be reviewed and updated.
* Ofsted and the Local Authority will be informed as required.
* Support will be offered to staff, children, and families affected.