



## Lost Child Policy

### Statement of Intent

The care and safety of all children must always be paramount, and we comply with all safety procedures in our setting making it very difficult for any child to leave the premises or to hide within the building – thus being classed as lost.

However, if a child did appear to be lost during or at the end of a session then we would follow the procedure as outlined below:

### Within the Building

- No child can leave the building as all exits are either locked with keys or they have 2 locking mechanisms that need to be used to exit the doors.
- Staff will check the toilets immediately in case the child had not told an adult they were going to the toilet (Kindergarten, nursery children cannot access their toilets without an adult due to the gated internal doors).
- Staff then check all the exit doors within the building to ensure that they have not been left open
- The two staff members then move on to check the following:
  - All classrooms
  - All cupboards
  - Toilet areas
  - Kitchen area
  - Hall
  - Play equipment
  - Any other area where a child could hide
- **The child's name will be constantly called during the search.**
- Other room staff will keep the other children in their classrooms, quietly on the carpet, and check the register again.
- If there is no result inside the building, then two staff members will check the outside play areas, grounds and car park areas outside of the building. They will ensure that the door through which they exit is securely closed behind them.
- If there is no further result, the manager will inform the parents, other named contacts on the Child Data form and pre-school database, the Police, Social Services, Ofsted and the LADO.

### When outside in the Garden

- The gates within the gardens must always be closed and bolted/padlocked.
- If any of the gates are found to be open during the course of the time outside. ALL staff must immediately gather the children and headcount them to ensure no child has wandered out of the garden onto the grounds.
- Should it appear that a child may have wandered onto the grounds, 2 Staff MUST search the outer area, including Muddy Acorns whilst the other staff gather the rest of the children to their respective waiting areas for returning to the building.

- The Early Years' Manager and office staff to be informed immediately in order that they can search the front area of the grounds.
- Staff MUST communicate with others if they are taking a child/children into the building for the toilet and to make it obvious when they return with the child/children.
- If there is still no sighting of the child, the manager will inform the parents, other named contacts on the Child Data form and pre-school database, the Police, Social Services, Ofsted and the LADO.
- When it is time to come back in from the garden at the end of the session, all children to be gathered at their respective waiting areas to be counted and registers checked that all children are accounted for. In the meanwhile, a staff member must also sweep the grounds looking in ALL areas including under the castle, middle of the tree etc for any stragglers; starting from the opposite side of the garden to the waiting area.


### Trips & Outings

If a child should become separated from the group, the staff should immediately:

1. Call the Police on **999** giving full details of when and where the child was last seen, the child's name and date of birth.
2. Call the pre-school and give full details of what has happened to the Early Years' Manager or the Deputy Early Years' Manager. This person will then call the parent immediately (unless already on the trip) and inform them as to what has happened and what action has already been taken.
3. Everyone then returns back to the pre-school (without completing the trip, if necessary).
4. One staff member needs to stay at the site to liaise with the Police.
5. The Early Years' Manager / Deputy Early Years' Manager will go to the site with all information pertaining to the child for the purpose of police records.
6. The relevant authorities as listed above will then be informed.

### Review

This Policy has been reviewed and updated on **1<sup>st</sup> August 2025** by



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