Missing Child Policy

Policy statement

At Little Steps Day Care, it is always our intention to maintain the children's safety to the highest priority, both on and off the premises.

Every attempt is made to ensure the safety of the children, through:

- Carrying out our outings procedures
- Ensuring the arrival and departure time of all the children are clearly marked on our paper register
- Signing in the children on our electronic Famly app (so that it is clear which children are present at nursery)
- Ensure the security procedures are maintained at all times

In the unlikely event of a child going missing while in the care of the nursery, we will immediately implement the procedure detailed below.

- A member of the Management team will be notified immediately
- A full headcount will be completed and the register checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray; also to ensure the child is not cared for in another room in the building
- All staff present will be informed of the situation and Management will deploy some staff to start an immediate thorough search of the nursery inside followed by a search of the garden and surrounding areas, whilst the remainder of the staff will stay with the other children in a large group, where possible ensuring that staff to child ratio is maintained, so they remain supervised, calm and supported
- Doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could exit the nursery premises
- Management will talk to staff to establish when and where the missing child was last seen and record this
- If the child remains missing the parents/carers will always be contacted and kept informed
- At this point - which would be a maximum of 10 minutes - the police will be contacted, the matter will be treated as an emergency

Reviewed: 23/04/2025

- A second search of the nursery premises/garden will be carried out, during which available staff will continually search for the missing child, whilst the remaining staff maintain near to normal routine as possible for the rest of the children in the nursery
- Management will meet with the parents/carers and police
- Management will await instructions from the police

Outings

The following procedures will be carried out during outings:

- Outings on the nursery grounds will have a risk assessment carried out prior to the outing.
- Each member of staff will have a 'designated group' of children to be responsible for.
- Regular head counts will be made throughout the time children are out.
- A senior member of staff will ensure they have a nursery mobile phone with them, fully charged, at all times.
- In the event of a child going missing the Missing Child Policy procedures will be followed.

In the unlikely event that a child is not found, Little Steps Day Care will follow the local authority and police procedure.

After the incident, as soon as practically possible a report will be made including the outcome, who was missing, time identified, notification to police and findings.

Ofsted would be contacted with a full report of the incident.