

Missing Child Policy

Forest Kindergarten Sevenoaks

	Reviewed: October 2026
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Statement of intent:

We believe that the health & safety of children is of paramount importance. Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

We take every care to ensure children cannot leave the security of the setting unattended and have strict procedures and policies (see Health and Safety Policy and associated documents) in place to ensure as much as possible that this cannot happen.

Any outings from the setting are thoroughly planned and only undertaken after risk assessments have been completed and when the appropriate adult:child ratios are present (see Health and Safety Policy).

However in the unlikely event that it is found that a child is missing we will act in accordance with the following procedures.

Method:

If a child goes missing whilst at the setting premises:

- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the site, pathways and areas recently visited by group, whilst the remaining staff members stay with group at current area.
- Setting phone or walkie talkies are used to communicate between the searcher and the remaining group.
- Time when child first noted missing is recorded.
- Head counts are completed and the register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened
- If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.

If a child goes missing during an outing:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The person in charge is informed, if s/he is not on the outing and makes his/her way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- The person in charge of the setting contacts the child's parent who makes their way to the setting as agreed with the person in charge.
- The staff contact the police using the setting phone and reports the child as missing.

The investigation:

- The manager carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time, or who were on the outing.
- The key person/ staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the report;
 - what staff/ children were in the group/outing;
 - when the child was last seen in the group/outing;
 - what has taken place in the group/outing since then; and - the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing