

# 1: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

## 1.4 Missing Child Procedure

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# 1: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

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### 1.4 Missing Child Procedure

#### ***Policy Statement***

The safety and well-being of children attending Miss B's Nursery is our highest priority. Every possible precaution is taken to ensure children remain safe and supervised at all times.

Although the nursery has never experienced a child going missing, staff are trained to respond quickly and effectively should such an incident occur. Clear procedures are in place to ensure a swift and organised response that prioritises the child's safety and minimises distress for other children.

Our practice reflects children's rights as outlined in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, including:

- **Article 3** – The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them.
- **Article 19** – Children have the right to protection from harm and neglect.
- **Article 6** – Every child has the right to life, survival and development.

These principles guide the actions staff take if a child is believed to be missing.

#### ***1.4.1 Daily Register and Visual Attendance Record***

A clear visual record of children attending each session is maintained and displayed in the nursery. Children place their name tags on the self-registration board when they arrive, allowing staff to easily see who is present at any time.

This system helps staff quickly confirm attendance and identify if a child is not accounted for.

#### ***1.4.2 Early Identification***

Staff remain vigilant throughout the day and regularly check the number of children present.

If any member of staff suspects that a child cannot be located, they must immediately alert other staff members, remain calm, and ensure that the situation does not cause alarm among the other children.

Prompt communication allows staff to act quickly and effectively.

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### **1.4.3 Bringing Children Together**

The member of staff in charge (Manager) will gather all children together to complete an accurate headcount and confirm which child is missing.

All children, whether indoors or outdoors, will be brought together in a designated safe area, such as the story or group area. A member of staff will remain with the children to keep them calm and engaged while other staff begin searching.

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### **1.4.4 Searching the Premises**

The Duty Supervisor will organise a thorough search of the nursery environment. Staff will be allocated specific areas to check to ensure that no location is overlooked.

Search areas will include:

- Other children's rooms
- Sleep Room
- Soft Playroom
- Sensory Room
- Toilets and changing areas
- Storage areas
- Kitchen areas / Staff Room
- Any restricted or out-of-bounds spaces
- Outdoor play areas
- Nearby car park or surrounding grounds

This coordinated search ensures the nursery environment is checked quickly and systematically.

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### **1.4.5 Contacting Parents and Emergency Services**

If the search confirms that the child cannot be found, the Duty Supervisor will take immediate further action.

This will include:

- contacting the police by calling **999**
- informing the child's **parent or carer**
- notifying the **Nursery Manager** or senior leadership if they are not already present on site

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A member of staff will also access the child's learning record (such as Tapestry) in order to provide the police with a recent photograph of the child to assist with identification if required.

If necessary, advice may also be sought from **West Sussex Children's Services (Integrated Front Door)**.

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### ***Monitoring and Review***

Miss B's Nursery regularly reviews and updates these procedures to ensure they remain effective and reflect current safeguarding guidance.

Staff receive training and reminders about the Missing Child procedure so they can respond confidently and appropriately in the unlikely event that it needs to be implemented.

By maintaining clear procedures and vigilant supervision, the nursery works to uphold every child's right to safety, protection and well-being **(UNCRC Articles 3, 6 and 19)**.

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