



Lost Child Procedure from Nursery

September 2026-September 2027

At Acorn Childcare Centre, we take all reasonable steps to safeguard children while they are on the premises. Children will only be released into the care of individuals who have been authorised and notified to the nursery by the parent or carer.

We have a range of safety measures in place to prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised, including:

- Regular staff head counts in addition to normal registration procedures.
- Intercom systems.
- Gated perimeter areas.
- Internal locks.
- CCTV covering the main reception area and the bottom of the ramp.

Procedure in the Event of a Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child is believed to be missing from the nursery, the following procedure will be implemented immediately:

1. Raise the alarm and inform management

- The member of staff who identifies that a child is missing will immediately inform the Nursery Manager.
- All staff present will be informed and provided with relevant information to assist the search.
- Staff will obtain or provide a recent photograph of the child, together with a detailed description, including clothing worn.

2. Immediate search of the nursery

- Staff will immediately carry out a thorough search of all areas of the nursery, including rooms, toilets, cupboards, storage areas, outdoor areas and any other places where the child may be.
- Staff will check entrances, exits and perimeter areas.
- Staff will ensure that the remaining children continue to be appropriately supervised, reassured and supported.

3. Search of the surrounding area

- If the child is not located within the nursery, staff will begin an immediate search of the surrounding area, where this can be done safely and without compromising supervision of the other children.
- Staff will continue to monitor entrances, exits and other areas where the child may have gone.

4. Contact the police and parents/carers

- The Nursery Manager will contact the police as soon as it is reasonably believed that the child is missing and will follow police instructions and guidance.
- The child's parents/carers will be contacted without unnecessary delay and kept informed.
- The Manager will meet with the police and the child's parents/carers when they arrive.

5. Continued search and supervision

- A further systematic search of the nursery and surrounding area will be carried out as appropriate.
- Available staff will continue searching for the child while other staff maintain appropriate supervision and reassurance for the remaining children.
- The nursery will follow any instructions given by the police and other relevant authorities.

6. If the child is not immediately found

- If the child cannot be located, the nursery will follow all directions and procedures issued by the police and the relevant local authority.
- Staff will continue to provide appropriate support and supervision to the other children.

Recording and Reporting

- The incident will be recorded in writing as soon as reasonably practicable.
- The record will include, where applicable:
 - the child's name;
 - the time the child was identified as missing;
 - where and when the child was last seen;
 - the circumstances surrounding the incident;
 - searches undertaken;
 - when the police and parents/carers were notified;
 - actions taken by staff;
 - the outcome of the incident; and
 - any findings or recommendations arising from the incident.

- Ofsted will be notified where required.
- Any other relevant agencies will be notified in accordance with statutory and local safeguarding procedures.

Support Following an Incident

A missing-child incident may be distressing for children, parents/carers and staff. Management will provide appropriate reassurance and support and will seek additional professional support where necessary.

Staff will not speak to media representatives or provide statements to the media. Any media enquiries will be referred to the appropriate management or designated spokesperson.

Review Following an Incident

Following any missing-child incident, management will conduct a review and complete a post-incident risk assessment. This will identify the circumstances that contributed to the incident, consider whether existing procedures and safeguards were effective, and identify any additional measures required to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring again.

Any lessons identified will be communicated to relevant staff and incorporated into the nursery's safeguarding and risk-management procedures where appropriate.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>February 24</i> <i>Reviewed August 2025 - SK</i> <i>Reviewed September 2026- DD</i>	<i>Lorna Hodgett</i>	<i>September 26</i> <i>September 27</i>