

Lost Child on Premises Policy

Written by: Louise Lloyd-Evans

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Next Review Due: August 2026

Our Values

At Young Friends, safety and supervision are fundamental — but so is avoiding panic or blame. We create environments that are secure, emotionally safe, and risk-aware. Our team take full responsibility for children's safety at all times and know what to do if the unexpected occurs.

- **Sustainability** – We design systems and spaces that prevent crisis through care
 - **Respect** – Children are never blamed or shamed for movement or exploration
 - **Authenticity** – We do not deny the possibility of risk — we prepare for it
 - **Supportive Leadership** – Staff are trained, mentored and guided in emergencies
 - **Community** – Everyone knows the procedures — and works together to uphold them
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Policy Statement

While every possible measure is taken to prevent children from being lost, this policy outlines the procedures we follow if a child is thought to be missing **from within the premises**, including indoor rooms and secure gardens.

Preventative Measures

We maintain a **culture of vigilance** through:

- Secure external gates and doors with clear access controls
 - High adult-to-child ratios and appropriate zoning
 - Regular and recorded **headcounts** and name checks
 - Strong key person attachment and emotional security
 - Supervision by **present, mobile, alert staff** — not passive watching
 - Well-structured transitions (e.g. moving to garden, toilet, snack)
 - Close monitoring of known wanderers or runners
 - Daily risk assessments and environment scans
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If a Child Cannot Be Located

If a child is unaccounted for:

1. **Calmly alert the room leader or most senior person** on site immediately
 2. Initiate an **immediate indoor and outdoor sweep** of the premises:
 - Check toilets, under tables, behind furniture, sleep areas, garden zones
 - Check spaces the child frequents or may feel safe in
 3. All other children are calmly gathered and reassured
 4. Headcount is repeated and checked against the **Family register**
 5. Staff do **not leave the premises** unless directed to do so
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If the Child Is Still Missing After 5 Minutes

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or most senior person must:

1. Call the police (999) and report the child as missing
2. Notify the child's parents/carers immediately
3. Continue to supervise the remaining children and maintain normality
4. If appropriate, close exits and monitor movement
5. Start a written incident log recording all timings, actions, and staff present

Post-Incident Actions

Once the child is found and safe:

- Offer immediate reassurance and care to the child
- Notify all involved parties and **Ofsted (within 14 days)**
- Complete a full written report and incident investigation
- Hold a **review with staff**, considering:
 - What happened
 - Why it happened
 - What will change
- Support staff and family wellbeing — this is a distressing event

Working with Families

We:

- Communicate honestly, clearly and compassionately
- Involve families in post-incident reflection if appropriate
- Share learning and policy amendments
- Reaffirm our commitment to transparent safeguarding

Review and Monitoring

This policy is reviewed annually and following any incident. It is:

- Included in **staff induction and training**
- Displayed in staff areas
- Practised through reflection, not fear

Linked Policies

- Supervision and Appraisal
- Outdoor Trip Policy
- Risk Assessment and Positive Risk Taking
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Whistleblowing

Authorisation

 *Louise Lloyd-Evans*

Owner and Director

Young Friends Kindergarten

89 Holland Road, Hove, BN3 1JP