

Razzy's Daycare & Nursery

Lost or Missing Child Policy



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Introduction

At Razzy's Daycare & Nursery, the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care is our highest priority. We recognise that losing sight of a child, whether on the premises or during an outing, is a serious safeguarding concern. This policy sets out the steps all staff must take to prevent children from going missing and the procedures to follow if a child is lost. It ensures compliance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2025), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and other safeguarding guidance, demonstrating our commitment to keeping children safe at all times.

Legal Framework

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2025)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Education Act 2002
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010 (for inclusive and equitable safeguarding)

Roles and Responsibilities

The nursery manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that procedures to prevent and respond to a lost or missing child are effectively implemented. All staff are responsible for knowing and following these procedures, ensuring children are supervised at all times and

responding promptly and calmly if a child is found to be missing. Staff are trained to understand their responsibilities during induction and through ongoing safeguarding and health and safety training, including practice drills and scenario-based exercises.

Prevention Strategies

At Razzy's Daycare & Nursery, we believe that prevention is the most effective way to keep children safe. Children are supervised at all times and staff-to-child ratios are strictly maintained in line with EYFS guidance. Entry and exit points are secure and all visitors are signed in and supervised while on site. Regular headcounts are conducted, particularly during transitions, outdoor play and outings. Children are supported to understand nursery routines, boundaries and safety rules appropriate to their age and development.

Risk assessments are carried out for all areas of the nursery and for each outing, identifying potential risks and detailing measures to reduce the likelihood of a child going missing. These risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

Procedures if a Child Goes Missing on the Premises

If a child is discovered to be missing while at the nursery, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Staff immediately alert the nursery manager and initiate a thorough search of all indoor and outdoor areas.
2. Remaining children are safely supervised by other staff members.
3. If the child is not found within a short period, parents or carers are contacted immediately to inform them of the situation.
4. The police and any relevant authorities are notified without delay if the child cannot be located quickly.
5. All incidents are recorded in detail, including the circumstances of the child going missing, the actions taken, times, staff involved and communications with parents and authorities.

The incident record is retained securely and in line with data protection requirements, as well as EYFS guidance, for at least until the child leaves the nursery.

Procedures if a Child Goes Missing During an Outing

When children leave the nursery premises for trips or outings, additional precautions are taken to prevent a child from going missing:

- Staff complete detailed risk assessments for the location and planned activities.
- Children are counted before leaving, upon arrival and regularly throughout the outing.
- Children are assigned a designated staff member or “buddy” for supervision.
- Mobile phones and emergency contact information are carried by staff at all times.

If a child goes missing while on an outing, the group leader alerts staff immediately, initiates a search of the immediate area and contacts the nursery manager. Parents are notified and the police are called if the child cannot be located promptly.

Post-Incident Review

After any incident involving a lost or missing child, a structured review is conducted by the nursery manager and senior staff. This review identifies any gaps in supervision, procedures, or risk assessments and ensures that lessons are learned to prevent future occurrences. Staff involved in the incident are supported and, if appropriate, additional training is provided. The outcome of the review is documented and, where necessary, shared with parents.

Training and Continuous Improvement

All staff receive training on preventing and managing lost or missing children as part of their induction and through ongoing professional development. This includes safeguarding training, risk assessment, supervision strategies and emergency procedures. Practice drills are carried out regularly to ensure staff can respond confidently and effectively.

The effectiveness of our lost or missing child procedures is monitored through routine supervision, audits and feedback from staff and parents. Any identified gaps or areas for improvement are addressed promptly to maintain a high standard of child safety in line with EYFS 2025 statutory requirements.

Partnership with Parents

Razzy's Daycare & Nursery recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents and external agencies. Parents are kept fully informed during any incident and their input is valued in post-incident reviews. Where appropriate, support is sought from safeguarding authorities, the local authority and emergency services to ensure children's safety and wellbeing are prioritised.