



# Preschool Lost Child Policy

Gainsborough Primary  
School

PRIMARY  
ADVANTAGE

SCHOOLS ACHIEVING  
MORE TOGETHER

Primary Advantage



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All practitioners at Gainsborough Preschool have the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. The Preschool team will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will ensure that exits and entrances are kept secure and that magnetic releases are in working order.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore, practitioners will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions. If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the setting, the following procedure will be activated:

- o The Manager or person in charge and the rest of the Preschool team must be informed that the child is missing
- o A thorough search of the entire premises will commence
- o The staff will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- o The manager or person in charge will nominate as many staff as possible to search the area surrounding the premises.
- o All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the nursery grounds.
- o If after 10 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the manager or person in charge will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
- o While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other staff members will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children attending the setting.
- o The manager or person in charge will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer.
- o The manager or person in charge will coordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers. Once the incident is resolved, the manager or person in charge and the nursery team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes.

- o All incidents of children going missing from the setting will be recorded on Incident Record Sheet, and in cases where either the police or social care have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

## **Outings and Lost Child Procedures**

- o All children are accounted for during the day and their arrival and departure time is marked in the online register and staff make regular heads counts
- o When taking the children on outings, a risk assessment is carried out prior to the outing and regular head counts are made throughout the time. Children are allocated to certain members of staff with higher than normal ratios, to ensure the children are safe at all times
- o If a child is missing, staff alert the manager (or person in charge) who calmly checks both inside and outside the building. If there is no sign of the child the police are contacted immediately and parents are also informed of the situation. Staff would then wait for the police to arrive and follow their instructions. The manager would continue the search whilst awaiting the police

**Ofsted would be contacted and a written report sent by the Nursery Manager informing them of the incident**

<b>Policy written:</b>	April 2020
<b>Amended/Updated:</b>	July 2025
<b>Adopted by Governing Body:</b>	April 2020
<b>Review date</b>	July 2027

**The Federated Governing Body has reviewed this policy with careful consideration of our approach to equalities as outlined in the Equalities Policy, January 2020.**

We would like to acknowledge the work of other colleagues in drafting this policy. We have drawn on a range of sources including policies from other schools, good practice guides, published schemes and LA and Statutory guidelines where appropriate.

