



Our children leave Mile Oak thinking big with no limit on their potential. The school family works together to inspire and support every child. They learn and achieve through inspirational teaching in a lively, ambitious environment. Every child is nurtured to gain the creativity, responsibility and full breadth of skills required to take an active and fulfilling role in society.

Little Oaks Nursery: Lost Child Policy

Date	March 2026
Review Date	March 2027

Introduction

Little Oaks Nursery takes the safety of children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children are cared for in a secure environment and do not leave a session unaccompanied. Little Oaks children do not currently access learning opportunities outside of the school setting, however this policy provides guidance on our procedures, if and when this might form part of our curriculum.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the wider school's policy for Safeguarding and for Educational Trips and Visits where further procedures around mitigating risk through detailed assessments, can be found.

Staff will undertake periodic head counts using the key person system in addition to the registration procedure. However, in the unlikely event of a child going missing from the nursery or garden or whilst on an outing, the following procedure will be followed. All of our staff are familiar with this procedure.

Procedure for a child going missing from the nursery or leaving the nursery rooms unaccompanied:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the key person will alert the most senior staff member of staff
- This member of staff will take lead of the situation, firstly establishing who last saw the missing child, where and when and check if the child has been collected
- The remaining children will be gathered into one large group, with one/two adults (within ratio where possible) and a register will be taken
- All remaining nursery adults will begin to search systematically. This will include:
 - Checking gates and doors to ensure there has been no security breach whereby a child could exit the site
 - All areas of the nursery classroom, including the toilets and any spaces where a child could hide
 - All areas of the nursery garden, including the shed on the outside of the boundary and any spaces where the child could hide
 - All the areas of the reception classrooms and garden, including the toilets, sheds and any spaces where a child could hide
 - All the inside spaces along the infant corridor including the fox room, library toilets, offices, infant hall and storage cupboards
 - All the outside spaces on the infant side including walking the perimeter of the field, checking the tires and forest school area
 - The junior hall, science cupboard, school garden (including shed and greenhouses)
 - The wider school building including classrooms, storage cupboards, toilets, library and small spaces where a child could hide
- With the search already underway, the lead adult will call the main school office. The admin staff will make all spare adults aware of the situation, alert the Senior Leadership Team and call the premises team
- Other adults joining the search will be guided by the lead nursery adult as to where to begin searching
- If the child is found, the lead adult or child's key person will care for and comfort the child, bearing in mind they may have been distressed by the incident
- The senior leadership team will liaise with the lead adult and other staff to establish what happened and make adaptations to practice to ensure it does not happen again
- If deemed necessary, the most senior nursery staff member and a member of the school's leadership team will explain the incident to the family. This will be done sensitively and privately and not in the entrance at collection time.

If the child cannot be found, the nursery manager will:

- Whilst the search continues, a member of the school's senior leadership will contact the police (999), the child's family and Front Door for Families (01273 290400).

- The lead adult and other nursery staff will share their accounts through the schools Senior Leadership team and, where necessary, with the above persons

Procedure for a child going missing on an outing:

- Lead practitioners must have a mobile phone with all key phone number saved (only for use in case of emergency)
- A head count of all children will be taken immediately to ensure that no other children are missing. This will be checked against the register
- A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity, whilst ensuring the remaining children are adequately supervised
- If the child cannot be found, they will inform the most senior staff member on the outing
- They will contact the police (999), Front Door For Families (01273 290400) and the school's Senior Leadership
- A member of the School's Leadership team will contact the child's family
- A member of the School's Leadership team will make their way to the location of the outing (where possible)
- The most senior member of nursery staff, and the member of SLT, will remain in the location and liaise with the police and child's family
- All the other staff and children will return to the setting
- If the child is found, the lead adult, key person and family will comfort the child, bearing in mind they may have been distressed by the incident

After the incident:

- The nursery manager and school's senior leadership team will check in with staff members impacted by the incident and offer support where necessary
- The nursery manager, under the direction and guidance of the school's senior leadership team, will carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all staff and any other adults that were present
- The Headteacher of the school will speak with the family and keep them informed about the reporting process
- A full report will be written up and recorded on
- This will then be passed to Ofsted and Brighton & Hove City Council
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) would be notified within 24 hours
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff will co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents
- Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address
- The School's Senior Leadership team will lead, in the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken