

13. Missing Child policy

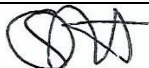
Welford Pre-school and extended services have the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Statement of intent

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times, both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through adhering to the outings procedure and the arrivals and departures procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing we follow the missing child procedure.

Managing the situation

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Welford Pre-school's leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents/carers will feel angry and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at Welford Pre-school's leader. When dealing with distraught and angry parents/carers, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is Welford Pre-school's leader and the other should be the chair of the management committee or another committee officer. No matter how understandable the parents/carers' anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support as this will be a very difficult time. The chair of the management committee or another committee officer will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Date reviewed	10/10/2025
This policy was adopted at a meeting of Welford Pre-school held on	23/10/2025
Signed on behalf of the Committee	
Role of signatory	Chair