Outings & emergencies

Lost or missing child

Immediate action while keeping the rest of the group supervised.

Draft for centre review | Prepared 16 November 2026

Operational review required

This is a centre-specific draft. It must be reviewed, completed and approved before adoption. It does not confirm staff appointments, registration or arrangements that have not been supplied.

Prevention

Use registers, headcounts, clear staff responsibilities, suitable supervision and agreed boundaries at the centre and on every outing. Check transitions, entrances, toilets and collection carefully.

Explain a simple age-appropriate plan for becoming separated and identify safe adults or meeting points. Knowing a home address or family number supports preparedness; it never replaces supervision.

Immediate action

Raise the alarm immediately, establish the child's last known location and keep the remaining children supervised. Alert the manager and venue staff or security where relevant.

Contact police without delay where a child is missing; use 999 where there is immediate danger. Do not wait for an arbitrary time limit or wait for a parent's permission before seeking emergency help.

Share an accurate description and essential details with the appropriate responders. Inform parents or emergency contacts promptly and follow police advice. Do not leave other children unattended while searching.

After the incident

Record the timeline, decisions, contacts and outcome. Support the child and other children without blame, and preserve relevant records.

The manager will assess safeguarding, regulator and insurer notifications, review the risk assessment and agree improvements before the activity resumes.

Centre review before adoption

Confirm staff roles, venue arrangements, emergency communications and escalation procedures.