Holy Trinity EYFS
Missing Child Policy
September 2025

Aims:

At Holy Trinity EYFS the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. We have robust systems and procedures in place to significantly reduce the likelihood of a child going missing or becoming lost. These are embedded within staff training and are monitored regularly.

Preventative Measures:

To minimise the risk of a child going missing, we:

- Always supervise children attentively, maintaining sight and sound monitoring.
- Maintain appropriate **staff-to-child ratios** at all times.
- Complete **perimeter check twice daily** in all areas where children play.
- Conduct a **comprehensive risk assessment** prior to any trip or outing and this will be approved by the manager.
- Count children **in and out** when they leave or return to the building (including trips to the garden), with emergency contact details taken on every outing.
- Ensure that **all visitors** are signed in and closely supervised at all times.
- Train staff to be vigilant and to act swiftly and calmly in any situation.

With consistent and careful planning, children should **never be out of sight** or hearing of a trusted adult.

Missing Child Procedure – On the Premises:

In the **unlikely event** that a child is unaccounted for within the nursery:

1. **Alert the Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead** immediately.
2. A thorough search of the entire premises, garden and immediate surroundings will be conducted by available staff.
3. Check the **sign-in/out sheets** to confirm if the child has already been collected.
4. Ensure all **doors, gates, and access points** are secured and check for possible breaches.
5. If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the **police (999)** and the child's **parents/carers** will be contacted immediately.
6. Continue the search under the guidance of emergency services.

Missing Child Procedure – Off the premises (outing):

If a child becomes separated from the group while offsite:

1. Alert all staff and conduct an **immediate headcount** to ensure no other child is missing.
2. **One staff member** will search the immediate area while the rest of the group remains supervised.
3. Call **999** and provide:
    - Your name and location
    - A physical description of the child and share the photograph taken prior to the visit.
    - The child's name, DOB and any medical needs
    - Name of the nursery and manager contact
4. Notify the **Nursery Manager** immediately, if not present.
5. The Manager or Deputy will:
    - Go directly to the scene
    - Inform the venue or premises management
    - Contact the child's parents/carers
    - Notify the **Designated Safeguarding Lead.**
6. Staff will **return the remaining children to the nursery** once a safe handover is confirmed.

7. A **senior member of staff** will stay at the scene to liaise with police/emergency services.
8. All staff involved will complete **written reports** documenting the incident.
9. **Ofsted** will be notified of the incident promptly.

Investigation Process:

After the child is found and safe:

- The **Nursery Manager** will speak with the child's parents.
- A full internal **investigation** will be launched immediately.
- Written **statements** will be taken from all staff present.
- An **incident report** will be created, detailing:
    - Date and time
    - Staff and children present
    - Time and location the child was last seen
    - Timeline of the incident
    - How the child was found or recovered
    - Conclusions and actions taken to prevent reoccurrence

Support provided:

Managing Emotions:

Missing child incidents are distressing. Staff involved may feel responsible or overwhelmed. The Nursery Manager will:

- Offer emotional support and reassurance.
- Ensure staff wellbeing is prioritised throughout and after the investigation.

Managing Parents/Carers:

- We understand that parents may be anxious or upset. We will provide full transparency and support.
- However, **aggressive or threatening behaviour** toward staff will not be tolerated, and security may be called if necessary.

Supporting Other Children:

- Children will be kept calm and reassured.
- Staff will answer any questions honestly but age-appropriately.
- The incident will not be discussed in front of the children unnecessarily.

Review date: Sept 2027, or in response to statutory changes.