GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

Lost Child Policy

Purpose

A missing child is an urgent safeguarding concern. At Gems tiney Home Nursery we act immediately to locate the child, protect the other children and obtain police help. For a missing young child, call 999 promptly; there is no five- or ten-minute waiting period before doing so.

Preventing a child going missing

We maintain effective supervision and permitted ratios and allocate clear responsibility for children during play, personal care, outings and handovers. Adults check children by name, not just by number, at arrivals, departures and transitions and before and after vehicle journeys.

Doors, gates and boundaries are checked, with access controlled while retaining safe fire escape. Adults verify collection authorisation and identity and record actual attendance. Children are taught simple safety rules without placing responsibility for their safety on them.

Outings are risk assessed for routes, crowds, water, exits, toilets and each child's needs. Suitable identification may show the setting's contact number without the child's name or address. Clothing and identification must not create a choking or strangulation hazard.

Immediate action wherever the child is missing

Alert the other adults and confirm which child is unaccounted for and where they were last seen. Keep the remaining children together, safe and supervised. Call 999 promptly

for a missing young child or any child at immediate risk or vulnerable to harm. A brief check of the immediate area must not delay the call.

Tell police the child's name, age, description and clothing, last confirmed location and time, relevant medical or communication needs and nearby risks such as roads or water. Give the setting address or exact outing location and a reliable contact number. Follow police instructions.

Notify parents promptly and keep them informed, without delaying police contact. If parents cannot be reached, try emergency contacts and continue the response. Inform tiney as soon as practical, but agency advice must not delay police help.

If the child is missing at the setting

If enough suitable adults are present, one keeps the group safe while another checks accessible rooms, hiding places, sleep areas, garden and exits. Do not enter a dangerous area or leave children unattended. Tell police immediately about open gates, possible escape routes or suspected abduction.

If working alone, keep the other children safely with you, call police and explain that you cannot leave them to search. Check only areas that can be checked while maintaining their safety. Do not leave the premises or split the group to conduct a search alone.

If the child is missing on an outing

Alert venue staff or security immediately and request their missing-child response, including monitoring exits where safe. Tell them police have been called or arrange the call without delay; do not assume venue staff have done so.

With sufficient adults, one remains with the supervised group at a safe agreed location while another checks the immediate area and liaises with staff and police. If alone, keep the group together and request assistance. Do not send children or unrelated visitors to search or put the remaining children at risk.

Preserve accurate information about the last sighting and adult responsibilities. Follow police advice about further searches, moving the group or ending the outing. Do not post the child's image or details publicly unless police direct an appropriate appeal.

When the child is found

Confirm their identity and safety, reassure them calmly and provide first aid or medical help as needed. Do not punish or blame the child or conduct an investigative interview. Listen to spontaneous comments and record their words accurately.

Tell police, parents and tiney immediately that the child has been located and where they are. Do not assume the child is uninjured or that enquiries are no longer needed. Follow medical and safeguarding advice and consider whether urgent care, a referral or changes to supervision are required.

Records reporting and review

Record times, attendance, staff responsibilities, last sighting, calls, actions, search areas, advice, recovery and the child's condition as events allow. Preserve relevant existing evidence securely and lawfully and provide it to police or safeguarding agencies as appropriate.

Report the incident promptly to tiney and follow applicable statutory notifications and agency requirements, including the 14-day limit where a reportable significant event or serious incident is involved. Any serious accident, injury or death also requires local child protection notification. Concerns about adult conduct follow allegations procedures where relevant.

Gemma reviews the cause, supervision, environment and response with assistants and appropriate agencies, agrees actions and informs families appropriately while protecting confidentiality. Unsafe arrangements are suspended until effective controls are in place. This policy is reviewed annually and after any missing-child incident or significant change. References: current EYFS childminder framework; Police.uk What to do when someone goes missing; tiney safeguarding procedures.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
Reviewed: November 2026
Next review due: November 2027