



Missing or Lost Child Policy

Bijou Day Nursery & Crèche, Cowbridge

Policy owner: Nursery Manager / Rheolwr y Feithrinfa

Version: 2.0

Last reviewed: June 2026 / Mehefin 2026

Next review: June 2027 / Mehefin 2027

Approved by: Samantha Rennison, Responsible Individual / Unigolyn Cyfrifol

1. Policy Statement

Bijou Day Nursery & Crèche takes the safety and security of every child extremely seriously. Every precaution is taken to prevent a child going missing from our care. In the unlikely event that a child cannot be accounted for, this policy sets out the immediate actions to be taken.

This policy complies with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended), the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare (2016), the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and CIW guidance on safeguarding. The procedure follows the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

2. Prevention

- The premises are secured with a controlled-entry door system; all external doors and gates are kept closed and locked
- A daily register of all children and staff is maintained and accurate at all times
- Head counts are conducted regularly — at transitions, before and after outdoor play, at meal times, and on outings
- Children are supervised at all times, meeting or exceeding NMS staff-to-child ratios
- All visitors sign in and out and are accompanied at all times
- Children are released only to authorised persons; a password system is in place for emergency collections
- On outings, specific procedures apply (see Outings & Educational Visits Policy) including additional head counts, high-visibility clothing, and risk assessment

3. Procedure — Child Missing on Premises

1. **Alert:** As soon as a child cannot be accounted for, the staff member raises the alert with the Room Leader and Nursery Manager immediately
2. **Search:** A thorough, systematic search of the entire premises begins immediately — all rooms, toilets, sleep rooms, outdoor areas, storage areas, and any hiding places
3. **Head count:** All other children are accounted for and gathered safely

4. **Time check:** The Nursery Manager notes the time the alert was raised and the last known time/location of the child
5. **External check:** Staff check the immediate vicinity outside the building — car park, street, nearby shops
6. **Emergency services:** If the child is not found within **5 minutes**, the police are called (999) and provided with a full description of the child (clothing, appearance, name, age) and the last known location
7. **Parents:** Parents are contacted immediately — ideally at the same time as the police
8. **CIW notification:** CIW is notified as soon as practicable, in line with our notification duties
9. **Continue search:** The search continues while awaiting police arrival
10. **Record:** A full written record is made of the incident, including timeline, actions taken, and outcomes

4. Procedure — Child Missing on Outing

1. An immediate head count is conducted
2. The outing leader alerts all staff and any venue staff
3. The group is secured in one location with adequate supervision
4. Staff search the immediate area systematically
5. If not found within 5 minutes, the police (999) and the Nursery Manager are called
6. Parents are informed immediately
7. CIW is notified

5. After the Incident

- The Responsible Individual (Samantha Rennison) is informed immediately
- A full investigation is conducted to understand how the incident occurred and what improvements can be made
- Risk assessments are reviewed and updated
- Staff involved are offered support (the incident can be distressing for all involved)
- Parents are provided with a full written account of the incident and the actions taken
- The incident and investigation findings are shared with CIW

6. Related Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Outings & Educational Visits Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Accident & Incident Policy