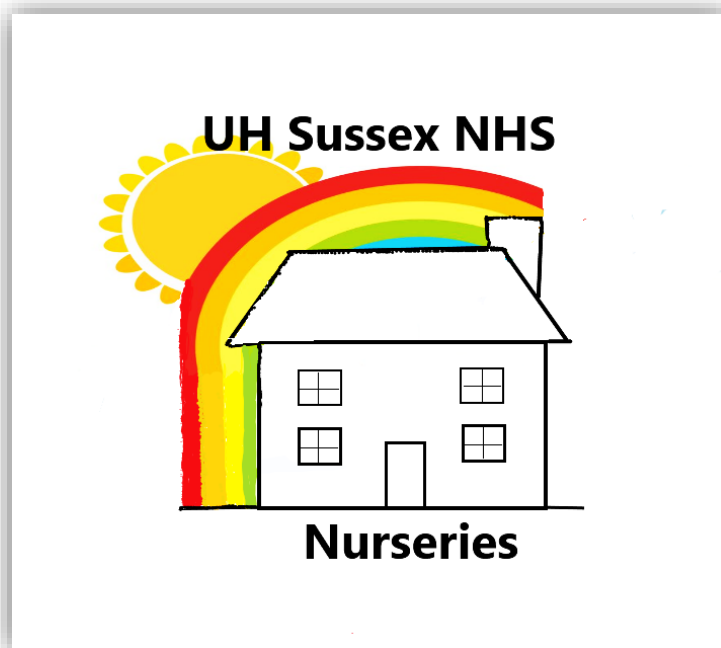


TRUST POLICY

Nursery Handbook – Missing and Lost Child Policy



Approval		
Director Approval	Date approved:	13 th March 2026
Ratification		
Trust Management Committee	Date approved:	22 nd July 2026
	Review Date	22 nd July 2029

Version	Date	Author	Status	Comment
1.0	February 2026	Childcare Services Manager Sussex House Nursery Manager	LIVE	New trust wide policy

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1. Policy Statement

Providers must ensure that they take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well
3.3 pg. 22 EYFS Statutory Requirements 2025

- All members of staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety, security and welfare of the children in the setting.
- Staff are expected to have accurate information regarding who is based their playroom on any given day and who is collecting.
- Staff should be vigilant and have all children in their direct care in their eyeline.
- There should be planned 'free flow' activities with staff communicating their positions either inside or outside the building.
- It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager to ensure that all children are on the registers and accounted for.
- Planned and consistent nursery routines and staff communication, children should never be out of sight of a trusted adult.
- University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust nurseries have a written policy and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.
- In the event of a child going missing from the nursery a pre-set action plan would come into place.

2. Safety and Security in our Nurseries

Strategies to promote Safety and Security:

- Doors and gates are childproof with reminders for staff, parents, carers and visitors to remain shut.
- Parents, carers are permitted to collect in the reception area of the nursery, a playroom or nursery garden.
- Parents, carers and visitors are not to open the front door to let another person in unless they are a recognised nursery staff member.
- Staff, parents, carers and visitors are expected to sign in and out.
- Staffs are aware of persons collecting and password implemented if needed.
- Premises are secure and steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises.
- Adequate staff: child ratios
- Children are supervised at all times whilst on nursery premises.
- If a child is with their parent or carer is on the premises that adult is responsible for the supervision of the child.
- A parent or carer is responsible for the safe supervision for the child whilst outside of the premises i.e. car park, 'drop off' area, hospital corridor, main street.
- When accessing the garden, the perimeter fence is secure and gate is shut.
- Headcounts are efficient throughout the day and especially times of transitions i.e. outside to indoors, from playroom to playroom.

- Staff in partnership with parents and carers promote 'how to keep safe' with teaching of stranger danger and road safety.
- When out of the premises children are encouraged to hold hands.

3. Incident: Child Missing on the Nursery Premises

The immediate actions if a staff member realises a child is missing on the nursery premises:

- The member of staff will check with immediate staff and the children when and where the child last was seen.
- Nursery Manager, Deputy Manager or senior staff member will be alerted.
- All nursery staff would be alerted immediately a child has gone missing, and ensure others such as volunteers, students are alerted.
- Staff, contractors or visitors will be requested not to leave the premises.
- At least two members of staff would remain with the other children.
- All Playroom registers will be checked.
- The remaining staff will carry out a thorough search for the missing child.
- Staff will check all windows, doors, other rooms, cupboards and areas which a child could hide in.
- After 10 minutes the Nursery Manager, Deputy Manager or Senior member of staff will telephone Security team via switch O, ext. 4444 and the police immediately.
- The Childcare Services Manager will be contacted.
- If a child is definitely missing the parents will be contacted and informed of the situation.
- Time, Date, location of disappearance, staff responsible for caring for child at time, what the child was wearing and other circumstances surrounding the disappearance will be recorded.
- Records will be kept of any incident.
- Ofsted will be informed without delay.
- All parents and carers will be informed of the incident.

4. Incident: Child Missing Outside of Nursery Premises

During a trip or outing a child is reported to be missing the following actions will immediately happen:

- The member of staff will check with immediate staff and the children when and where the child was last seen.
- All nursery staff on the outing would be alerted immediately a child has gone missing.
- Depending on staffing – two members of staff would stay with the remaining children whilst the other staff carry out a thorough search for the missing child. A register will be taken.
- The police would be informed within 10 minutes of the alert raised.
- A staff member on the outing would telephone the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager if they are not present.
- The Childcare Services Manager will be contacted
- Management team will contact the missing child's parent or carer. We recognise this will be a difficult time and will put in place staff support.
- If after searching child cannot be found the rest of the nursery children will make their way back to the Nursery with remaining staff, leaving one behind to continue the search and wait for the police.
- Time, Date, location of disappearance, staff responsible for caring for child at time, what the child was wearing and other circumstances surrounding the disappearance will be recorded.
- Ofsted will be informed.

5. Investigation Procedure

It is the responsibility of the Childcare Service Manager and the Nursery Manager / Deputy Manager to ensure a complete and thorough investigation is carried out should there be a breach of security or a child goes missing whilst under the care and supervision of nursery staff.

Staff to keep calm and not to let other children become anxious.

Nursery Management to communicate to all parents and carers.

On finding the missing child the Nursery Manager will carry out a detailed report to include staff written statements.

All staff present will be interviewed; Circumstances why and when it occurred

Childcare Services Manager with the support of the Nursery Manager will carry out full investigation, with an evaluation and change of procedure if necessary.

Detailed report to the Parent and Carer.

Detailed report sent to Ofsted.

Detailed report to the police.

Further communication to all parents and carers.

With the support of University Hospitals Sussex NHS FT Human Resource team disciplinary action if deemed appropriate

6. Missing / Repeated Absence of a Child

If it is determined that a child has repeated absence from the setting without prior acceptable notification than University Hospitals Sussex NHS FT has a responsibility to ensure that the welfare of the child is upheld and has the responsibility to liaise with other agencies such as Health Visitor, Social Worker known to the family to ensure they receive the required support.

Where a child is repeatedly absent from the setting the Nursery Manager or Service Manager has the responsibility to ensure the child is safe and therefore will contact the parent or carer to establish the child's welfare.

In such circumstances there may be a child protection concern and therefore the nursery will be permitted to follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures

7. Links to other Trust policies

UHSN008 Nursery Handbook - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

UHSN001 Nursery Handbook - Accident, Fire, Security and Contingency Policy

UHSN012 Nursery Handbook - Arrivals and Departure Policy