

# Little Dukes: Lost or Missing Child Policy



Policy adopted September 2024 - Version 1

Little Dukes Nursery Schools, 58 Buckingham Gate London SW1E 6AJ

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## Little Dukes: Lost or Missing Child Policy

### Monitoring and review...

This policy will be continuously monitored, refined and audited by the Headteacher who will also review it annually to assess how efficiently duties have been carried out over the year. This review will take place no later than one year from the date shown below, or sooner if needed due to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines.

Adopted September 2024

#### Reviewed by:

Geoff Marston Dukes Education: Group Compliance Director

Rik McShane, Director of Operations: Little Dukes Nurseries

Nazish Usman, Principal of Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nurseries

Ben Murray, Marketing and Admissions Director - Little Dukes Nurseries

**Next review due: September 2025**

#### Please note:

This policy applies to all nursery schools within Little Dukes, including:

- Hove Village Day Nurseries
- Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nurseries
- Miss Daisy's Nursery Schools
- Miss Daisy's Nursery School Hyde Park Ltd
- The Kindergartens Nursery Schools
- Reflections Nursery and Forest School
- Riverside Nursery Schools
- Bright Beginnings (Twickenham) Ltd
- Twickenham Park Day Nursery Ltd
- Broomfield House School Ltd
- Pippa Pop-ins Nursery Schools

Any reference to 'Little Dukes' applies to all the nurseries named above.

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## Little Dukes: Lost or Missing Child Policy

### **Statement of intent:**

At Little Dukes, we take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children on the premises. We only release children into the care of individuals who parents/carers have formally approved, and we have safety systems in place to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. These include but are not limited to, attendance being registered on our nursery Family app, secure doors and strict headcount and supervision procedures in line with policy.

Our staff are also trained to ensure no child can be allowed to hide in any areas not designated at approved areas for children.

### **Policy aims:**

This policy outlines the procedures we have to keep children safe and accounted for at all times on the nursery premises and to set out the actions we will take in the unlikely event that a child goes missing.

We only release children into the care of individuals who parents/carers have formally approved, and we have safety systems in place to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. These include but are not limited to, attendance being registered on our nursery Family app, secure doors and strict headcount and supervision procedures in line with policy.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure children are kept safe while away from the nursery. For all outings, a designated team member will have a fully charged nursery mobile phone and all relevant contact details. On any outing we assess the risks or hazards that may arise for children and identify steps to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards.

### ***This includes:***

- Careful consideration of adult to child ratios
- Carrying out regular head counts of children throughout any outing or visit
- Children wearing high-visibility jackets in accordance with our Trips and Outings Policy and Supervision Policy and Procedure.
- Team members should wear high-visibility jackets or similar in order for the children to be able to spot them clearly and easily.

However, in the unlikely event of a child going missing in or from the nursery or on an outing, we have procedures which will be implemented immediately.

### **Missing child procedure:**

If a child is noted as missing either following a regular headcount or noticed as missing, the Headteacher will be informed immediately and all team members present will also be informed.

If on an outing the designated person in charge of the trip will be informed.

If on an outing, the outing will pause, all children will be gathered, a headcount will be done and the team member in charge will discuss the best approach.

In either case (whether on outing or in the nursery), team members will be deployed to start an immediate, thorough search of the nursery or outing area, followed by a search of the surrounding area. Some team members will remain with the other children so they are supervised, calmed, and supported.

During this search, if in the setting and where available, a team member will review any CCTV, to see if the child can be located or their last location found.

If on an outing and if appropriate, on-site security will also be informed and given a description of the child.

If on an outing the child is not found after 5 minutes, the designated person in charge will then inform the Headteacher/DSL.

In either case, if the child cannot be found after 10 minutes the Headteacher will call the police and follow police guidance.

At this point, the parents/carers of the missing child will also be contacted by the Headteacher.

During this period, some team members will continue to search for the missing child, while other team members look after the remaining children.

If on an outing, it will be the responsibility of the designated person in charge to ensure that there are enough team members to care for the children and get them back safely to the nursery. This may mean contacting the nursery to ask for additional/relief team members.

The Headteacher (or designated person in charge if on an outing) will meet the police. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) may be contacted for further advice.

In the unlikely event that the child is not found, the nursery will follow the local authority and police procedure.

The Headteacher will inform their line manager (usually the principal) who will take over procedures from the Headteacher in turn informing the MD, and Operations Director.

Any incidents must be recorded in writing as soon as practicably possible including: the outcome, who was lost, time identified, notification to police and findings. Nurseries will use the Missing child procedure form in the first instance to do this.

In any case involving media attention, staff will not speak to any media representatives. They will hand this responsibility over to a designated Dukes Education representative.

A post-incident investigation and risk assessment will be conducted by the DSL/Headteacher and Principal following any incident of this nature to reduce the chance of it happening again.

Depending on the outcome of the investigation, LADO and the local authority safeguarding team will be updated.

Ofsted will be contacted and informed of any reportable incident as soon as possible, but always within 14 days.

**Legislative Framework:**

**EYFS 2024: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements 3.63, 3.65 & 3.66**