

Crossroads Nursery Missing Child Policy

Aim

At Crossroads Nursery we aim to provide a safe learning environment for all our children. This Policy has been developed in line with:

- The Scottish Government, 2020, Realising the Ambition [realisingtheambition.pdf \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/realising-the-ambition/realising-the-ambition.pdf)
- The Scottish Government, 2017, "Health and Social Care Standards My Support My Life"
<http://www.newcarestandards.scot/>
- Education Scotland, 2016 "How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare" [How good is our early learning and childcare? \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/how-good-is-our-early-learning-and-childcare/how-good-is-our-early-learning-and-childcare.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, 2018, "Guidance on Adult to Child Ratios in Early Learning and Childcare Settings" [Guidance on adult to child ratios in early learning and childcare settings.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/guidance/adult-to-child-ratios-in-early-learning-and-childcare-settings/guidance-on-adult-to-child-ratios-in-early-learning-and-childcare-settings.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, 2022, "A Quality Framework for Early Learning and Childcare" [Quality framework for early learning and childcare 2022 PRINT FRIENDLY.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/quality-framework-for-early-learning-and-childcare-2022-print-friendly/quality-framework-for-early-learning-and-childcare-2022-print-friendly.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, Keeping Children Safe - [Keeping children safe - practice notes | Care Inspectorate Hub](https://www.careinspectorate.com/keeping-children-safe-practice-notes/keeping-children-safe-practice-notes.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, [elc-practice-note-trips-and-outings.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/elc-practice-note-trips-and-outings/elc-practice-note-trips-and-outings.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, [elc-practice-note-2-transitions.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/elc-practice-note-2-transitions/elc-practice-note-2-transitions.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, [elc-practice-note-3-supporting-curiosity-and-exploration.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/elc-practice-note-3-supporting-curiosity-and-exploration/elc-practice-note-3-supporting-curiosity-and-exploration.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, 2018, "Out to Play – Practical Guidance for creating outdoor play experiences in early learning and childcare" [Out to Play: Practical guidance for creating outdoor play experiences in early learning and childcare \(playscotland.org\)](https://www.playscotland.org.uk/out-to-play-practical-guidance-for-creating-outdoor-play-experiences-in-early-learning-and-childcare/out-to-play-practical-guidance-for-creating-outdoor-play-experiences-in-early-learning-and-childcare.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate, 2016, "My world outdoors - Sharing good practice in how early years services can provide play and learning wholly or partially outdoors" [My-World-Outdoors.pdf \(playscotland.org\)](https://www.playscotland.org.uk/my-world-outdoors-my-world-outdoors.pdf)
- Care Inspectorate – SIMOA campaign - [Keeping children safe - Look, Think, Act campaign | Care Inspectorate Hub](https://www.careinspectorate.com/keeping-children-safe-look-think-act-campaign/keeping-children-safe-look-think-act-campaign.pdf)

Aberdeenshire Policy/ Guidance:

- Aberdeenshire Council, 2021, "Offsite Excursion Procedures – Education and Children's Services" [offsite-excursion-procedures-25april2021-1.pdf \(livelifieberdeenshire.org.uk\)](https://www.livelifieberdeenshire.org.uk/media/6707/offsite-excursion-procedures-25april2021-1.pdf)
- Aberdeenshire Council, 2021, "Planning, Managing and Evaluating Your Excursion Flowchart" <https://www.livelifieberdeenshire.org.uk/media/6707/excursions-flow-chart-23march2021.pdf>
- Aberdeenshire Council, 2021, Specific documents of interest from the Offsite Excursions Procedures Appendices - Live, Life Aberdeenshire (livelifieberdeenshire.org.uk)

- 2.25 I am helped to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviour and decisions.
- 3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.
- 3.23 If I go missing, people take urgent action, including looking for me and liaising with the police, other agencies and people who are important to me.
- 4.4 I receive an apology if things go wrong with my care and support or my human rights are not respected, and the organisation takes responsibility for its actions.
- 5.19 My environment is secure and safe.

Who is responsible?

- Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner, Early Years Lead Practitioner, Early Years Practitioners, Early Years Support Workers, Parents and Carers are all responsible in following this policy to keep the children at Crossroads Nursery safe.

Prevention Measures

- All external gates are closed by parents, carers, visitors, and staff when they enter and exit the nursery area.
- Staff switch on door alarms once external doors are closed when children are in the building.
- Nursery doors are manned by a member of staff during drop off and pick up times – if staff have to leave the cloak area, the outside door is closed, and the alarm is turned on.
- All children are signed over to a member of staff at the door and the collecting adult is recorded on the daily sign in sheet.
- It is the responsibility of parents to inform nursery staff of any changes to the collecting adult – children will not be allowed to leave nursery unless we have had confirmation from parents/carers.
- These procedures are shared with families in our handbook and during the induction process.
- Daily registers are taken in the morning and updated after the lunchtime pick up.
- Staff regularly carry out head counts.
- When outdoors, staff use walkie talkies to communicate numbers.
- Head counts are carried out before, during and after any time spent outside to ensure no children are left outdoors/indoors.

Procedure

If a child goes missing when in the care of Crossroads Nursery, the Head Teacher, the Early Years Senior Practitioner, the Early Years Lead Practitioner, the Early Years Practitioners and the Early Years Support Worker will immediately follow the procedure detailed below. This will ensure a systematic approach is taken to find the child and that their safety is at the forefront of all decisions and actions taken.

If a child goes missing from Crossroads Nursery

- All staff will remain calm, communicate and support each other.
- All staff should carry their walkie talkie so clear communication can be maintained during the search period.
- A member of staff will be assigned to carry out a thorough search of each area and room in nursery and in the garden - where possible this should be the EYSP or the EYLP.
- The remaining children will be gathered, counted and the register checked by staff who are not searching for the missing child – this will ensure no other children are missing. **When the children are gathered, a note of the time should be taken.**
- A story or suitable activity will be conducted by the other staff to allow the remaining staff to look for the missing child whilst keeping all remaining children in one – this will be done in the main playroom and the

door will be shut to avoid any possibility of other children moving around when the search is being carried out.

- Staff will sensitively ask if children have seen the missing child, or where they were playing.
- All external doors and gates will be checked to ensure there has been no security breach.

If the child is found in the building or garden

- A member of staff will care for and talk with the child sensitively. The child may be distressed, afraid and in need of comfort. It may be appropriate for the Senior or Lead practitioner to be included.
- There should be no more than two members of staff with the child as this can be overwhelming for them.
- The senior or lead will take the opportunity to speak with the gathered children to remind them of SHANARRI calamari and our SAFETY badge.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the parents of the incident.

If the child is found in the car park, forest or road

- If the child is found in the carpark, forest or road, refer to **“After the Incident”** section of the policy.

If the child is not found

- If the child is not found in the initial search of the building and garden, the EYSP or EYLP will contact the school to alert the Head Teacher.
- If the Early Years Senior Practitioner is not in the building, the Early Years Lead Practitioner will contact Drumoak School to alert the EYSP.
- Where at all possible, the Head Teacher will leave Durris School and travel to Crossroads Nursery.
- Where at all possible, Early Years Senior Practitioner will leave Drumoak School and travel to Crossroads Nursery.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will contact the parents.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will contact the police, giving as much detail as possible about the last known whereabouts of the child and what the child was wearing. **This should be done within 5 minutes after the initial unsuccessful search period.**
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will make available to the police:
 - A recent photograph of the child
 - Personal information – family information, contact details and date of birth
 - Details of any medical or additional support needs
 - Any other relevant information
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner and/or Early Years Lead Practitioner will meet the child’s family when they arrive at nursery in the main office.
- Details of the incident to date will be shared with the family.
- In the event that the family arrive before the police, a member of nursery staff will wait with the family until the police arrive.
- If the child isn’t found the investigation will be handed over to the police with full co-operation from Crossroads Nursery and Durris School.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Aberdeenshire Early Years Team.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Care Inspectorate.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Aberdeenshire Corporate Communication Team.

- Liability should not be discussed until the incident has been fully investigated by Crossroads Nursery, the Care Inspectorate, and the Police.
- Staff and parents will be asked to refer any enquiries they have from the media about the incident to the Head Teacher who will liaise with the Corporate Communications Team.
- If the police are investigating a decision will be taken by Aberdeenshire Council on whether the nursery will close due to the investigation.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation:
 - All staff will co-operate fully
 - The police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff
- The Care Inspectorate will be involved as a Duty of Candour will have been raised and they will carry out an investigation when appropriate.

After the Incident

- After the incident, as per the Duty of Candour policy, the parents will be invited in for a meeting at the parents' request or at the end of the session. A detailed statement of the incident and the actions taken will be given to the parents. The parents should sign, and a copy should be taken for them to take home. The other copy will be filed in the child's personal file.
- Duty of Candour expects apologies to be made and a clear timeline given to parents on when they can expect feedback on any policy/procedural changes, and detailed feedback from any investigations.
- Policies and procedures should be reviewed and changed where necessary.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner and the Early Years Lead Practitioner may carry out a full investigation.
- The Care Inspectorate must be notified if the child has escaped the building using the e-forms notification system.
- Duty of Candour will be activated, and all related policy and procedures will be followed.

If a child goes missing from an outing, Crossroads Nursery will follow the following procedures:

- Staff will carry contact details for all attending children and a register that reflects the children who are on the trip.
- Staff and volunteers will be assigned a group of children to be responsible for throughout the trip. The group leader will have a note of this. A ratio of 1:5 will be adhered to for all groups.
- Head counts will be carried out regularly.
- There will always be an 'extra' adult on trips to ensure emergency situations can be covered effectively.
- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, everyone will be brought back together, and a head count taken. Appropriate ratios of staff and volunteers will stay with these children. All other staff will carry out a search of the area. **When the children are gathered, a note should be taken of the time.**
- If the child is still not found, the Head Teacher and Early Years Senior (if not on the outing) will be informed.
- The Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner and any other members of staff will make their way to an agreed meeting place to aid the search, be a point of contact for the police and to support staff.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will contact the parents.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will contact the police, giving as much detail as possible about the last known whereabouts of the child and what the child was wearing. **This should happen within 5 minutes of the initial unsuccessful search period.**
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will make available to the police:
 - A recent photograph of the child
 - Personal information – family information, contact details and date of birth
 - Details of any medical or additional support needs
 - Any other relevant information

- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will meet the child's family when they arrive at the venue.
- Details of the incident to date will be shared with the family and a member of staff will wait with them until the police arrive (if they arrive before the police).
- If the child isn't found the investigation will be handed over to the police with full co-operation from Crossroads Nursery and Durris School.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Aberdeenshire Early Years Team.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Care Inspectorate.
- The Head Teacher, Early Years Senior Practitioner or Early Years Lead Practitioner will inform the Aberdeenshire Corporate Communication Team.
- Liability should not be discussed until the incident has been fully investigated by Crossroads Nursery, the Care Inspectorate, and the Police.
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- If the police are investigating a decision will be taken by Aberdeenshire Council on whether the nursery will close due to the investigation.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation:
 - All staff will co-operate fully
 - The police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff
- The Care Inspectorate will be involved as a Duty of Candour will have been raised and they will carry out an investigation when appropriate.