

Missing Child Procedure 2026

Summary

The International British Theatre School (IBTS) is committed to maintaining the highest levels of supervision and safeguarding. This procedure outlines the immediate actions to be taken in the rare event that a child goes missing, ensuring the child's swift recovery and the safety of all others in our care.

Preventative Measures

IBTS takes proactive steps to minimise the risk of a child going missing:

- Staff carry out **frequent headcounts**, particularly during transitions between venues (e.g. from collection points to classrooms or outdoor spaces).
- Children are always signed in and out by authorised adults.
- Registers are updated in real time when moving between locations.
- Boundaries are clearly explained to children at the start of each session or trip.
- The **staff-to-child ratio** complies with or exceeds EYFS 2024 requirements.
- All staff are familiar with this procedure and trained annually in missing child response.

If a Child Cannot Be Located

If a child is discovered to be missing:

1. **Alert all staff immediately.**
 - Stop all other activities and ensure all children are safely supervised.
2. **Conduct an immediate search** of the premises and surrounding area, including toilets, corridors, and outdoor zones.
3. **Check attendance registers** and confirm which child is missing and the last known location/time.
4. **After 10 minutes**, if the child is not found:

- The **Police (999)** must be called without delay.
- The **Manager or Director** will contact the child's parents or carers to inform them of the situation and ongoing actions.

5. Continue searching while awaiting the arrival of the police and parents.
6. Keep all remaining children calm and supervised, maintaining normal routines as far as possible.
7. When the police arrive, the **Manager/Director** will provide:
 - A recent photo (if available)
 - Details of what the child was wearing
 - Time and location last seen
 - Attendance list and staff witness statements.
8. The **Manager** will liaise directly with the police and parents until the child is found.

If a Child Goes Missing on an Outing

- The **Group Leader** will conduct a headcount immediately.
- Staff will search the immediate area, ensuring remaining children are kept safe in one supervised location.
- The venue's staff and security should be informed.
- If not found within 10 minutes, the police will be called.
- The **Manager/Director** will be contacted to coordinate communication with parents and Ofsted.

After the Incident

- Once the child is found and safe, the priority is reassurance and care.
- The incident will be recorded in the **Incident Log**, including details of time, actions taken, and outcome.

- A full internal review will be conducted to identify causes, procedural gaps, or staff training needs.
- A risk assessment will be updated to prevent recurrence.
- **Ofsted** will be informed of any missing child incident within **14 days**.
- If the police or Social Care were involved, a **safeguarding referral** will be made following **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**.

Emergency Contact Information

- **UK Police & Emergency Services:** 999
- **German Emergency Services:** 112 | Police: 110
- **Italian Emergency Services:** 113 | Police: 112
- **Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231
- **Director (Ben Whiteside):** +44 7707 360192 (Phone / WhatsApp)

Monitoring and Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually and following any incident involving a missing child. All staff will revisit it during induction and safeguarding training.

Reviewed: 15 November 2025

Next Review Due: 15 November 2026

Policy Owner: Ben Whiteside, Director
International British Theatre School