**Lost Child Policy**

**Policy Created:** 15/12/22

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The safety of your child is paramount, and I will always try to ensure that they remain with me at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing or becoming ‘lost’ whilst in my care I will take the following steps:

* I will immediately raise the alarm to all around me that I have lost a child and enlist the help of everyone to look for them
* If it is a secure area such as a shopping centre, I will quickly alert the security staff so they can assist me in looking for the child and check the CCTV.
* I will provide everyone involved in the search with a description of the child.
* I will reassure the other children with me, as they may be distressed. If possible, I will leave the children with a responsible person that I know has been DBS checked, for example, another registered childminder, whilst I continue to look for the missing child.
* **If the child is not found in the immediate area within 10 minutes, I will then alert the police and provide a full description and look for a recent photograph.**
* I will alert the parents of the situation and continue to help on the advice of the police.

To avoid situations like this from happening I take the following precautions:

* Ensure all exterior doors, safety gates and fences are secure in and around my home.
* Ensuring small children hold my hand or the pushchair whilst we are out.
* Avoid going to places that are overcrowded.
* Teach the children about the dangers of wandering off and of talking to strangers.
* When taking children on outings to new places I will carry out a risk assessment prior to the outing.