Climbing The Stairs

Date adopted: 13 October 2026

Reviewed: 13 October 2026

Date to be reviewed: 13 October 2028

Purpose

This procedure is to be followed every time the children are climbing up and down the stairs. The procedure is to be verbally communicated to the staff member helping, to ensure no accidents take place. Management will monitor the procedure to ensure it is being followed.

This procedure is a control measure identified in our written risk assessment for the stairs and corridors, which is reviewed at least annually.

Legal and statutory basis

This procedure supports our compliance with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, in particular the requirements on premises and security, and on staffing arrangements and ratios.

Staffing ratios are maintained at all times during transitions: 1:3 for children under two, 1:4 for two-year-olds, and 1:8 for children aged three and over . The four staff members referred to below are the minimum needed to move the group safely while keeping ratios in the rooms.

Going upstairs

A staff member radios management to help support staff to get the children up and down the stairs safely.
When all 4 staff members are present, the children will come out of the room and sit in the corridor with 2 members of staff.
1 staff member goes to the top of the stairs with 1 child. The child is on the side with the banister and the staff member will be behind the child. The staff member has a firm hold of the child's two hands and is walking behind the child going up the stairs. When they reach the top, they support the child to get ready for going outside.

As they reach the top, another member of the team takes 1 child up following the same procedure, where the child holds the banister and the staff member is behind the child holding onto both hands. When they reach the top, the child has help to get ready for going outside.
The staff member should always be behind the child to ensure they are there to stop any falls.
The staff member returns downstairs to help the next child. This continues with the children as they climb the stairs one by one.
The extra staff member moves from the bottom of the stairs to the top as the children climb, as help and support is needed at the top to get the children ready.
The children climb at their own pace.
When there is only 1 child left to climb the stairs, the remaining staff member helps that child up following the same procedure as all the other children.
Under NO CIRCUMSTANCE should there be more than one child on the stairs at any one time.

Going downstairs

1 staff member radios management to support/help them down the stairs.
As the children come in from the garden, coats etc. are removed and placed on their pegs.
Wellies are to be removed and indoor shoes put on for safety.
The staff member takes the first child to the top of the stairs, firmly holding both of the child's hands, and comes down the steps in front of the child, facing the child to ensure they are there to support any trips or slips.
When they reach the bottom, the staff member and the child sit and wait for the others.
As the child reaches the bottom of the stairs, another member of the team helps a child down the stairs, following the same procedure of firmly holding both hands, going down in front of the child, facing the child to prevent any falls.
The staff member should always be in front of the child to ensure they are there to stop any falls.
When the child is safely down and sitting, the staff member returns to the top of the stairs for the next child. This procedure is followed until all of the children are safely at the bottom of the stairs.
The extra staff member moves from the top of the stairs to the bottom as the children descend, as help and support is needed at the bottom to get the children settled and waiting safely.
The children go down stairs at their own pace.
When there is only 1 child left to come down the stairs, the remaining staff member helps that child down following the same procedure as all the other children.
Under NO CIRCUMSTANCE should there be more than one child on the stairs at any one time.

The team are responsible for the safety of the children and the children's own pace is to be followed at all times. There is to be no rush or hurry when going up and down the stairs. All coats, wellies and outdoor clothing are to be put on and taken off in the cloakroom at the top of the stairs, so the children are safe as they travel the stairs.

Useful links

Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers
EYFS: staff to child ratios
Health and safety on educational visits
Ofsted: early years inspection handbook