



EMERGENCY CLOSURE/CRITICAL INCIDENT

Purpose

We understand we need to plan for all eventualities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the children we care for. With this in mind, we have an Emergency Closure & Critical Incident policy in place to ensure our nursery is able to operate effectively. This includes:

- Flood
- Severe weather - snow/heatwave
- Fire
- Burglary
- Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- Bomb threat/terrorism attack
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the nursery.

Policy

If any of these incidents impact the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via phone, email or text message at the earliest opportunity, e.g., before the start of the nursery day.

Flood

There is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions, or through the water/central heating systems. We cannot anticipate adverse weather; however, we can ensure that we take care of all our water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the risk of flooding in this way. Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered engineer, and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the nursery day, the Nursery Manager will make a decision based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the fire evacuation procedure. In this instance, children will be kept safe and parents will be notified in the same way as the fire procedure.

Snow or other severe weather

If high snowfall, or another severe weather condition such as dense fog, is threatened during a nursery day then the Manager will take the decision as to whether to close the nursery. This decision will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team. In the event of a planned closure during the nursery day, we will contact all parents to arrange for the collection of their children.

In the event of staff shortages due to snow or other severe weather, we will contact all available off duty staff and/or agency staff and group the children differently until they are able to arrive. If we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements after all avenues are explored, we will contact Ofsted to inform them of this issue, recording all details in our incident file. If we feel the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised then we will take the decision to close the nursery.

Heat wave

Please refer to our [Sun Protection guidance](#)

We will not take children outdoors where we judge that weather conditions make it unsafe to do so.



Fire

Please refer to the [Fire Safety policy](#)

Delivery of Childcare

If the setting opens in adverse weather conditions, a limited-service may be offered due to limited staffing. However, the setting will endeavour to have as many staff as possible at the setting when this situation occurs. The setting will work to ratios as set down in the registration requirements.

Note - limited childcare service will work on a first come first serve basis.

Burglary

The management of the nursery follows a lock-up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises. Alarm systems are used (not in all sites) and in operation, during all hours the nursery is closed.

The Manager will always check the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the nursery has been broken into they will follow the procedure below:

- Dial 999 with as many details as possible, i.e., name and location, details of what they have found and emphasise this is a nursery and children will be arriving soon
- Contain the area to ensure no one enters until the police arrive. The staff will direct parents and children to a separate area as they arrive. If all areas have been disturbed staff will follow police advice, including following the relocation procedure for flood (above) wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children
- The Manager on duty will help the police with enquiries, e.g., by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- A manager will be available at all times during this time to speak to parents and reassure children
- Management will assess the situation following theft and ensure parents are kept up to date with developments relating to the operation of the nursery.

Abduction or threatened abduction of a child

We have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including safety from abduction. Staff must be vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering on nursery property immediately. All doors and gates to the nursery are locked and cannot be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in. Parents are reminded on a regular basis not to allow anyone into the building whether they are known to them or not. Visitors and general security are covered in more detail in the [Visitors and Supervisions policy](#)

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult; see the [Arrivals and Departures policy](#) for more details.

If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from the nursery, we have the following procedures which are followed:

- The police must be called immediately



- The staff member will notify management immediately and the Manager will take control
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure and calmed down where necessary
- The police will be given as many details as possible including details of the child, description of the abductor, car registration number if used, time and direction of travel if seen and any family situations that may impact this abduction.

Bomb threat/terrorism attack

If a bomb threat is received at the nursery, the person taking the call will record all details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm as soon as the phone call has ended. The management will follow the fire evacuation procedure to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible.

Other incidents

All incidents will be managed by the Manager on duty and all staff will co-operate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the fire plan. Other incidents e.g., no water supply will be dealt with on an individual basis taking into account the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff in the nursery.

Should the nursery be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our critical incident plan. The Nursery Manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

Lockdown procedure

We will use the lockdown procedure when the safety of the children and staff is at risk and we will be better placed inside the current building, with doors and windows locked and blinds/curtains drawn.

We will activate this emergency procedure in response to a number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident or disturbance in the local community (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the nursery)
- An intruder on the nursery site (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in nursery)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plumes, gas cloud etc.)
- A major fire or explosion in the vicinity of the nursery – as long as it is safer staying in the premises than leaving.

In this case, the staff will be notified of the following action:

[Insert action here (e.g., the bell being rung, whistle blown etc.)]

All individuals (including children) will remain in the area they are in, if safe to do so. If the children are outside, staff are to promptly and calmly direct children into the building, if this will not endanger them. Staff will make efforts to close and lock doors wherever safe to do so.

All individuals will keep away from the windows and doors and children will be occupied in the centre of the room so they are not placed at risk or are able to see any situation developing outside.



The Manager will ensure all children, staff and visitors are accounted for and safe before returning to the office area to keep up to date with the current situation via updates.

The Manager on duty will manage the situation depending on the situation and the information available. If the nursery is in immediate danger of an intruder, the police will be called as a matter of urgency. In other cases where the situation has been called through by the police or local area authority then the nursery will await further instructions.

Once all-clear has been given externally the Manager will issue all-clear internally. After this time the staff will try to return practice to normal to enable the children not to be disrupted or upset by the events.

Any children showing worries or concerns will have one to one time with their key carer to talk about these. Parents will be informed about the situation at the earliest safest opportunity and will be kept updated when the information changes. After the event, a post-incident evaluation will be conducted to ensure that each child and staff member was supported fully and the procedure went as planned.

In all cases, the Area Manager would contact the relevant landlord, insurance company and OFSTED. A critical incident may attract media attention. It is important that staff do not comment and refer all such attention to the Area Manager. Staff and other persons who witnessed the incident may need support. The Area Manager would request counselling services through the police or County Council for those affected.

Associated Documents

- [Visitors and Supervisions Policy](#)
- [Arrivals and Departures Policy](#)
- [Sun Protection guidance](#)
- [Fire Safety policy](#)