

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises.



8.10 Critical Incident Policy

A 'Critical Incident' is a traumatic incident that could result in the death, or near death of a child or staff member. To ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children and staff in our responsibility, we ensure we plan for all eventualities. This critical incident policy and procedure is in place to ensure that we operate effectively in the unlikely case of a critical incident.

Critical incidents include:

- · Adverse weather conditions such as a flood or snow
- · Heating system failure
- · Burst water pipes
- · Fire
- · Bomb threat
- · Explosion
- · Terrorist attack
- · Burglary
- · Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- · Death of a member of staff or a child
- · Assault on a member of staff or a child
- · Serious accident or illness
- · Any other incident that may affect the care of the children at the nursery

In all cases we will make every effort to keep the preschool open, but in exceptional circumstances we may need to close at short notice. In such a case we will contact parents via telephone, text and e-mail. In the event of an emergency our primary concern will be to ensure that both the children and the staff are kept safe. If it is necessary to evacuate the preschool the procedures set out in policy 8.5 Fire safety and emergency evacuation will be followed.

Flood:

- Although not usual at our preschool location, there is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions which we cannot anticipate. If flooding occurs during the preschool day the manager in charge will make a decision depending on the severity and location of the flooding and it may be necessary to follow the evacuation procedure.

Snow:

- If heavy snow fall is threatened during preschool hours the manager in charge will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff when deciding whether or not to close the nursery. Parents will be contacted for collection of their child via email, text and telephone. In the event of staff shortages due to snow, bank staff will be contacted. Please be aware it may be necessary to group the children differently to normal until they arrive. If, having

explored all avenues, we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements, Ofsted will be informed and advice sought. If the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised, the manager in charge will take the decision to close the nursery.

Burst Water Pipes:

- We take care of our water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the risk of flooding in this way. However, if flooding occurs as a result during the nursery day the manager in charge will make a decision based on the severity and location of the flooding, and it may be necessary to follow the evacuation procedures.

Fire:

- In the event of a fire our normal fire procedures will apply and the building will be evacuated as above

Burglary:

- We follow a strict lock up procedure. All doors and windows are closed and locked before the premises are vacated and team members sign that they have done so on our detailed check list which is re-checked by the manager in charge before the team are 'released'. We have an alarm system which is switched on and in operation during the hours that the centre is closed. The opening manager and/or deputy managers/room leaders check the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the centre has been broken into, they will: –
- Dial 999 Police with as many details as possible – i.e. name and location, details of what they have found, and emphasize that this is a preschool and children will be arriving soon
- Contain the area so that no-one enters until the police arrive
- If all areas have been affected, the opening manager will follow police advice and may then follow the emergency closure procedure
- The opening manager will help the police identify items missing, point of entry etc.
- The Centre Manager will be informed, if not already there, so that they are available to speak to and reassure parents. The Committee will also be informed.
- The Centre Manager will assess the situation following a 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 take the safety and welfare of the children in our care extremely seriously and have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe whilst within our care. This includes safety from abduction. We keep our children safe from abduction by putting the following in place:
- Staff are vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering around the property to the Manager in charge.
- All doors and gates to the preschool are locked and unable to be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in.
- Children are only be released into the care of a designated adult – see collection of children policy
- Parents are requested to inform the preschool of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so that the staff are able to support the child/ren. The preschool staff will not enter into any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the preschool will not restrict access unless a court order is

in place. Parents are requested to issue the preschool with a copy of these documents should they be in place. We will seek legal advice with regards to any concerns over custody and relay any information back to all parties involved

- If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from the preschool, the following procedures will be followed:-
 - The police must be called immediately
 - The Staff member will notify the Manager in charge immediately
 - The Parents 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 might impact on this abduction

Bomb Threat / Terror Attack:

- Though this is of course unlikely the country is sadly always on terror alert and as gloomy as this is we must be vigilant and prepared for the worst. Our Bomb Threat/ Terror Attack procedure is similar but not the same as our fire procedure (see fire procedure):
- If a bomb threat is received at preschool the person taking the call will record all the details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm, without alarming the children, calmly and as soon as the telephone call is terminated
- The same applies if any suspicious circumstance is detected

Examples of suspicious circumstances are:

- A telephone call announcing a bomb threat or imminent terror attack
- Someone suspicious outside the building with a suspicious bag
- A bag planted outside the building
- A suspicious package arriving at the setting

Death or serious injury of a member of staff or child:

- In this incidence, the Manager in charge would need to take charge of the situation...
- Priority would be to get emergency assistance ringing 999 giving full details of the person, location, incident, and medical situation
- A parent or next of kin should be contacted immediately
- The Local Authority Early Years Team should be contacted for support in contacting all the necessary agencies that need to be informed of the incident, including Ofsted, and Social Care
- They will also provide support for the preschool itself
- Staff team will be updated and debriefed
- Children will be managed and reassured
- Insurance company will be informed
- Management will agree regarding what will be told to the other parents to ensure they are all given the same information
- With legal advice, management will decide what will be said to media if necessary to ensure consistency
- Advice will also be obtained from the Early Years Team
- A factual report will be written, using clear, specific language giving the facts about what happened
- There will be a review of the procedures in the preschool, to see if lessons can be learnt from the incident, and an assessment made on the ongoing risk of this happening again
- Counselling will be offered to those in need

- In the sad event that the preschool is notified of a child's death outside of the setting, there may well be ongoing actions and issues that need to be addressed. These can include distress for staff, children, and parent's/carers, as well as Social Care and Police investigations, and possible media interest. There is no duty for us to ring Ofsted or Social care. However, if we felt that this incident was a safeguarding children issue, we would follow the normal Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

Other Incidents:

- All incidents will be managed by the Manager in Charge, and all staff will cooperate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the fire procedures. Other incidents will be dealt with on an individual basis taking into account the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff at the nursery.

This policy was adopted by	Winterbourne Early Years Centre
On	_____
Date to be reviewed	_____
Signed on behalf of the provider	_____
Name of signatory	_____
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	_____