

# Critical Incident Policy

At **The Old School Children's Centre** 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 a critical incident policy in place to ensure our nursery is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident. These include:

- Flood
- Fire
- Burglary
- Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- Bomb threat/terrorism attack
- National outbreaks of infection/health pandemics
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the nursery.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via telephone 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 option of flooding in this way. Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered gas engineer and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the nursery day, the Senior Manager/Responsible person 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.

Should the nursery be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our operational plan. We will contact parents and have to close temporarily whilst we seek alternative arrangements or until such a time that the setting is deemed as safe to operate.

## **Fire**

Please refer to the Fire Safety Policy & Procedure.

## **Burglary**

The Senior Manager/Responsible person of the nursery follow a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises.

The Senior Manager/Responsible person 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 you 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 under flood wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children

- The Senior Manager/Responsible person will help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- A Senior Manager/Responsible person will be available at all times during this time to speak to parents, reassure children and direct enquires
- Management 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 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 internally 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 Security Policy.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult, as per the Security Policy & Safeguarding Policy. Parents are requested to inform the nursery of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise, so the nursery is able to support the child. The nursery will not take sides in relation to any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child.

If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the nursery will not restrict access **unless** a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the nursery with a copy of these documents should they be in place. We will consult our solicitors with regards to any concerns over custody and relay any information back to the parties involved.

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

- The police must be called immediately
- The staff member will notify management immediately and the Senior Manager/Responsible Person 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 on 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.

In the event of the setting being on 'Lock-Down' whereby due to the nature of the threat we are unable to evacuate the setting, Senior Manager/Responsible Person will ensure that they follow the below Lock Down Procedure;

- All staff and children are taken to areas of the setting that are out of site of accessible window; the sleep room, ladybird room.
- If Butterfly cannot access the stairs to these areas, the must stay out of site of windows and doors i.e. within the book nook, behind the partition wall.
- During Lock Down – all windows and doors are to be locked internally

- Setting Mobile Phones instead of landline.

### **Other incidents**

All incidents will be managed by the Senior Manager/Responsible Person 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 Safety Procedure. 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.

If there is an incident outside of the nursery building and it is safer to stay inside the building will put into place the Lock Down Procedure. Emergency advice would be taken.

### **National outbreaks of infection/Health Pandemics**

In the event of a national outbreak of a health pandemic we will follow the Government health advice and guidance, legal advice and advice from our insurance provider.

The setting will remain open until directed to close by a governing body, such as Public Health England and provided as long as we have sufficient staff to care for the children.

The Senior Manager/Responsible Person will use the Suitable Person's Policy as guidance regarding staffing effectively, specifically: Emergency Staffing Plan

Nation outbreaks/ National or Local Emergencies/Health Epidemic/Pandemics may require the setting to consider prioritising children's places. **This will also be used prior to the decision to close in the event of staff absences**, to ensure that the setting is remains open and therefore supportive during challenging periods.

Priority places will be given to the following families:

1. Children who's parents/carers are both employed and currently working within;
  - a. NHS
  - b. Emergency Services
  - c. Military
2. Children of parents/carers who are both at employment for the duration of the child's attendance
3. Children known to CYPS or cared for under CYPS

Depending on the nature of the pandemic we will follow all advice and implement measures to ensure that risks to vulnerable children and staff are minimised. This may include:

- Undertaking additional cleanliness/hygiene routines
- Closing for short periods of time to undertake a deep clean of all areas
- Excluding potentially infected children/staff/parents or family members from the setting for a set period of time to prevent the spread of infection
- Temporary closure

### Staffing during Critical Incidents

During these times The Old School may have to seek emergency staffing, due to staff illness or inability to work. The Old School will always try to ensure that there is at least one key member of staff present from each unit. Extra staff may be sourced from outside agencies or from other local settings. The Old School always maintains the highest standard of safety when sourcing from external agencies.

- A full induction will take place before any agency staff is able to work with the children
- Require that a DBS has taken place- including DBS number.
- They will never be left alone with a child
- They will never be involved in intimate care of a child such as nappy changing routines

- In cases where we are using a member of staff from another setting, the above will apply as well as speaking to their employer to obtain their suitability for the roll.
- Where possible we will make sure that additional staff are working with an age group where they have the most confidence and/or experience.

Taking children from other settings on a temporary basis

During times when other settings may be as closed, due to a critical incident, The Old School will always try to support families by ensuring it is able to temporarily accept children from other settings, provided current staffing allows.

The registration process would apply as if registering a new child, however settling procedure may be adjusted to support emergency need.

The Old School will seek to ensure that any relevant welfare and safeguarding information regarding children is obtained from their original setting. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

In situations such as these a registration fee of £25 would be expected for children attending on a temporary basis or at the discretion of the senior management team.

This decision will be done in consultation with parents, staff, legal advice and our insurance provider. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

The nursery Senior Manager/Responsible person will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>March 2020</i>		<i>March 2021</i>