



Critical Incident Policy October 2025

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 can operate effectively in the case of a critical incident. These include:

- Fire
- Flood
- 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.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the nursery to remain open the following process will be followed to maintain children's safety until they are collected:

- We will find or make a safe area that is suitable for staff and children to occupy until all children are collected.
- We will contact parents via the Eylog system, the Closed Parent and Staff Facebook page, or email at the earliest opportunity.
- We will reassure children and parents that are anxious, ensuring that children's care is continued.
- We will try to make alternative arrangements in other childcare facilities in the local area for children that cannot be collected by parents for a lengthy time. Where possible children will be transported to nearby settings with spaces on foot or by car, if by car this will only be where business insurance is in place, and there are appropriate child safety seats available.
- The Nursery will notify Ofsted in the event of a fire or other critical incident.
- Management will assess the situation following a fire or other critical incident and ensure parents are kept up to date with developments relating to the operation of the nursery.

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 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.

Burglary

The management of the nursery follow a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises. Alarm systems are used and in operation during all hours the nursery is closed.

Should a member of staff discover on opening that the nursery has been broken into they will follow the procedure below:

- Dial 999 to report to the Police, request quick response as children will be arriving soon.
- Find or make a safe an area that is suitable for staff and children to occupy until police confirm re their requirements for their investigations.
- Help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.

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 Visitor and Contractor 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 a parent requests for the Nursery to stop allowing another parent to collect child, this will only be agreed to if a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the nursery with a copy of these documents should they be in place.

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 senior management immediately.
- 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 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.

Other incidents

All incidents will be managed by SMT and all staff will co-operate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the fire evacuation 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.

Recording and reporting

- On discovery of an incident, the member of staff reports to the appropriate emergency service, fire, police, ambulance, if those services are needed.
- The member of staff ensures that the setting manager and/or deputy are informed (if not on the premises at the time) and that the owners/trustees/directors are informed.
- If the incident indicates that a crime may have been committed, all staff witness to the incident should make a written statement.
- Staff do not discuss the incident with the press.
- According to the severity of the incident the Nursery notifies Ofsted or RIDDOR.
- If the incident is RIDDOR reportable, the setting manager telephones HSE Contact Centre on 0345 300 9923 or reports online at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm
- RIDDOR Reportable events require reporting to RIDDOR within 15 days of the event occurring.

If an insurance claim is likely:

- incidents such as fire, theft or flood are notified to the insurance provider immediately
- if broken or faulty equipment is involved, it must not be repaired, destroyed or disposed of, in case it is needed during the investigation
- if communication from a solicitor is received on behalf of the injured party, this is sent directly to the insurance provider; the setting manager will then write to the solicitor to confirm that the letter has been passed on
- the incident is not discussed with any outside persons, or other parents, no matter what questions they may ask about their own child's safety in relation to the incident, as it is regarded as confidential.