

The Children's Workshop

Critical Incident Policy

At the Children's Workshop 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 pre-school 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
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the pre-school.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the pre-school to operate, we will contact parents via phone/email message at the earliest opportunity, e.g. before the start of the pre-school 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 insist that our landlords take care of all water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the option of flooding in this way. The central heating systems are checked and serviced regularly by a registered gas engineer and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the pre-school day, the pre-school senior 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.

Should the pre-school be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we would have to close until such time that is safe to reopen. Parents will be informed about how they can find out when the pre-school will reopen and other pertinent information according to the circumstances of the closure.

Fire/Gas leak

Please refer to the fire safety policy.

Burglary

The management of the pre-school follow a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises.

The Children's Workshop

The senior manager will always check the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the pre-school 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 pre-school and children will be arriving soon
- Inform the landlords
- 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 closing the pre-school if necessary to ensure the safety of the children
- The senior 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, 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 pre-school.

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 pre-school property immediately. All doors and gates to the pre-school are locked and cannot be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in. Visitors and general security are covered in more detail in the Safeguarding policy.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult; see the arrivals and departures policy for more details. Parents are requested to inform the pre-school of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so the pre-school is able to support the child. The pre-school will not take sides in relation to any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent with legal parental responsibility arrives to collect their child, the pre-school will not restrict access **unless** a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the pre-school with a copy of these documents should they be in place. We will take legal advice 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 pre-school 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 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,

The Children's Workshop

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 pre-school, 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 cooperate 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 pre-school.

Lock down procedure

We will use the lock down 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, blinds/curtains drawn where possible and lights turned off.

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

- A report incident or disturbance in the local community (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the pre-school)
- An intruder on the pre-school site (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in pre-school)
- 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 pre-school – as long as it is safer staying in the premises than leaving.

In this case the staff will be notified by the following action:

Staff will quietly be informed that there is a CODE RED situation.

All Staff, children and visitors must

- ❖ Remain calm and keep the children calm and quiet
- ❖ Move slowly
- ❖ Obey instructions

All children and staff will relocate to **MOSS HALL** if safe to do so (if necessary move through MOSS HALL to the either the STAGE or CHURCH). 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. The group managers will ensure all children,

The Children's Workshop

staff and visitors are accounted and safe by checking the group registers and visitors book and conducting a headcount.

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

The senior manager on duty will manage the situation dependant on the situation and the information available. If the pre-school is in immediate danger of an intruder, the police will be called as a matter of urgency (999). In other cases where the situation has been called through by the police or local area authority then the pre-school will await further instructions.

Once the all clear has been given externally the manager will issue the all clear internally. After this time the staff will 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 person/group manager to talk about these.

Parent communication during a lockdown should give enough information so that they:

- ❖ are reassured that the pre-school understands their concern for their child's welfare and that it is doing everything possible to ensure his/her safety
- ❖ Do not need to contact the pre-school. Calling the pre-school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers
- ❖ Do not come to pre-school. They would interfere with emergency provider's access to the pre-school and may even put themselves and others in danger.
- ❖ Wait for the pre-school to contact them with information about when & where it will be safe to collect children.

We may need to re-enforce the message:

" the Children's Workshop is in full lockdown situation. During this period the school telephone line and all entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out ..." via the Children's Workshop website/parents email and both Children's Workshop Instagram and Facebook accounts

Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as the situation unfolds. The pre-school site may or may not be cordoned off by the Emergency Services depending on the severity of the situation that has triggered the lockdown.

Emergency Services will support the decision of the senior manager regarding timing of communication with Parents

The Children's Workshop

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.

The pre-school senior manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the pre-school	Date for review
<i>Jan 2018</i>	<i>JB</i>	<i>Jan 2019</i>