

Critical Incident Policy

Introduction and purpose

At Little Stars Pre-school 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 incidents 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.

General Incident Response

If any incident impacts on the ability of the Pre-school to operate, we will contact parents via phone at the earliest opportunity, e.g. before the start of the Pre-school day.

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

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 Pre-school day, the Pre-school 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.

Fire

Please refer to the fire safety policy.

Burglary

The Pre-school have a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises.

The manager/ staff 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.
- Contact the Church office and Preschool Committee.
- 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 manager will help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- The manager or Deputy manager will be available at all times during this time to speak to parents, reassure children and direct enquires • The manager 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 to the Pre-school 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 Pre-school whether they are known to them or not.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult. 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 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 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 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 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 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 Preschool 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.

Lockdown procedure

In the event of an intruder causing the preschool staff and children to lockdown, the staff will be alerted to this need by the use of a codeword which is available on the inside of the staff cupboard. The staff will gather the children into one locked space where they will be kept safe until the danger has passed.

Other incidents

All incidents will be managed by the manager 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 Pre-school.

Review / Version Control				
Review period - 3 years				
Version	Created	Reviewed	Initials	Changes
Critical Incident Policy (v1.0)	03/2020		DH / AP	
Critical Incident Policy - Oct24 – v1.1	10/2024		DH AP	Changed template and version control. Minor changes to wording and order. addition of Introduction header
		10/2025	DH AP	
Critical Incident Policy – v1.2	09/2026		DH SH AP	Lockdown procedure added