



## Critical Incident Policy

### Policy statement

At Little Elms 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:

- 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 nursery.

If any of these incident's impact on the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via phone and/or email 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 Nursery Manager will decide based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the Emergency Plan and evacuate. In this instance children will be kept safe, and parents will be notified in the same way as the Fire Action procedure.

### Fire

In the event of a fire, our normal Fire Action procedure will apply, and the building will be evacuated as above. Please see our Fire Policy for more information.

### 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. If a cleaner is used out of normal operating hours, they will follow the same procedure as the nursery management in securing the building. Alarm systems are used and in operation during all hours the nursery is closed.

The nursery management team 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 manager on duty will help the police with enquiries, e.g., by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- A manager will always be available 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 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.

Staff are always vigilant and report any persons lingering on nursery property immediately to the management team. 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 Visitors and Security Policy.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult; see the Visitors and Security Policy for more details. Parents are requested to inform the nursery of any potential change in parental rights or family concerns as soon as they arise, so the nursery can support the child and family. The nursery will not take sides in relation to any change in parental rights 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 manager will take control
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure, implementing the Lockdown Procedure, and calming the children 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 manager on duty will follow the Fire Action procedure to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible.

#### Pandemic / Epidemic

In the event of a pandemic/epidemic situation the nursery will take advice from the government and local authority on closing. If necessary, parents will be contacted by phone / email and informed of any closures.

#### Other incidents

All incidents will be managed by the manager 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 Action procedure. Other incidents e.g., no water supply will be dealt with on an individual basis considering the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff in the nursery.

## 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 and blinds/curtains drawn.

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 nursery)
- An intruder on the nursery site (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in nursery)
- 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 nursery – as long as it is safer staying in the premises than leaving.

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

- The manager on duty will use the designated code word when there is an intruder on site. This code word is unique to each setting and is communicated during the induction and via regular staff meeting updates and supervisions.
- All individuals (including children) will remain in the area they are in, if safe to do so. 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.
- All individuals will keep away from the windows and doors and children will be occupied in the centre of the room, so they are not placed at risk or are able to see any situation developing outside.
- The manager on duty will ensure all children, staff and visitors are accounted for and safe before returning to the office area to keep up to date with the current situation via updates.
- The manager on duty will manage the situation dependant on the situation and the information available.
- If the nursery is in immediate danger of an intruder, the police will be called as a matter of urgency. The staff member who is informed by the Manager on duty, of the code word will contact the police using the room phones.
- All staff have been trained and made aware what to do in the case of calling the police (999) and not being able to talk.
- In other cases where the situation has been alerted by the police or local area authority then the nursery will await further instructions.
- Once the all-clear has been given externally, the manager on duty will issue the all-clear internally. After this time, the staff will try to return to normal practice 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 to talk about these.
- Parents will be informed about the situation at the earliest safest opportunity and will be kept updated when the information changes.

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 Nursery Manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

### *Associated Documents:*

- *Silent Solution Guide*



- *Emergency Plan*
- *Fire Policy*
- *Fire Action Procedure*
- *Visitors and Security Policy*