



Critical Incident Policy

For Acorn nursery and Out of School Club

June 2026- June 2027

EYFS: 3.1-3.2, 3.55,3.56, 3.63

At Acorn Childcare Centre we understand the importance of planning for all eventualities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children in our care, including those attending wraparound care before and after school and during holidays.

With this in mind, we have a critical incident policy in place to ensure our nursery and wraparound provision can operate effectively in the event 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 children attending the nursery, wraparound provision, school collection or school drop-off services.

If any of these incidents impact the ability of the nursery or wraparound provision to operate safely, we will contact parents/carers via phone, email or Connect message at the earliest opportunity, including where disruption affects school pick-up/drop-off arrangements or the operation of before and after school care.

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 all water and heating systems are regularly maintained and checked to reduce the risk of flooding. Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered engineer and conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the nursery day or during wraparound care hours, the Nursery Manager will assess the severity and location of the flooding. It may be necessary to follow the fire evacuation procedure. In this instance children will be kept safe, and parents/carers will be notified in the same way as the fire procedure (see Fire Safety Policy).

Where flooding affects school transport routes or school premises, the nursery will liaise with local schools and parents/carers regarding amended collection or drop-off arrangements. No child will be transported unless it is safe to do so.

Should the nursery or wraparound provision be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident, we will follow our operational plan and provide temporary care at the Danish Invader, Empingham Road, where possible and appropriate.

Fire

Please refer to the Fire Safety Policy.

In the event of a fire during wraparound care sessions or while children are being escorted to or from school, staff will follow evacuation procedures and maintain appropriate supervision ratios at all times. School collection and drop-off arrangements may be suspended until it is deemed safe to resume.

Burglary

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

The Manager or most senior member of staff on site will always check the premises upon arrival. Should they discover that the nursery has been broken into, they will follow the procedure below:

- In an emergency dial 999 or non-emergency dial 101 with as many details as possible, including the name and location of the setting, details of what has been found and emphasising that this is a nursery and wraparound childcare setting with children due to arrive shortly.
- Contain the area to ensure no-one enters until the police arrive.
- Where safe to do so, staff will direct parents/carers and children to a separate area as they arrive. If all areas have been disturbed, staff will follow police advice. This may include temporary closure and/or relocation procedures under the flood section wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children.
- If school collection or drop-off services are affected, parents/carers and relevant schools will be informed immediately and alternative arrangements agreed.
- The Manager on duty will assist the police with enquiries, e.g. identifying items missing or areas of entry.

- A Manager will always be available during this time to speak to parents/carers, reassure children and direct enquiries.
- Management will assess the situation following a theft and ensure parents/carers are kept up to date with developments relating to the operation of the nursery and wraparound provision.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the nursery is made safe and secure again.

Abduction or Threatened Abduction of a Child

In the event of a suspected abduction or threatened abduction of a child, the safety and welfare of all children will remain paramount.

The Manager or senior member of staff will:

- Immediately contact the police by dialling 999.
- Contact the child's parent/carer as soon as possible.
- Ensure all remaining children are supervised safely and securely.
- Implement the lockdown procedure if advised by emergency services or deemed necessary.
- Review registers, signing in/out records and school collection records where applicable.
- Inform relevant schools immediately if the child attends wraparound care or was due to be collected from or dropped off at school.
- Notify Ofsted and any other relevant agencies.

Staff involved in school collections and transport arrangements must ensure all children are accounted for at all transition points between school and nursery.

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/contact emergency services immediately after the call has ended.

Management will follow the fire evacuation procedure and guidance from emergency services to ensure the safety of all on the premises, including children attending wraparound care and those awaiting school collection or transport.

The person who took the call will provide as much detail as possible to emergency services. Ofsted will be notified.

Where necessary, school collection and drop-off services will be suspended and parents/carers informed immediately. Staff will remain with children until they are safely collected by authorised adults.

Following incidents of this nature, parents/carers, children and staff may require additional support and reassurance. Management will provide this or seek further support where necessary.

Any Other Significant Incidents

All incidents will be managed by the Manager on duty and all staff will co-operate fully with emergency services where applicable.

The fire evacuation procedure will be followed for any incident requiring emergency evacuation. Other incidents, e.g. no water supply, severe weather or loss of utilities, will be dealt with individually while considering the safety, health and welfare of children and staff.

Where incidents impact school transport arrangements or wraparound care sessions, parents/carers and schools will be informed promptly. Decisions regarding school collections or drop-offs will always prioritise children's safety.

If there is an incident outside the nursery building and it is safer to remain indoors, the setting will implement the lockdown procedure and follow emergency advice.

National Outbreaks of Infection/Health Pandemics

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

The setting will remain open as long as sufficient staff are available to care safely for children attending nursery and wraparound care.

Depending on the nature of the pandemic, we will implement measures to minimise risks to vulnerable children and staff. This may include:

- Enhanced hygiene and cleaning procedures
- Adjustments to school collection and drop-off arrangements
- Limiting visitors to the setting
- Excluding infected children, staff, parents/carers or family members for a specified period
- Temporary suspension of wraparound services if staffing or safety cannot be maintained

All decisions will be made in consultation with parents/carers, staff, legal advisors, schools where appropriate, and our insurance provider. Each case will be reviewed individually.

Dealing with People's Reactions

The Centre accepts that children, parents/carers, school representatives and staff members may be frightened and distressed following a critical incident.

This Policy is written and shared with all parties so there is a clear understanding of working within a framework of mutual trust and understanding.

The Centre recognises that powerful emotions may be involved and that people's behaviour can sometimes be unpredictable in stressful circumstances.

The Centre will:

- Be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Respond sympathetically and professionally to questions and concerns
- Provide information in as much detail as reasonably practicable
- Work collaboratively with schools and other professionals where wraparound care children are affected
- Offer reassurance and support to children, families and staff

Dealing with the Media

Distressed parents/carers may contact the local press, or reporters may become aware of the incident if the police or emergency services are involved.

One designated person, usually the Centre Manager, will speak on behalf of the Centre. All staff and adults involved in the setting will be asked to refer media enquiries to the Centre Manager.

No information regarding individual children, families or staff members will be shared without appropriate consent and consideration for confidentiality and safeguarding obligations.

The nursery manager 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>June 2024</i>	<i>Lorna Hodgett</i>	<i>June 2025</i>
<i>Reviewed May 2025 - SK</i>		<i>June 2026</i>
<i>Reviewed 29 May 26 Added OOSC actions.</i>	<i>Lorna Hodgett</i>	<i>June 2027</i>