



Critical Incident

June 2024

Review June 2025

EYFS: 3.1-3.2, 3.55,3.56, 3.63

At Acorn Childcare Centre 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
- National outbreaks of infection/health pandemics
- 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 operate, we will contact parents via phone/email/Connect message 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 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 same procedure as 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 (see Fire Safety Policy).

Should the nursery 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.

Fire

Please refer to the fire safety policy.

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.

The manager or most senior member of staff on site 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:

- In an emergency dial 999 or non-emergency dial 101 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.
- Where it is safe to do so, 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. This may include temporary short-term closure and/or following the relocation procedure under the flood section 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
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the nursery is made safe and secure again.

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 as soon as the phone call has ended. The management will follow the fire evacuation procedure and guidance from the emergency services to ensure the safety of all on the premises. The person who took the call will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible. Ofsted will be notified. With incidents of this nature parents, carers, children and staff may require support and reassurance following the traumatic experience. 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 with any emergency services on the scene, where applicable. The fire evacuation procedure will be followed for any other incident that requires an emergency evacuation. 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.

If there is an incident outside of the nursery building and it is safer to stay inside the building will put into place the lockdown procedure. Emergency advice would be taken.

National outbreaks of infection/Health Pandemics

In the event of a national outbreak of a 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 we have sufficient staff to care for the children. Depending on the nature of the pandemic we will follow all advice and implement measures to ensure that risks to vulnerable children and staff are minimised. This may include excluding infected children/staff/parents or family members from the setting for a set period of time, to prevent the spread of infection. This decision will be done in consultation with parents, staff, legal advice and our insurance provider. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Dealing with People's Reactions

The Centre accept that children, parents/carers and staff members may be frightened and distressed. This Policy is written and shared with all parties so that there is an understanding of working within a framework of mutual trust and understanding. The Centre accepts that in such circumstances powerful emotions are involved and people's behaviour can be unpredictable. The Centre will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions. Information will be provided in as much detail as possible to all parties as soon as reasonably practicable.

Dealing with the Media

Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. It is sensible for one person, usually the Centre Manager, to be the one who speaks for the Centre. All adults will be asked to refer all enquiries to the Centre Manager.

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>