



Critical Incident Policy

At **Cherrytrees Children's Nurseries Ltd** 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 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
- National outbreaks of infection or health pandemics
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the nursery.

If any of these incidents affect the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via phone 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 and 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 occurrence 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 make a decision based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the same procedures 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 Nursery operational plan and provide care in another location.

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 has been 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 relocation procedures (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 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 nursery.

Abduction or threatened abduction of a child

We have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including taking reasonable steps to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises. Staff are vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering on nursery property immediately. 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. We also have visual reminders about closing the door behind them to prevent tailgating (another person accessing entry behind them). Visitors and general security are covered in more detail in the supervision of visitor's 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 nursery of any potential custody proceedings or family concerns as soon as they arise, so the nursery is able to support the child. The nursery will not take sides in relation to any custody arrangements 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 about 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 that are followed immediately:

- The staff member will notify management immediately and the manager will take control, dialling 999 and requesting the police, instructions from the emergency response team will be followed
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure, reassured and calmed 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 have resulted in this abduction
- Any incidents must be recorded in writing as soon as practicably possible including the outcome, who was abducted, time identified, notification to police and findings
- In the unlikely event that the child is not found, the nursery will follow the local authority and police procedure
- The Care Inspectorate will be contacted and informed of the incidents



- 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
- In any cases with media attention, staff must not speak to any media representatives
- Post-incident risk assessments will be conducted following any incident of this nature to reduce the chance of reoccurrence.

Bomb threat/terrorism attack

If a bomb or terrorist attack 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 and 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. The Care Inspectorate 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

The manager on duty will manage all incidents 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, we will follow the Lockdown policy. Emergency services advice will be taken.

National outbreaks of infection or health pandemics

In the event of a national outbreak of a health pandemic, we will follow the 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 made in consultation with parents, staff, legal advice and our insurance provider. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

The nursery manager will notify The Care Inspectorate in the event of a critical incident.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>Feb 25</i>	<i>S Bennet</i>	<i>Feb 26</i>

Links to UNCRC Articles: 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 16, 19