



Critical Incident Policy

A 'Critical Incident' is a traumatic incident that could result in the death, or near death of a child or staff member. To ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children and staff in our responsibility, we ensure we plan for all eventualities. This critical incident policy and procedure is in place to ensure that we operate effectively in the unlikely case of a critical incident.

Critical incidents include:

- **Adverse weather conditions such as a flood or snow**
- **Heating system failure**
- **Burst water pipes**
- **Fire**
- **Bomb threat**
- **Explosion**
- **Terrorist attack**
- **Burglary**
- **Abduction or threatened abduction of a child**
- **Death of a member of staff or a child**
- **Assault on a member of staff or a child**
- **Serious accident or illness, such as outbreak of disease or virus**
- **Any other incident that may affect the care of the children at the pre-school**

In all cases we will make every effort to keep the pre-school open, but in exceptional circumstances we may need to close at short notice. In such a case we will contact parents via telephone or text. In the event of an emergency our primary concern will be to ensure that both the children and the staff are kept safe. If it is necessary to evacuate the pre-school we will follow the procedures set out in policy Fire safety and emergency evacuation.

Flood: ● **Although not usual at our pre-school location, there is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions which we cannot anticipate. If flooding occurs during the pre-school day the manager in charge will decide, depending on the severity and location of the flooding and it may be necessary to follow the evacuation procedure.**

Snow: ● **If heavy snow fall is threatened during pre-school hours the manager in charge will consider the safety of the children, their parents and the staff when deciding whether to close the pre-school. Parents will be contacted for collection of their child via text and telephone. In the event of staff shortages due to snow, we will endeavour to keep to ratio with the help of our committee. If, having explored all avenues, we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements, and the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised, the manager in charge will take the decision to close the pre-school.**

Burst Water Pipes: ● **The Church committee take care of our water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the risk of flooding in this way. However, if flooding occurs as a result during the pre-school day, the manager in charge will decide based on the severity and location of the flooding, and it may be necessary to follow the evacuation procedures.**

Fire: ● **In the event of a fire our normal fire procedures will apply and the building will be evacuated.**

Burglary: ● We follow a strict lock up procedure. All doors and windows are closed and locked before the premises are vacated. On opening the building, the manager and/or deputy manager check the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the hall has been broken into, they will: –

- Dial 999 Police with as many details as possible – i.e. name and location, details of what they have found, and emphasize that this is a pre-school and children will be arriving soon
- Contain the area so that no-one enters until the police arrive
- The manager or person in charge on the day will follow police advice and may then follow the emergency closure procedure
- The manager or person in charge on the day will help the police identify items missing, point of entry etc.
- The Church Committee will be informed. The Pre-school Committee will also be informed.
- Parents are kept up to-date with developments relating to the operation of the pre-school.

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. We keep our children safe from abduction by putting the following in place:
- Staff are always vigilant and report any persons lingering around the property to the Manager in charge.
- All doors and gates to the pre-school are locked and unable to be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in.
- Children are only be released into the care of a designated adult – see collection of children policy
- Parents are requested to inform the pre-school of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so that the staff can support the child/ren. The pre-school staff will not enter into 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 seek legal advice with regards to any concerns over custody and relay any information back to all parties involved
- If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from the pre-school, the following procedures will be followed: -
 - The police must be called immediately
 - The Staff member will notify the Manager in charge immediately
 - The Parents 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 might impact on this abduction

Bomb Threat / Terror Attack:

- Though this is of course unlikely the country is sadly always on terror alert and as gloomy as this is, we must be vigilant and prepared for the worst. Our Bomb Threat/ Terror Attack procedure is similar but not the same as our fire procedure (see fire procedure):
 - If a bomb threat is received at pre-school the person taking the call will record all the details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm, without alarming the children, calmly and as soon as the telephone call is terminated
 - The same applies if any suspicious circumstance is detected

Examples of suspicious circumstances are:

- A telephone call announcing a bomb threat or imminent terror attack
- Someone suspicious outside the building with a suspicious bag
- A bag planted outside the building
- A suspicious package arriving at the setting

Assault on a member of staff or child:

- Any assault will not be tolerated. Parents and staff must follow the strict Code of Conduct guidance that they have signed and agreed to. Any assault will be passed on to the Police.

Serious accident or illness, such as outbreak of disease or virus:

- Procedures will be followed regarding serious accidents and illness, as outlined in our Recording and Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy and our Health and Safety Policy. A specific policy for Covid-19 is also in place and procedures will be followed in line with Government guidance.

Death or serious injury of a member of staff or child:

- In this incidence, the Manager in charge would need to take charge of the situation...
- Priority would be to get emergency assistance ringing 999 giving full details of the person, location, incident, and medical situation
- A parent or next of kin should be contacted immediately
- The Local Authority Early Years Team should be contacted for support in contacting all the necessary agencies that need to be informed of the incident, including Ofsted, and Social Care
- They will also provide support for the pre-school itself
- Staff team will be updated and debriefed
- Children will be managed and reassured
- Insurance company will be informed
- Management will agree regarding what will be told to the other parents to ensure they are all given the same information
- With legal advice, management will decide what will be said to media if necessary, to ensure consistency
- Advice will also be obtained from the Early Years Team
- A factual report will be written, using clear, specific language giving the facts about what happened
- There will be a review of the procedures in the pre-school, to see if lessons can be learnt from the incident, and an assessment made on the ongoing risk of this happening again
- Counselling will be offered to those in need
- In the sad event that the pre-school is notified of a child’s death outside of the setting, there may well be ongoing actions and issues that need to be addressed. These can include distress for staff, children, and parent’s/carers, as well as Social Care and Police investigations, and possible media interest. There is no duty for us to ring Ofsted or Social care. However, if we felt that this incident was a safeguarding children issue, we would follow the normal Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

Other Incidents:

- All incidents will be managed by the Manager in charge on the day, and all staff will cooperate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the fire procedures. Other incidents will be dealt with on an individual basis taking into account the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff at the pre-school.

**This policy was adopted by All Saints Pre-school
on 17th June 2020**

Signed on behalf of All Saints Pre-school

Name of signatory

Role of signatory