

Written December 2022 by Hayley Jacklin



### **Critical Incident Policy and procedure**

At Market Rasen Pre School, 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 setting is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident.

A 'critical incident' may be defined as any event which threatens severely to disrupt, in whole or in part, the functioning of the setting or which carries the risk of significant adverse publicity (or both). This definition is inevitably vague, and it is probably impossible to identify in advance all types of event which would constitute critical incidents. But a critical incident would normally have the following features:

There are substantial threats to the safety of individuals or the fabric or reputation of the setting; and the incident is likely to lead to the suspension of normal operations and it follows that a critical incident is likely to require the calling out of the emergency services; and special communications mechanisms.

All incidents will be managed by the manager on duty (in consultation with the owner if available) and all staff will co-operate with any emergency services on the scene. An incident that requires evacuation will follow the lockdown procedure if evacuation of the premises was necessary.

Other than the incidents identified, all 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 in the setting.

**Contacting parents** - In respect of contacting parents, the manager will ensure that this is done via phone and/or e-mail. Parents' contact details will be stored securely within the setting.

**Specific Incidents; We have identified a number of specific critical incidents and how we would respond to them if they should arise. These include:**

- **Flood**
- **Burglary**
- **Abduction or threatened abduction of a child – please refer to lockdown procedure**
- **Bomb threat/terrorism attack – please refer to lockdown procedure**
- **Fire - please refer to the fire safety plan**
- **Altercation between parents (of any kind, physical or verbal abuse)**

**Flood** - There is 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. This is followed by Market Rasen Children's Centre and undertaken routinely and records kept by the centre as the landlord.

If flooding occurs during the business day, a decision will be made based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to close the setting. In this instance children will be kept safe and parents will be notified via phone to collect immediately. Should the setting be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our evacuation procedure which is outlined in our lockdown policy, until parents can collect their child. At this point decisions will be made on how long term care can be provided or alternative arrangements / facilities can be found in the in the local area.

**Burglary** - The management team 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 Centre is closed. On arrival in the morning, members of the team check the premises and conduct daily risk assessments. Should they discover that the Centre has been broken into they will follow the procedure below:

- Contact Children's Centre Reception Team - relaying as many details as possible, i.e. name and location, details of what you have found. Security will advise of the next steps which will include contacting the police.
- Contact the duty manager if she/he is not already at the Centre.
- Contain the area to ensure no one enters until the police arrive. Staff will direct parents and children to a separate area as they arrive (which could be the Pre School Field). If all areas have been disturbed staff will follow police advice, including following the evacuation procedure wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children. The management team will help the police with the 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 setting.

**Altercation between parents (of any kind, physical or verbal abuse) –**

Following our parent behaviour policy, parents should behave appropriately in the pre-school grounds or when collecting their children. In the event that parents have altercations between each other, we will ensure the safety of others is our priority. We will:

- Ensure all safety of our children/staff and parent/carers. This may be by asking them to move elsewhere to queue to collect their child, or by management taking one party involved into a room in the children's centre (if appropriate for theirs and others safety) to settle the tension between both parties involved. (This should not happen if the situation is out of control, we do not wish for any member of staff to become involved in such abuse or to feel threatened).
- Call emergency services on 999 immediately.
- Manager to ensure that the deputy is aware of the situation and to be extra vigilant.

- Collect factual information from all witnesses and parties involved where possible to protect ourselves, our parents, staff and children of any further comeuppance.
- Following the incident, make a plan for future support for the families of those involved. Check and revise policies to ensure all was covered and was adhered to.
- Keep records of any police intervention and crime numbers when police have been called.
- Ensure parents/carers of all children at the setting are all ok and feel safe.