

8.8 Critical incident procedures

Links to Early Years Foundation Stage: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements:

Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment:

At Niton and Brighstone preschools 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 preschool is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident.

These include:

- Adverse weather conditions such as 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
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the preschool.

If any of these incident's impact on the ability of the preschool to operate, we will contact parents via Family or our preschool facebook page at the earliest opportunity, e.g. before the start of the preschool day.

Flood

There is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions, which we cannot anticipate. If flooding occurs during the preschool day, the Manager in charge will make a decision depending on the severity and location of the flooding, and it may be necessary to follow the evacuation procedure.

Central Heating system

Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered engineer, and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

At Brighstone -we have underfloor heating which is regulated and maintained by the school.

At Niton- we have electric heaters that are annually pat tested.

Snow

If heavy snow fall is threatened during preschool hours, the Manager in charge will consider the safety of the children, their parents and the staff when deciding whether or not to close the setting. Parents will be contacted for collection of their child. In the event of staff shortages due to snow we will be closed. If the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised, the Manager in charge will take the decision to close the setting.

Fire

In the event of a fire, our normal fire procedures will apply, and the building will be evacuated as above. Please see our fire policy for more information.

Bomb Threat / Terror Attack

If a bomb threat is received, the person taking the call will record all the details given over the phone and raise the alarm as soon as the telephone call is terminated and will provide as much detail to the emergency services. At this point the attached Primary school will be alerted for their safe evacuation. The Management will follow the fire evacuation procedure to ensure the safe removal of staff and children from the premises. Advice would then be sought from the police as to further steps required.

Burglary

Niton and Brighstone Preschools follow a lock up procedure. All doors and windows are closed and locked before the premises are vacated. The Opening Manager checks the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the preschool 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 emphasise that this is a preschool and the children will be arriving soon.
- Contain the area so that no-one enters until the police arrive. If all areas have been affected, the Opening manager will follow police advice and may then follow the emergency closure procedure.

- The opening manager will help the police to identify items missing, area of entry etc....
- The Ofsted Nominated Person will be informed, if not already there, so that they are available to speak to and reassure parents.
- The Nominated Person will assess the situation following a theft and ensure parents are kept up to date with developments relating to the operation of the preschool.

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. Staff are always vigilant and report any persons lingering around the property to the Manager in charge. All doors are locked and cannot be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in. Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult- see collection of children policy. Parents are requested to inform the preschool of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so that the staff can support the child/ren. The setting will not enter any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the preschool will not restrict access unless a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the setting 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 preschool, the following procedures will be followed: -

- The staff member will notify the preschool manager in charge immediately
- The police must be called immediately
- The parents will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure and calm.

Death or serious injury of a member of staff or child

In this incidence, the Manager in charge would control the situation. Priority would be to get emergency assistance ringing 999 giving full details of the person, location, incident, and medical situation.

- 1) A parent or next of kin should be contacted immediately,

- 2) IOW COUNCIL Early Years should be contacted for support in contacting all the necessary agencies that need to be informed of the incident, including Ofsted, Social Care and Health and Safety Executive. They will also provide support for the preschool itself.
- 3) The staff team must be updated and debriefed.
- 4) Children must be managed and reassured.
- 5) The Insurance Company must be informed.
- 6) With legal advice, management must decide what will be said to the media if necessary to ensure consistency. Advice may also be given by IOW Council Early Years Team.
- 7) A factual report must be written, using clear, specific language giving the facts about what happened.
- 8) There must be a review of the procedures in the setting, to see if lessons can be learnt from the incident, and an assessment made on the ongoing risk of this happening again.
- 9) Counselling may be offered to those in need. In the sad event that the setting 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 parents, as well as Social Care and Police Investigations, and possible media interest. There is not a duty for us to ring Ofsted or Social Care. However, if we felt that this incident was a safeguarding issue, we would follow the normal Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

Pandemic / Epidemic

In the event of a pandemic/epidemic situation the preschool will take advice from the local authority on closing. If necessary, parents will be contacted by phone / email and informed of any closures.

Other Incidents

All incidents will be managed by the senior manager in charge, and all the staff will co-operate 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 setting.

Critical Incident Procedures 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 setting, the following steps will be taken: -

- All children will be escorted from the building and taken to the assembly point.
- No attempts will be made to collect personal belongings, or to re-enter the building after evacuation.
- The manager in charge, or if appropriate, another nominated individual will check the premises providing that this does not put anyone at risk.
- Before leaving the building, the manager in charge will close all accessible windows and doors.
- The manager will take an iPad containing the register and contact details of parents/carers(including staff next of kin)
- If any person is missing from the register, the emergency services will be informed immediately.
- The manager, admin manager/nominated person will contact parents to collect their children.
- If the registration is affected, we will inform the local authority & Ofsted of its closure. The nursery manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.