

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Children's behaviour must be managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs.

Safeguarding children

1.12.4 Critical Incident

Policy statement for St Joseph's Pre-school

At St Joseph's Pre-school we ensure that through our vision, values, rules, curriculum and teaching we promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. The committee also ensures that this ethos is reflected and implemented effectively in policy and practice and that there are effective risk assessments in place to safeguard and promote children's welfare. We have a duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe. Children who attend our pre-school have the right to learn in safety. We do not tolerate bullying of any kind and will challenge derogatory language and behaviour towards others.

This procedure is designed to be followed in the event of a major incident, accident or terrorist attack.

At all times staff will endeavor to remain calm and will attempt to protect the children to the best of their ability.

Definition

A "critical incident" may be defined as any event which threatens severely to disrupt, in whole or in part, the functioning of the Pre-school 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 Pre-school; and
- the incident is likely to lead to the suspension of normal operations.

It follows that a critical incident is likely to require the calling out of the emergency services.

In case of an emergency on outings

As precautionary measures St Joseph's Pre-school will take the following steps to try to protect all children:

- during outings children are to wear hi-visibility vests;
- during outings the Lead Practitioner will carry a "grab bag" containing a backup mobile phone, contact details and emergency information for all children linked to the setting and a first aid kit; and
- we will avoid busy places such as city centres, large train stations and other places where large crowds of people congregate to the best of our ability.

In case of an emergency within the setting

St Joseph's Pre-school resides within the grounds of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. The school has in place a warning bell to notify the school and pre-school of certain situations. For example, if there is an incident that needs the Leigh building to be 'locked down', such as:

- a reported incident or disturbance in the community;
- an intruder on site;
- a warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution (eg. smoke, gas cloud);
- a major fire in the vicinity of the school;
- the close proximity of a dangerous animal (eg. dog).

Lockdown procedure

The Pre-school follows the same lockdown procedure as St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Namely:

- in the event of an emergency a signal of intermittent bells will be rung continuously in an SOS sequence¹;
- the pre-school will initiate the lockdown procedure;
- staff will ensure that all children are inside the Leigh Building. They will attract the children's attention and reassure them if frightened;
- all outside doors will be locked and all windows closed that may be open;
- the pre-school register will be taken and any child or adult not present will be notified to the Lead Practitioner or her Deputy, who will inform the head and office staff of St Joseph's Primary School. They will liaise to arrange a search for the missing child/adult;
- pre-school staff will ensure that all outside doors are locked and all key pad doors have the key pads engaged;
- in the event of the need to call emergency services the head/teacher in charge and office staff of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will dial 999 and request the emergency service required;
- the all clear signal will be given by the head/teacher in charge and/or office staff of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in person to the pre-school;
- an email message will be sent to parents/carers to advise of the emergency;
- if the pre-school is still under a warning at 3pm, the children will only be released from pre-school to their parents/carers or a nominated representative. Any children that are not collected will be taken to the entrance hall and be supervised until parents/carers come to collect them and take them home. It is unlikely that parents/carers will be required before the usual end of day;
- if evacuation is required, this will be signaled by a continuous bell;
- all electronic devices will be switched to silent where possible.

Fire evacuation

In the event of the need to evacuate the Leigh Building, the Pre-school will follow its usual fire drill procedures which are well rehearsed. Namely:

- an evacuation is announced by the ringing of a continuous bell either as a result of a fire point being activated or by manual activation as part of a drill;
- staff will attract children's attention and reassure them if frightened;

¹ 3 short – 3 long – 3 short sequence of bells

- the pre-school register will be taken and any child or adult not present will be notified to the Lead Practitioner or her Deputy. A search will be arranged for any missing child or adult;
- staff will take the register and 'grab bag' and exit the building with all of the children, taking the safest route possible;
- staff and children will assemble at the evacuation point and ask the children to sit down or line up at the wall. A member of staff will stay with the children at all times;
- staff will contact the relevant emergency service;
- no one will return to the Leigh Building until the Lead Practitioner or her Deputy have given the all clear.

In the case of a real fire or need to evacuate the Leigh Building, parents/carers will be contacted via their emergency contact number, and asked to collect their child/children immediately. All children will be supervised until they have been collected.

Premises evacuation/emergency plan

If it is necessary to evacuate the school grounds, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School has an arrangement with Nympsfield Village Hall.

If an evacuation of the school grounds is still in operation at collection time (ie. 3pm), Pre-school staff will contact parents/carers via their emergency contact number to advise them of collection arrangements.

Recording of all incidents/major incidents

All incidents are recorded – the following information is collected:

- date(s);
- times;
- details of the incident;
- names of anybody involved and action taken.

The Lead Practitioner or her Deputy will make a decision as to the severity of the incident and if applicable, will report the incident to OFSTED within 14 days, and review this policy.

If we are involved in a major incident we will attempt to take the following steps to protect children to the best of our ability:

- remain calm at all times;

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Committee at least annually, by receiving a report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Associated Policies and Procedures

- No 1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection
- No 1.8 Supervision of children on outings and visits
- No 1.22 First Aid
- No 3.4 Fire safety and emergency evacuation

Version Number	Author	Purpose of change	Date
1.0	K Coupe	Reviewed, updated and page numbered	Sept 2014
2.0	N Pitcher	Reviewed	June 2017
3.0	K Coupe, N Powers & H Elliott	Reviewed, updated and version controlled	01/05/2019 Cttee Mtg
4.0	K Coupe	Updated to include emergency lockdown procedures in line with Primary School	19/09/2019 Cttee Mtg
5.0	K Coupe & N Powers	Document reviewed. Inclusion of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • definition of a “critical incident”; • “Associated Policies and Procedures” section as per EY Safeguarding Audit 2023 s175/157 	29/05/2023 Chair (A Hitchings)