



Critical Incidents Policy

1. Statement of Purpose

As an early learning and childcare (ELC) setting, we recognise the need to plan for emergencies that can have an impact on the service we are providing. The health and safety and wellbeing of the children is paramount, and the setting will plan effectively for all eventualities. Any critical incident will be dealt with as calmly and efficiently as possible and appropriate procedures will be followed by all service users.

If any incident impacts on the setting's ability to operate, parents will be informed via telephone, in the first instance, or via email.

Throughout this policy the term '*parents*' is used to include all main caregivers.

2. Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Ensuring a safe environment is our top priority, particularly regarding fire safety. We have a comprehensive fire safety risk assessment in place, which is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in our ELC setting. These assessments identify potential hazards, evaluate risks, and implement control measures. All staff receive fire safety training and participate in regular fire drills. Detailed records of assessments, reviews, and drills are maintained, and all fire safety equipment is regularly checked and maintained.

- The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 place a duty on employers, including those in ELC settings, to ensure fire safety
- All staff, including full-time, part-time, and volunteers, need to understand basic fire safety principles and how to respond in a fire emergency.
- A thorough fire safety risk assessment will be carried out at least annually and whenever there are significant changes to the environment.
- The assessment will identify potential fire hazards, evaluate the risks to children, staff, and visitors, and implement appropriate control measures to mitigate these risks

2.1

The Fire Register is held in a location that is easily accessible and visible to all staff, particularly those responsible for fire safety such as the main office, or where settings do not have an office, with all other documentation. It details regular safety checks, including fire drills and will be maintained by Sophie Startin.

The first fire drill of each session will be an announced one. Children will listen to the alarm, or where there is no alarm, a whistle, with their member of staff and then be walked through the evacuation procedure. Thereafter drills will be unannounced to children in the first instance and subsequently to children and adults.

2.2

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are sited throughout the building as appropriate. Yearly demonstrations will be given on their use. In the case of fire, no matter how small, the alarm should always be raised first, and the building evacuated before any attempt to use an extinguisher is made. Staff are not expected to fire fight if there is a risk to personal safety or the safety of others in so doing. Staff should always be vigilant regarding possible fire risks. Fire door and points of exit should always be kept free from obstruction. There should be no continuous wall displays and a gap of at least 300mm, every 2 metres, should be maintained. There should be no posters/displays on doors used for staff or children to exit through. The fire plan and duties of all staff in case of fire and location of assembly points will be summarised and posted throughout the building. These instructions will be discussed and reviewed annually by the whole staff team and additionally in the aftermath of any incidence of fire.

2.3

The following procedures should be followed in the event of fire or any other incident which may necessitate emergency evacuation of the building:

- If fire is discovered please calmly raise the alarm
- The alarm should be raised by smashing the glass at one of the fire points located throughout the building. Staff should make themselves familiar with the location of these points.
- The Fire & Rescue Service will be called by the manager or deputy if the manager is not present. This person is considered to be the Fire Officer. The Fire Officer should take the official Fire Register with them as they exit. They will also take a mobile phone and a list of children's emergency contacts maintained for such purposes. This list will be stored in a place which allows confidentiality to be maintained but also allows immediate access in case of an emergency, this is located next to the phone above the children's trays by the fire exit.

2.4

All staff are responsible for the evacuation of the area in which they are currently working, they should:

- Remain calm and strive to keep the children calm.
- Evacuate their area, checking carefully that no child has sought cover behind doors or under equipment.
- Ensure no one stops to collect coats or personal belongings.
- Check toilets or rooms off the main play areas as they evacuate. If your building includes utility room, storeroom, staffroom, kitchen etc. the Lead Practitioner on shift is responsible for this.
- Close all doors to prevent further spread of the fire as exit is made.
- Be aware of children with additional support needs, children who are new to the setting and those who become easily distressed. Carry these children to safety if necessary.
- Follow the agreed procedures for the evacuation of babies and non-mobile children. Each setting will be required to develop these as relevant to their own circumstances.
- Exit via the nearest Fire Door which can be opened by pressing on the bars. Should fire obstruct exit via the fire doors, then the nearest unobstructed exit should be used.
- Proceed to the designated Fire Assembly Point, situated at Old Rayne Primary School.
- Take all registers to enable the Fire Officer to carry out a roll call when everyone is

assembled at the designated Fire Assembly Point.

2.5

Re-entry to the building should only be initiated on instructions from the Fire Officer. The silencing of the smoke alarm *does not* signal re-entry. Should re-entry to the building be impossible, staff and children will proceed to Old Rayne Primary School. In these circumstances a notice will be posted, informing parents where their children have been re-located to, or a member of staff will remain in the vicinity to redirect parents. Additionally, parents will be informed at enrolment of the nominated location in event of evacuation.

3. Medical Emergencies

A medical emergency means that the patient requires immediate medical intervention to stabilise and prevent the medical condition from deteriorating. An emergency **first aider** has various **roles** and **responsibilities**. It is important **first aiders** take these **roles** and **responsibilities** seriously as **first aid** is potentially lifesaving in an emergency situation. The **role** of a **first aider** is to provide immediate, lifesaving, medical care before the arrival of further medical help.

The following procedure should be followed.

- Remain calm, render first aid and call for help. Do not move the injured or sick person unless their safety and/or health is at risk.
- Call 999 for emergency medical services to report the incident or request someone else to call.
- Assign an individual to meet the emergency personnel and direct them to the casualty.
- Any medical information pertaining to the casualty should be accessed from the files and available for the medical personnel.
- Assign a staff member to accompany the patient to hospital.
- Ensure the emergency contact of the patient is notified.
- Complete relevant paperwork (accident/incident report).
- If the setting is a registered daycare of children service and the emergency results in a visit to a GP or Hospital, then the incident needs to be reported to the Care Inspectorate within 24 hrs through e-forms notifications.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all employees, our ELC setting will maintain a team of trained first aiders. These individuals will be clearly identified and accessible in case of emergencies.

Designated First Aiders:

Sophie Startin
Kimberlee Taylor
Karin Leslie
Rachel Lorimer
Emma Lee Kinch
Laura Ross

Training Schedule: All designated first aiders will complete initial training and will undergo refresher courses every three years to keep their skills up-to-date and in line with current best practices.

4. Missing Child

The children's safety is paramount within the setting. If a child is feared missing the following procedures should be followed:

- Immediate notification to the police should be made once an initial search of the setting has been made, and attempts have been made to ascertain whether a family member may have collected the child, or whether the child has made their own way home.
- The search will include all areas within the setting and the immediate surrounding area.
- Notify the child's parents.
- A record of any incident must be made in the incident book and where police have been contacted the manager should also inform the Care Inspectorate Officer for the setting, if it is a registered day care service.
- The incident needs to be reported to the Care Inspectorate within 24 hours through e-forms notifications.

Staff should refer to The Care Inspectorates [SIMOA Practice Notes – Keeping Children Safe: Supporting Curiosity and Exploration in Early Learning and Childcare](#) for guidance and best practice.

5. Potentially Violent Situations - (See Appendix 1)

6. Utility Disruption

If utilities are disrupted, every effort will be made to keep the setting open. The decision to close the setting will be based on the risk to the health and wellbeing of the children. Parents will be informed by phone if children need to be collected early or if sessions need to be cancelled.

Settings should refer to '[Space to Grow](#)' guidance on heating, lighting, ventilation, noise and sustainability. If the disruption is to be likely for more than 24 hours, then this needs to be reported to the Care Inspectorate within 24 hours through e-forms notifications.

7. Threatening Call

Calls of a threatening nature should be reported as accurately as possible and reported to the police. If possible, record the call and note any relevant information which may be useful to the police.

8. Suspicious Package

Evidence of a suspicious package or letter should be reported to the manager immediately. Communicate concerns to the police. Do not attempt to move the article unless instructed to do so by the police. Follow advice given by the police regarding appropriate procedures to take within the setting

9. Flooding

If your setting is liable to natural flooding, monitor announcements regarding flood warnings. Close or evacuate the setting if required and follow evacuation orders from emergency safety officials.

10. Post-Incident Review

Following any critical incident, a thorough post-incident review will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of our response and identify areas for improvement. This review will involve gathering feedback from all staff members involved, assessing the procedures followed, and documenting any lessons learned. The aim is to ensure that we continuously enhance our policy and response strategies. Any necessary updates to the critical incident policy will be made based on the findings of the review. Additionally, support will be provided to staff and children affected by the incident, including signposting to external support services.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of Sophie Startin to ensure all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. Monitoring of the policy will be achieved through regular fire drills and reviews of the procedures to be followed in the event of a critical incident. Staff responsibilities and procedures will be reviewed as appropriate to implement or modify any changes to either procedures or personnel.

Appendices: - Appendix 1 - Potentially Violent Situations

See also:

Health and Safety Policy

Duty of Candour/Complaints Policy

General Data Protection Regulation – Privacy Policy

Links to national policy:

Please refer to the EYS Early Years External guidance glossary which can be found within MyEYS for the most up to date links.

The purpose of this Early Years External Guidance Glossary is to offer a comprehensive collection of links and documents from external organisations. These resources form the foundation of the policies and procedures used within your ELC setting

Find out more:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

www.legislation.gov.uk

Fire Safety Officer (local), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

www.firescotland.gov.uk

Critical Incidents Policy – Appendix 1

A1

Potentially Violent Situations

A potentially violent situation (i.e. hostage situation or aggressive person) may be cause for a selective evacuation procedure. The premise behind a selective evacuation is that it enables large numbers of children and staff to move out of harm's way when an individual is on-site who is potentially violent.

A1.1

If a potentially violent individual gains access to your building:

- Immediately call 999/police and seek advice on how to handle the situation. Indicate to the police that you may have a situation that requires evacuation.
- Should you have any reason to believe the individual has a weapon, order evacuation if possible.
 - Try to isolate the potential aggressor from as many adults and children as possible. Seek to draw the individual(s) to the office or other less populated space. If the individual has entered a playroom, seek to draw him/her into the least used part of the room. Always endeavour to keep yourself between the aggressor and a means of exit to allow you to escape the situation if necessary.
 - Do not physically restrain or block their movements.
- Try to engage the potential aggressor in conversation to de-escalate the situation.
- Remain calm and be polite.
 - While you are engaging the potentially violent individual, other available persons should direct unaffected rooms to move to locations around the facility that are farthest from the incident point. This selective evacuation should proceed room by room in as orderly and quiet a manner as possible, being careful to use routes not visible to the incident point.
 - Other staff should make sure no other individuals, other than emergency personnel, enter the space where you have isolated the potentially violent individual.
- Once the police arrive, they will take over the situation, negotiate and dictate further movements.
 - If a decision is made to relocate to an alternative site while negotiations go on, follow the appropriate evacuation procedures within the Critical Incidents Policy.

A1.2

Random Acts of Violence

If the setting is affected by random acts of violence (e.g. shooting incident), do the following:

- Remain calm.
- Immediately call 999.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility and have the children lie down on the floor.
- Brief the police of the problem once they arrive.
- Report the incident to management as soon as possible.

A1.3

Aggressive employees, parents or members of the public

In the event of having to deal with aggressive employees, parents or members of the public do the following:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Try to diffuse the situation and encourage the person to leave the building, if appropriate, or seek to draw the individual to the office or other less populated space.
- If the person becomes confrontational, call 999 if possible.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility to isolate the incident.
- If an aggressive parent's child is present during an incident move the child to another room if possible, away from any incident.
- If a parent has acted in an aggressive manner and then demands to take their child with them as they leave, you are required to release the child to the parent in accordance with setting procedures, unless you have good reason to believe they intend harm to the child.
- Report the incident to management.

A1.4

Parents under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If you have reasonable cause to suspect that any person collecting a child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and that going with them may put the child at risk, you may have cause to refuse to release the child. If so, request that another adult be called to pick up the child or call the numbers listed on the child's enrolment form.

In the event of having to deal with employees, parents or members of the public who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs do the following:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Try to diffuse the situation and encourage the person to leave the building if appropriate.
- If the person becomes agitated and/or confrontational, immediately call 999.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility to isolate the incident.
- Report the incident to management.
- In some instances, children, young people and their families may have additional needs that require further support and a multi-agency approach. In these instances, your settings safeguarding procedures should be followed for those children whose welfare may be at risk.

Visit:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/alcohol-drugs-parenting/>

A1.5

Hostage Situations

In very rare circumstances the setting may be subject to a hostage situation. In the event of a hostage situation:

- Remain calm and polite.

- Follow the hostage taker's instructions.
- Do not resist.
- Any available staff member will call 999.
- Staff members will alert other staff of the problem if time permits. Do not put yourself in danger.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility.
- If staff members believe it is safe, evacuate children from the building moving in the opposite direction from the incident. Report your location to the police immediately.