



Critical Incident and Adverse Weather Policy

At Next Steps Day Care, we understand we need to plan for all eventualities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the children we care for. We have a critical incident policy in place to ensure our nursery is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident. These include:

- Flood
- Fire
- Burglary
- Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- Bomb threat/terrorism attack
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the nursery.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via email at the earliest opportunity, e.g. before the start of the nursery day.

Flood

There is always 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 system is checked and serviced annually by a registered gas engineer and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the day, the manager will decide based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the fire evacuation procedure. In this instance children will be kept safe and parents will be notified in the same way as the fire procedure.

Should the Setting be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our operational plan and provide options for childcare facilities in the local area.

Fire

Please refer to the fire safety policy.

Burglary

The management of the nursery follow a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises.

The staff will always check the premises in the morning. Should they discover that the setting has been broken into they will follow the procedure below:

- Dial 999 with as many details as possible, i.e. name and location, details of what you have found and emphasise this is a childcare setting and children will be arriving soon
- Contain the area to ensure no-one enters until the police arrive. The staff will direct parents and children to a separate area as they arrive. If all areas have been disturbed staff will follow police advice, including following the relocation procedure under flood wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children
- The manager on duty will help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- A manager will be available always 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 nursery.

Abduction or threatened abduction of a child

We have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including safety from abduction. Staff must be vigilant always and report any persons lingering around the settings property immediately. All doors and gates to the house are locked and cannot be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in. Parents are reminded on a regular basis not to allow anyone into the building whether they are known to them or not. Visitors and general security are covered in more detail in the supervision of visitor's policy.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult; see the arrivals and departures policy for more details. Parents are requested to inform the setting of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise, so the setting can support the child. The setting will not take sides in relation to any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the setting will not restrict access **unless** a court order is in

place. Parents are requested to issue us with a copy of these documents should they be in place. We will consult our solicitors with regards to any concerns over custody and relay any information back to the parties involved.

If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from nursery we have the following procedures which are followed immediately:

- The police must be called immediately
- The staff member will notify management immediately and the manager will take control
- The parent(s) 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 may impact on this abduction.

Bomb threat/terrorism attack

If a bomb threat is received at the setting, the person taking the call will record all details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm as soon as the phone call has ended. The management will follow the fire evacuation procedure to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible.

Other incidents

All incidents will be managed by the manager on duty and all staff will co-operate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the fire plan. Other incidents e.g. no water supply will be dealt with on an individual basis considering the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff in the nursery.

The nursery manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

Snow or other severe weather

If high snowfall, or another severe weather condition such as dense fog, is threatened during a nursery day then the manager will take the decision as to whether to close the nursery. This decision will consider the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team. In the event of a planned closure during the nursery day, we will contact all parents to arrange for collection of their child.

In the event of staff shortages due to snow or other severe weather, we will contact all available off duty staff and/or agency staff and group the children differently until they are able to arrive. If we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements after all avenues are explored, we will contact Ofsted to inform them of this issue, recording all details in our incident file. If we feel the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised then we will take the decision to close the setting.

Heat wave/ sun protection

The damaging effects of exposure to the sun on young skin have recently been well documented. We will do everything we can, working in partnership with you, to ensure that your child is protected.

You will need to provide the following; -

- Sun cream suitable for your child (high factor)
 - Sun hat (preferably a legionnaires hat to protect the neck)
 - A thin top or t-shirt.
-
- We will ensure that your child uses the sun cream you have supplied and wears a hat.
 - We will avoid spending long periods of time outside during the hottest part of the day, and when outside will try and protect your child by finding shady areas using sunshades on the pushchairs or sitting under trees.
 - We will encourage your child to drink as much fluid as possible to prevent dehydration.

We will require you to sign a form giving us permission to apply sun cream to your child.

If you have any concerns regarding this policy, please speak to the manager at Next Steps Day Care

Review date January 2022