

Gosforth Nursery



CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE POLICY

Policy statement

At Gosforth Nursery 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 nursery is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident. These include:

- 1) Adverse weather conditions such as flood or snow
- 2) Heating System failure
- 3) Burst Water Pipes
- 4) Fire, bomb threat, explosion, terrorist attack
- 5) Burglary
- 6) Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- 7) Death of a member of staff or a child
- 8) Assault on a member of staff or a child
- 9) Serious accident or illness
- 10) 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 Parenta or our nursery facebook page 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, which we cannot anticipate. 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.

If flooding occurs during the nursery 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.

Should the nursery be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our operational plan.

Snow

If heavy snow fall is threatened during nursery hours, the Manager in charge will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff when deciding whether or not to close the nursery. Parents will be contacted for collection of their child

In the event of staff shortages due to snow, bank staff will be contacted. The children may be grouped differently until they arrive. If, having explored all avenues, we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements, Ofsted will be informed and advice sought. If the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised, the Manager in charge will take the decision to close the nursery.

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 at nursery, the person taking the call will record all the details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm as soon as the telephone call is terminated. The Management will follow the fire evacuation procedure to ensure the safety of all on the premises, and will provide as much details to the emergency services as available. The nursery will move to the secondary evacuation point as soon as possible, and advice would then be sought from the police as to further steps required.

Burglary

Gosforth Nursery follows a lock up procedure. All doors and windows are closed and locked before the premises are vacated. Alarm systems are installed and are in operation during the hours that the nursery is closed.

The Opening Manager checks the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the nursery has been broken into, they will:-

- Dial 999 Police with many details as possible- i.e. name and location, details of what they have found, and emphasise that this is a nursery 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 nursery.

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 vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering around the property to the Nursery Manager in charge. All doors are card operated or key coded to the nursery and unable to 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 nursery of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so that the staff are able to support the child/ren. The nursery will not enter into any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child.

If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the nursery will not restrict access unless a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the nursery 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 nursery, the following procedures will be followed:-

- The police must be called immediately
- The staff member will notify the nursery manager in charge immediately.
- The parents will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure and calmed down where necessary.

Death or serious injury of a member of staff or child

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

- A parent or next of kin should be contacted immediately,
- Newcastle Council 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 nursery itself.
- The staff team must be updated and debriefed.
- Children must be managed and reassured.
- The Insurance Company must be informed.
- With legal advice, management must decide what will be said to the media if necessary to ensure consistency. Advice may also be given by Newcastle Council Early Years Team.
- A factual report must be written, using clear, specific language giving the facts about what happened.
- There must be a review of the procedures in the nursery, to see if lessons can be learnt from the incident, and an assessment made on the ongoing risk of this happening again.

- Counselling may be offered to those in need.

In the sad event that the nursery is notified of a child's death outside of the nursery, 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 issues, we would follow the normal Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

Pandemic / Epidemic

In the event of a pandemic/epidemic situation the nursery 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 nursery.

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 nursery, the following steps will be taken:-

- All children will be escorted from the building and taken to the assembly point at the front of the building next door.
- 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 the register and contact information from the office whilst the room leader will take the room registers and the register will be taken and all the children and adults will be accounted for.
- If any person is missing from the register, the emergency services will be informed immediately.
- The manager / nominated person will contact parents to collect their children.
- If the registration is affected, we will inform the local authority & Ofsted of it's closure.

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