

Safety & Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Emergency Closure Procedure



Policy statement

At Wroughton Preschool our priority at all times is to ensure the safety and well-being of all children, parents/carers, visitors and staff.

Certain situations, such as the loss of essential services (e.g. heating and water), building damage, fire outbreak, severe weather conditions or and illness epidemic may occasionally make it necessary for our setting to close to ensure the safety of all.

Planning for these situations is a central part of our policy on Health and Safety and Risk Management, and it is important that all staff, parents/carers and families are aware of the actions that will be taken should it become necessary to close unexpectedly, either during session times or outside of normal hours.

This procedure outlines the steps to be taken in case of emergency to ensure good communication and orderly conduct, so that the welfare of children, staff and other individuals is maintained. In a real emergency, it may be necessary for the person in charge to respond as they see fit and we recognise that this will be the case when dealing with real life situations. However, this procedure gives a common approach which should make coping with an emergency easier.

This policy is associated with the following policies: Health and Safety, Risk Assessment, Non-collection of children, Emergency Evacuation, Managing Children who have allergies or who are sick or infectious and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection.

Aims

To ensure that children, parents/carers, families, visitors and staff members are kept safe at all times, and that we are prepared to respond to emergency situations in a planned and safe way.

Procedures

- **Preparation**
- All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the emergency procedure. A copy is given to all staff on induction and reviewed annually. A copy is displayed on the in the clear storage box on the staff table.
- All staff and volunteers should take part in drills and practices which are held regularly. All those with specific roles should practise these roles when drills are carried out.

- No child should be left in our care without the parent/carer providing the following information so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency:
 - Home and mobile telephone numbers,
 - Work contact details (place of work and contact number),
 - Names, addresses and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents/carers to collect their child,
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child,
 - Details of who has parental responsibility for the child.
- Anyone entering our setting must register in the visitor's book.
- All staff present are recorded in the daily register.
- In an emergency, there may not be access to the building or hall. Key details, including contact details and sessions children attend, are kept securely by a nominated member of staff. The administrator is responsible for ensuring records are up to date.
- Emergency contact numbers for essential services are kept on the notice board.

B) Evacuating in an Emergency:

- In the event of the fire alarm sounding (3 sharp blows of a whistle), everyone should leave the building immediately, without stopping to collect personal belongings, and proceed via the appropriate evacuation route to the assembly point in the outside play area. Everyone should assemble outside of the building at the assembly point where a register will be taken.
 - Where necessary, the Preschool Supervisor or designated staff member will be responsible for calling the emergency services. All staff should also be familiar with the process for calling the emergency services themselves: for example, if a fire is discovered, they should initiate calling the emergency services as well as sounding the alarm and evacuating the children.
 - The Supervisor or Deputy Supervisor is responsible for collecting the emergency contact details for all children, the staff register and Visitors' Book.
 - All children will be guided in the right direction.
 - Staff members will thoroughly check the hall, other rooms, toilet area and offices to ensure complete evacuation.
 - Nominated staff member will take a register at the Assembly point to ensure complete evacuation. No one should re-enter the building to look for missing persons; any person missing should be reported to the Setting Supervisor who can inform emergency services.
- NO ONE SHOULD RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNLESS PERMISSION IS GIVEN BY THE MOST SENIOR PERSON PRESENT.**

C) Lock-Down Procedure

There may be occasions when it is safer for everyone to remain inside due to a threat outside, for example if there is a violent or armed person, a dangerous animal, or if there are dangerous fumes outside etc. In line with schools, children's centres and settings should follow a 'lock down' procedure where the building or hall is sealed off and people are not allowed to enter (and are discouraged from leaving) until the situation is resolved.

Note- staff have no legal authority to prevent people who wish to from leaving the building; they can only make people aware of the dangers and encourage them to stay inside and wait for the danger to pass.

In the event of a significant danger being present outside, the following procedure should be followed:

- Where possible, have a dedicated alarm to alert all staff; in other cases, a message to be passed around staff as quickly as possible without causing panic to parents/carers and children.
- Check all external doors are locked and lock the main front door.
- If the danger relates to a violent / armed / threatening stranger outside, call Police immediately. Staff inside rooms should close blinds.
- Do NOT leave the building to challenge the person.
Give the Police as much information as you can about the person.
 - Description
 - Name if known
 - Behaviour
 - Whether armed
- If the danger relates to a situation that is being managed by emergency services outside, (e.g. gas leak, fire) staff should await an all-clear from emergency services before unlocking doors.

D) Closing out-of-hours (e.g. due to bad weather)

- If the setting needs to be closed in the morning, a decision will be reached as early as possible by the Setting Manager in consultation with the Committee Chair.
- The closure of the setting will be announced on Facebook and on the setting's website. A pre-recorded message will be left on the answerphone where possible to advise anyone ringing the setting that it will remain closed.

- All parents whose children are due to attend, will be emailed by the administrator, to be advised of the unplanned closure.
- All staff will be notified by text by the setting's supervisor.
- Swindon Borough Council will be notified of any closure

E) Closing the setting during a session (e.g. bad weather)

- The Setting's Supervisor or the deputy will decide if the setting needs to be closed unexpectedly (for example, due to deteriorating weather conditions).
- Staff will make every effort to contact parents/carers (or the person authorised by the parent to collect their child) of the children attending. The children will continue to be cared for until the arrival of the parent/carer.
- Telephoning parents will be the responsibility of the Supervisor or a designated member of staff.
- If possible, a telephone message will be left on the answerphone explaining the situation to anyone trying to call the setting.
- Swindon Borough Council will be notified of any closure

F) Closing the setting due to sickness.

- Parents and carers should inform the setting if their child has been diagnosed with any infectious illness so that other parents, staff, visitor can be informed.
- A notice will be displayed giving details of the illness.
- Parents, carers and children who are unwell with an infectious disease should not attend the setting. For more information, please see our policy on Managing Children who have allergies or who are sick or infectious. Incubation periods are on the parents' notice board and on the website under Parents, Parent letters.
- Where there is a risk of an epidemic or pandemic in the community, we will always follow the official government guidelines, including closing the setting if necessary. Should the supervisor and chair decide that closure is necessary, this will be from the end of the current day. Children will not be sent home early unless they are displaying symptoms.
If new preschool procedures are required at this time, including a change to our opening days/hours, they will be quickly communicated with all parents and carers via email and Ofsted will be notified.
- When we are notified that a disease is notifiable, we will advise the necessary authorities, including Ofsted.
- Swindon Borough Council will be notified of any closure.

G) Re-opening the setting after an emergency closure.

- The decision to re-open the setting after any emergency closure will be taken by the Supervisor and Chair in conjunction with emergency services if necessary and always following government advice if applicable.
- All staff will be informed by text message and all parents/carers will be notified by email. If possible, the details will also be put on the website and our Facebook page.

H) Fees (payment of non-funded sessions)

- If the preschool is forced to close during operating hours and the children are sent home, fees will not be refunded for that day. Any fees paid for subsequent closure days will be refunded or deducted from the next invoice due.
- If a decision is made out of operating hours to close the preschool for the following day(s), fees already paid will be refunded or deducted from the next invoice.
- If the setting is closed following government advice, fees will be refunded or deducted from future invoices in respect of the days closed.

Further guidance

- *Health and Safety Regulation...a short guide* (HSE 2003)
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsc13.pdf
- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Wroughton Preschool Policies- Managing children with allergies or who are sick or infectious.
Lockdown Policy
Coronavirus Outbreak Policy

Authorisation & Review

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Wroughton Preschool
Held on	_____
Date to be reviewed	Yearly at AGM
Signed on behalf of the management committee	_____
Name of signatory	_____
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chairperson

