

Community Pre-schools Evacuation and Lockdown Policy

This policy lays out the framework for safeguarding all persons within Community Pre-schools settings in case of emergencies, ranging from fire and natural disasters to intruder threats and other critical incidents.

The policy applies to all staff, children, volunteers, visitors, and contractors on the premises during operational hours.

- To minimise risk and ensure the safety of all individuals
- To provide clear guidance for staff and volunteers
- To ensure parents and guardians are informed and reassured
- To comply with statutory health and safety and child protection regulations

Definitions

- Evacuation: The organised exit of children and staff from the building to a designated safe location due to hazards such as fire, gas leak, or structural compromise.
- Lockdown: Securing children and staff inside the building to protect from external or internal threats, such as a suspicious person or violent incident in the vicinity.
- Critical Incident: Any event that requires urgent response to protect life and safety, including but not limited to fire, chemical spill, bomb threat, or armed intruder.

Roles and Responsibilities

Management

- Develop, review, and communicate the evacuation and lockdown policy annually.
- Ensure up-to-date contact lists and emergency plans are in place.
- Organise regular drills for staff and children.
- Maintain emergency equipment (alarms, communication tools, first aid kits).

Staff and Volunteers

- Familiarise themselves with the policy and participate in drills.
- Supervise children and ensure their safety at all times.
- Carry out assigned roles during emergencies (e.g., sweepers, first aid responders).

Parents and Guardians

- Provide up-to-date emergency contact information.
- Cooperate with pre-school staff during real incidents or drills.
- Discuss the importance of safety procedures with their children in an age-appropriate manner.

Children

- Follow instructions from staff during drills and real incidents.
- Participate in age-appropriate discussions and activities about safety.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation may be necessary in the event of fire, gas leak, flood, or other physical dangers.

Alarm Activation

- Any person discovering a threat should immediately activate the nearest alarm and notify the designated staff member.
- In the event of fire, activate the fire alarm.

Evacuation Route

- All staff, children, and visitors must evacuate using the nearest safe exit.
- Staff must bring attendance registers, emergency medication, and first aid kits.
- Designated staff will check all rooms, including bathrooms and storage areas, before

Assembly Point

- Proceed to the pre-determined assembly point at a safe distance from the building.
- Take attendance immediately and report any missing individuals to emergency services.

Communication

- Contact emergency services as soon as possible.
- Contact parents/guardians once the immediate danger has passed and all children

Re-entry

- No one may re-enter the building until it is declared safe by emergency services or management.

Lockdown Procedures

Lockdown should be initiated if there is a threat of violence or danger inside or in close proximity to Community Pre-schools settings.

Initiation

- The manager or senior staff member will announce a lockdown via a pre-determined code word or alarm.

Lockdown Actions

- All external doors and windows should be locked immediately.
- Children and staff should move to the safest part of their rooms, away from view of doors and windows.
- Lights should be turned off and blinds closed if possible.
- All persons should remain quiet and calm.
- Mobile phones should be silenced; communication with emergency services should be initiated if necessary.
- Attendance should be taken discreetly.

All Clear

- No one should exit their secure area until the all-clear is given by management or emergency services.
- Following an incident, staff should provide reassurance and support to children.

Drills and Training

- Evacuation drills must be conducted at least once per term and lockdown drills at least twice per year.
- All new staff must receive training during induction and annual refreshers thereafter.
- Drills should be recorded and reviewed to identify improvements.
- Children should be involved in drills in an age-appropriate, non-threatening manner.

Support for Children and Staff

Emergencies can be distressing for young children and staff alike.

- After an event or drill, provide opportunities for children to express feelings and ask questions.
- Access to counselling or psychological support should be available when needed.
- Staff debrief sessions must be conducted following incidents to review response and identify training needs.

Communication with Parents and Community

- The pre-school should provide parents with information about the evacuation and lockdown policy and advice on talking to children about safety.
- During and after an emergency, parents should be informed promptly, with updates provided as appropriate.
- Local emergency services and community organisations should be engaged in policy reviews and drills.

Children with Additional Needs

- Individual evacuation/lockdown plans should be developed for children with disabilities, medical conditions, or other special requirements.
- Staff should be trained in supporting children with additional needs during emergencies.

Review and Improvement

- This policy must be reviewed annually or after any significant incident.
- Feedback should be collected from staff, children, parents, and emergency services to inform improvements.
- Any changes to the physical environment or staffing should trigger a review of procedures.

Contacts and Resources

- List of emergency contact numbers (police, fire, ambulance, local authority)
- Location of first aid kits and emergency supplies
- Names and contact details of staff with first aid or emergency training

Evacuation and Lockdown Checklist

- Sound alarm and notify emergency services
- Collect attendance register and emergency medication
- Sweep all rooms for remaining persons
- Lead children to assembly point (evacuation) or lockdown area
- Take and report attendance
- Maintain calm and reassure children
- Communicate with families as appropriate
- Debrief and review procedures following the incident