



Critical Incident and Lock Down Procedure

February 2025

At YMCA Childcare 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:

- 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 phone, email or text message 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 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 nursery manager will make a decision 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 childcare setting be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident we will follow our operational plan and provide care in another location, where possible.

Fire

Please refer to the fire safety policy.

Burglary

The management of YMCA Childcare follow a locking up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises. Alarm systems are used and in operation during all hours the setting is closed.





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The manager or most senior member of staff on site will always check the premises as they arrive in the morning. Should they discover that the setting has been broken into they will follow the procedure below:

- In an emergency Dial 999 or non-emergency dial 101, 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. Where it is safe to do so, 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. This may include temporary, short term closure and/or 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 always available during this time to speak to parents, reassure children and direct enquiries
- 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
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the nursery is made safe and secure again.

Abduction or threatened abduction of a child

We have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including taking reasonable steps to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and at risk of abduction. Staff must be always vigilant and report any persons lingering on YMCA Childcare property immediately. All doors and gates to the setting 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 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 proceedings or family concerns as soon as they arise so YMCA Childcare is able to support the child. The setting will not take sides in relation to any custody arrangements and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the setting will not restrict access





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unless a court order is in place, however the duty manager will attempt to contact the relevant parent to inform them. Parents are requested to issue the setting with a copy of these documents should they be in place. We may 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 the setting, the staff member will notify management immediately and the manager will take control, dialling 999 and requesting the police. Instructions from the emergency response team will be followed
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure, reassured, and calmed 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 have impacted on this abduction.
- Any incidents must be recorded in writing as soon as practicably possible including the outcome, who was abducted, time identified, notification to police and findings
- In the unlikely event that the child is not found, the nursery will follow the local authority and police procedure
- Ofsted will be contacted and informed of any incidents
- With incidents of this nature parents, carers, children and staff may require support and reassurance following the traumatic experience. Management will provide this or seek further support where necessary
- In any cases with media attention staff will not speak to any media representatives
- Post-incident risk assessments will be conducted following any incident of this nature to enable the chance of this reoccurring being reduced.

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/contact emergency services as soon as the phone call has ended. The management will follow the fire evacuation procedure and advice from the emergency services to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible. Ofsted will be notified. With incidents of this nature parents, carers, children and staff may require support and reassurance following the traumatic experience. Management will provide this or seek further support where necessary.





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Any other significant incidents

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

If there is an incident outside of the nursery building and it is safer to stay inside the building, the lockdown procedure will be implemented, and emergency advice will be taken.

National outbreaks of infection/Health Pandemics

In the event of a national outbreak of a health pandemic, we will follow Government health advice and guidance, legal advice and advice from our insurance provider.

Our aim is to keep our settings open as long as we have sufficient staff to care for the children. This may mean children temporarily being offered a place at one of our other settings that is within close proximity. Depending on the nature of the pandemic we will follow all advice and implement measures to ensure that risks to vulnerable children and staff are minimised. This may include excluding infected children/staff/parents or family members from the setting for a set period of time, to prevent the spread of infection. This decision will be done in consultation with parents, staff, legal advice and our insurance provider. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

The Childcare Manager will notify Ofsted in the event of a critical incident.

Lock down procedure

We take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises, in the event of an emergency requiring a full lock down we will follow the lock down procedure:

We will use the lock down procedure when the safety of the children, staff and others on the premises are at risk and we are better placed inside the current building, with doors and windows locked and blinds/curtains drawn (if applicable).

We will activate this emergency procedure in response to a number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:





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- A report incident or disturbance in the local community (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the nursery)
- An intruder on the childcare site (with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in setting)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plumes, gas cloud etc.)
- A major fire or explosion in the vicinity of the setting – as long as it is safer staying in the premises than leaving.

In this case the staff will be notified by the following action: **Whistle blown**

All individuals (including children) will remain in the area they are in, if safe to do so. If the children are outside, staff are to promptly and calmly direct children into the building, if this will not endanger them. Staff will make efforts to close and lock doors wherever safe to do so. Staff to carry out appropriate head counts.

All individuals will keep away from the windows and doors and children will be occupied in the centre of the room so they are not placed at risk or are able to see any situation developing outside.

The duty manager will ensure all children, staff and visitors are accounted for and safe before returning to the office area to keep up to date with the current situation via updates.

The manager on duty will manage the situation dependant on the situation and the information available. If the setting is in immediate danger of an intruder, the police will be called as a matter of urgency. In other cases, where the situation has been called through by the police or local area authority, the setting will await further instructions.

Once the all-clear has been given externally, the manager will issue the all clear internally. After this time the staff will try to return practice to normal to enable the children not to be disrupted or upset by the events.

Any children showing worries or concerns will have one to one time with their key person to talk about these.

Parents will be informed about the situation at the earliest safest opportunity and will be kept updated when the information changes.





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After the event a post-incident evaluation will be conducted to ensure that each child and staff member was supported fully and the procedure went as planned. Ofsted will be informed.

This policy was reviewed on:	Reviewed by:	Date for next review:
19.02.2025	K. Streater	18.02.2026
Signed on behalf of YMCA Trinity Group:	A.Spence	

