

Policy

Emergency Closure & Lockdown

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Policy

Title: Emergency Closure & Lockdown

From: Early Years Centre

Date: 18th January 2023

Continuity of service for the children attending the Early Years Centre is of paramount importance to us.

However, on rare occasions a situation may arise when the Centre will need to implement its emergency procedure and temporarily close or need to initiate a full or partial lockdown.

An emergency or short notice closure will be implemented in (but not limited to) the following circumstances:

- Adverse weather conditions such as snow, extreme heat or flooding.
- If an emergency occurs during the session which requires the Centre to close suddenly.
- High levels of sickness amongst staff and/or children. This could be if we are required to close in line with Public Health England or if staff absence due to illness means it is impossible to maintain the correct ratios of suitable adults to children.
- Unforeseen circumstances making the building unsuitable or not safe to use such as loss of heating or water, vandalism or fire damage.

The Centre Manager, or in their absence the Early Years Co-ordinator, has the power to close the setting if it is not possible to guarantee the health and safety of the children or staff.

Adverse Weather

- The decision to close the Centre for adverse weather will be taken by the Manager or the Early Years Co-ordinator if:
- It becomes clear that there are insufficient staff to ensure the Health & Safety of the children by maintaining child/staff ratios.
- The access to the centre is not in a fit state to ensure the safety of the children, parents and staff i.e. footpaths, roadways and car parks within the immediate vicinity of the university campus.
- The adverse weather is forecast to deteriorate throughout the day.

Emergency Closure after a session has started

In the event of an emergency closure after the session has started a message will immediately be sent to all parents via our childcare software system "Family". Parents/carers will also be informed by telephone and asked to collect their children as soon as possible.

Qualified staff and members of the management team will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected.

Emergency Closure before a session has started

If the situation arises overnight and a decision is made to close the Centre, a message will immediately be sent to all parents via our childcare software system "Family".

Parents/carers will also be informed by telephone as quickly as is reasonably practical.

Weather permitting, a notice will also be posted on the main entrance to the Centre.

Whenever possible notice of closure will be broadcast on the following radio stations:- BBC Radio Solent and Wave 105FM.

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Emergency Lockdown

We will use the lockdown procedure where the safety of the children, staff and others on the premises are at risk and we are better placed inside the centre, with doors and windows locked and blinds pulled down.

We will activate this emergency procedure in response to a number of situations such as:

- A report of an incident or disturbance on the University Campus or in our local area with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the centre.
- An intruder on the nursery site with potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the building.
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plumes, gas cloud etc) or a major fire or explosion in the vicinity of the centre – provided it is safer staying within the premises rather than leaving.

In the event of an emergency lockdown being implemented, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the children, staff and others on the premises and will follow the emergency lockdown procedure.

Emergency Lockdown Procedure

A lockdown will be initiated by the person who is first aware of the threat. If an intruder is on our site, the member of staff will shout “lockdown lockdown” as loudly as possible. Other staff who have heard this must pass the “lockdown lockdown” message until all staff/rooms have locked down.

If the lockdown is of an external nature, the management team will quickly notify all rooms to initiate the lockdown procedure in the quickest way possible and to cause least panic to the children.

There are two types of lockdown:-

1. Partial Lockdown.
This is a precaution aimed to keep children and staff safe by remaining indoors. Children and staff should remain in the building and all doors and windows leading outside should be immediately secured. No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building but otherwise the setting can continue as usual unless notified otherwise by the emergency services.
2. Full Lockdown.
 - The manager on duty will handle the situation dependent on information available. If the centre is in immediate danger of an intruder, the police will have been called as a matter of urgency. In other cases where the emergency services have been alerted, the management team will await further instructions.
 - Staff and children must remain in their designated areas if safe to do so. Calmly move the children into a small, contained area away from all doors and windows.
 - Stay as low as possible and reassure the children.
 - The management team will check the registers and ensure all children, staff and visitors are accounted for and safe.
 - Do not make any calls on landlines in order to keep the lines clear for the emergency services.
 - If possible, turn off lights, computer monitors and put mobile phones on silent
 - Do not open the external doors unless you are officially advised that is all clear or are certain it is emergency services at the door.
 - Parents should be informed at the earliest safest opportunity and will be kept updated when the situation changes. They must be asked not to come to the centre until the emergency services give the all clear and also not to phone the centre as it is imperative to keep phone lines clear.

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3. All Clear

- Co-operate with the emergency services to help in an orderly evacuation. If possible, bring children's details and register of attendance.
- Be aware that the police may need further details from staff or children who have witnessed any attack or incident.
- If appropriate, inform the Early Years Team and Ofsted following the incident.

New National Emergency Alert system.

The Government is set to roll out a new Emergency Alert system which will send alerts to mobile phones when there is a danger to life in the area. It is expected to launch during 2023. In an emergency, mobile phone masts in the surrounding area will broadcast an alert which will be received by every compatible 4G and 5G device and we will hear a siren like sound. The management team will follow the instructions on the message and adopt our Emergency Lockdown Procedure accordingly.