



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:
Critical Incidences (also known as a Lockdown)

45. Critical Incidences (also known as Lockdown)

Most procedures for handling an emergency are focused on an event happening in the building. However, in some situations you will be advised to stay put (lock-down) rather than evacuate. The 'Lock-down' of a building/group of buildings is intended to secure and protect occupants in the proximity of an immediate threat. By controlling movement in the area, emergency services can contain and handle the situation more effectively.

Early Year providers have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for the children and adults in the setting. In the unlikely event of a critical incident or lockdown it is important to keep an accurate record of what happens particularly as certain types of incidences must be reported to the authorities such as health and safety executive, your local authority, OFSTED, children's social care or your insurance provider.

The details regarding these incidences can also help assess the effectiveness of our procedures for preventing and dealing with future critical events.

- The setting manager/director assess the likelihood of an incident happening based on their location.
- The setting manager/director will check the police website for advice and guidance.
- Staff rehearse simple 'age-appropriate' actions with the children such as staying low to the floor, keeping quiet and listening to instructions in the same way that fire procedures are practiced. Lock-down should be rehearsed and recorded.
- The setting manager/director is aware of the current terrorist alert level, as available at [Threat Levels | MI5 - The Security Service](#)
- We follow any additional advice issued by the local authority.
- Emergency procedures are reviewed and added to if needed.
- Information about this procedure is shared with parents/carers and all staff are aware of their role during 'lock-down'.
- A text/phone message is issued to parents/carers when lockdown is confirmed.

Lockdown Procedures

If an incident happens the setting manager acts quickly to assess the likelihood of immediate danger. In most cases the assumption will be that it is safer to stay put and place the setting into 'lockdown' until the emergency services arrive. As soon as the emergency services arrive at the scene, staff comply with their instructions.

During lock down:

- Staff and children stay in their designated areas if it is safe to do so.
- Door and windows are secured until further instruction is received.

- Staff and children stay away from all doors and windows.
- Children are encouraged to stay low and keep calm.
- Staff do NOT make non-essential calls on mobile phones or landlines.
- If the fire alarm is activated, staff and children remain in their designated area and await further instructions from emergency services, unless the fire is in their area. In which case, they will move to the next room/area, following usual fire procedures.
- The door will not be opened once it has been secured until the manager/director is officially advised 'all clear' or is certain it is emergency services at the door.
- At Pre-School, we will follow all advice from the Smallberry Green Head Teacher should we have to escalate the critical incident procedures.

During lockdown, staff DO NOT:

- Travel down long corridors
- Assemble in large open areas
- Call 999 again unless there is immediate concern for their safety, the safety of others, or they feel they have critical information that must be passed on.

Following Lockdown

- Staff will cooperate with emergency services to assist in an orderly evacuation.
- Staff will ensure that they have the register and children's details.
- Staff or children who have witnessed an incident will need to tell the police what they saw. The police may require other individuals to remain available for questioning.
- In the event of an incident, it is inevitable that parents/carers will want to come to the setting and collect their children immediately. They will be discouraged from doing so until the emergency services give the 'all clear'. Staff will always be acting on the advice of the emergency services.

Recording and Reporting

- The setting manager/director reports the lockdown to the owners/directors/trustees as soon as possible. In some situations, this may not be until after the event.
- A record is completed as soon as possible.

Further Guidance

Members of the public should always remain alert to the danger of terrorism and report any suspicious activity to the police on **999** or the anti-terrorist hotline: **0800 789 321** .

For non-emergency, call the police on **101**.

An intruder gaining unauthorised access to the premises

An intruder is classified as anyone that enters the premises without permission, sometimes an intruder may be known such as a parent or a relation of a child trying to gain access to the child

when there is a court order preventing them. Alternatively, a stranger may try to gain entry to the premises, this could be down to a misunderstanding of the boundaries of the property or with the intention of committing a crime. For example, a bogus caller pretending to be from an unknown company in order to steal from the premises.

We ensure that we have the sole use of the parts of the building in which we care for children for the hours of our operation to ensure the safety of children.

Appointments for visitors should be agreed in advance and everyone on site is made aware.

Visitors should be asked to sign in with the time that they arrive and leave the premises and should be supervised at all times. Registration of vehicles is also asked for to ensure that there is a record of vehicles entering and leaving the premises too.

Additional measures are also in place such as fingerprint entry systems and telephone entry systems to prevent individuals unauthorised access.

Children's registration forms always ask to identify the person with responsibility for the child, emergency contacts and those who are also authorised with a clearly identified password.

Passwords may also be set up by a primary carer prior to someone unfamiliar to the setting picking up a child should circumstance change.

We have an uncollected child policy to support the parental responsibility arrangements.

Procedures

- When faced with an intruder, we calmly inform them in the first instance that they are trespassing and are not allowed to be on the premises, we would then ask them to leave.
- If the intruder is violent, abusive or we have a reason to believe that a person is dangerous, we will move all children and adults to a safe place and call the police. If any attempt is made by the intruder to remove a child by force, we will inform the police immediately.
- Our normal evacuation procedure will cover the evacuation requirements and records in accordance with:
 1. Fire
 2. Flood
 3. Gas Leak
 4. Electrical failure.

Attack on a staff member or parent/carers on the premises or nearby

An attack on a staff member or parent/carers can consist of abusive, intimidating, threatening or violent behaviour. It can be perpetrated by someone known to you for example a parent/carers being threatening or abusive to a staff member, or someone unknown for example a parent/carers being attacked by a stranger in a car park. We understand that managing work related violence will be assessed in the same way as a health and safety issue.

A risk assessment can help identify ways to reduce the risk of violence which could include introducing security measures such as insuring large amounts of cash are not kept on the premises and seeking training opportunities for early years educator to know the early signs of aggression and learn ways to avoid or manage it. Personal safety training can also be an option if early years educators have concerns.

Our policies make it clear that threatening behaviour is not tolerated on the premises and provide parents/carers with clear information on how they can raise any grievances about the setting.

Procedures

- Where possible we will try to calm the individual down before the behaviour gets threatening or violent. The priority during an attack is the safety of the children and adults in the setting, we will try to move everybody to a safe place and call **999**.
- Incidences of physical violence will always be reported to the police, and hospital treatment will be sought when necessary.
- Where an incident involves a parent/carer being abusive or intimidating to a staff member, we will ask the parent/carer to arrange for someone else to drop off and pick up the child.
- If a staff member is responsible for an attack at work, we will follow appropriate disciplinary procedures.
- Whenever an attack leads to an injury, we will notify our insurance providers.

A terrorist attack or the threat of one

Terrorism is an ongoing danger in society today. Terrorist planned attacks are using methods such as suicide bombings and chemical weapons to cause mass casualties and public intimidation. A terrorist attack or the threat of one can have a major impact on providers that are located or are on outings near the site where a terrorist attack takes place.

It can also be distressing in the families of the children or early years educator are affected by the attacks. The nature of terrorist attacks means that they are unpredictable however we should be prepared for an attack.

Procedures

- As part of a risk assessment for outings, we will consider alternative transport routes to take in the event of a terrorist attack or alert during the trip. We will be vigilant to any suspicious activity of packages and report any concerns immediately to the police or counterterrorism hotline on **0800 789 321**.
- In the event of a terrorist attack, where we are at the scene of an incident we will try to stay together and follow advice of the emergency services. They will be working to evacuate the area and to treat the wounded or injured. Once safely evacuated we will carry out a headcount to ensure that all children and adults are accounted for and try to contact the children's parents/carers or next of kin to inform them that they are safe.

- If the premises is a safe distance from the scene of an attack, we will stay indoors and listen to the local radio for further information and advice on what to do. If advised by the emergency services, we will evacuate following our emergency evacuation procedures.
- Any injury during an attack to early years educator or children will need to be reported to the health and safety executives.

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead