



Critical Incidents Policy

5.17 My environment is secure and safe

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989):

Article 24: (Health and health services): Children have the right to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay healthy



Statement of Purpose

At Strathburn ELC we recognise the need to plan for emergencies that can have an impact on the service we are providing. The health and safety and wellbeing of the children is paramount and the setting will plan effectively for all eventualities. Any critical incident will be dealt with as calmly and efficiently as possible and appropriate procedures will be followed by all service users.

Throughout this policy the term parents is used to include all main caregivers.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The **Fire Register** is held in the office. It details regular safety checks including fire drills and will be maintained by Barbara Milne. Outwith term time the Quality Improvement Officer on duty will ensure this is maintained as required.

The first fire drill of each session will be an announced one. Children will listen to the alarm with their member of staff and then be walked through the evacuation procedure. Thereafter drills will be termly and unannounced to children in the first instance and subsequently to children and adults. Fire alarms are tested each week.

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are sited throughout the building as appropriate. In the case of fire, no matter how small, the alarm should always be raised first and the building evacuated before any attempt to use an extinguisher is made. Staff are not expected to fire fight if there is a risk to personal safety or the safety of others in so doing.

Staff should be vigilant at all times regarding possible fire risks. Fire door and points of exit should be kept free from obstruction at all times. There should be no **continuous** wall displays and a gap of at least 300mm every 2 metres should be maintained. There should be no posters/displays on doors that are used for staff or children to exit through.

The duties of all staff in case of fire and location of assembly points will be summarised and posted throughout the building, including our ELC setting. These instructions will be discussed and reviewed annually by the whole staff team and additionally in the aftermath of any incidence of fire. It is also good practice to check these procedures with the Fire Officer.



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The following procedures should be followed in the event of fire or any other incident which may necessitate emergency evacuation of the building.

If fire is discovered, the alarm should be raised by smashing the glass at one of the fire points located throughout the building. All staff should make themselves familiar with the location of these points.

The Fire and Rescue Service will be called by the Head Teacher, depute or Early Years Senior or Lead Practitioner outwith school hours. The person making this call is considered to be the **Fire Officer**. The Fire Officer should take the official **Fire Register** with them as they exit. They will also take a **mobile phone** and a list of children's **emergency contacts** maintained for such purposes. This list will be stored in the setting which allows confidentiality to be maintained but also allows immediate access in case of an emergency.

All Staff are responsible for the evacuation of the area in which they are currently working, they should:

- remain calm and strive to keep the children calm
- evacuate their area checking carefully that no child has sought cover behind doors or under equipment
- ensure no one stops to collect coats or personal belongings
- check toilets or rooms off the main play areas as they evacuate
- close all doors to prevent further spread of the fire as exit is made
- be aware of special needs children, children who are new to the group and those who become easily distressed and carry these children to safety if necessary.
- follow the agreed procedures in PEEP plans for the evacuation of non-mobile children
- exit via the nearest **Fire Door** which can be opened by pressing on the bars - should fire obstruct exit via the fire doors then the nearest unobstructed exit should be used
- proceed to the designated **Fire Assembly Point in the infant playground of the school**
- take all **registers** in order to enable the Fire Officer to carry out a roll call when everyone is assembled at the designated Fire Assembly Point.



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Re-entry to the building should only be initiated on instructions from the Fire Officer. The silencing of the fire alarm **does not** signal re-entry.

Should re-entry to the building be impossible, staff and children will proceed to: Garioch Sport's Centre which is available outwith term time.

In these circumstances a notice will be posted informing parents where their children have been re-located to, or a member of staff will remain in the vicinity to redirect parents.

Medical Emergencies

A medical emergency means that the patient requires immediate medical intervention to stabilise and prevent the medical condition from deteriorating. The following procedure should be followed:

- Remain calm, render first aid and call for help. Do not move the injured or sick person unless their safety and/or health is at risk.
- Call 999 for emergency medical services to report the incident or request someone else to call.
- Assign an individual to meet the emergency personnel and direct them to the casualty.
- Any medical information pertaining to the casualty should be accessed from the files and available for the medical personnel.
- Assign a staff member to accompany the patient to hospital.
- Ensure the emergency contact of the patient is notified.
- Complete relevant paperwork (accident/incident report).

Missing Child

The children's safety is paramount within the setting. If a child is feared missing the procedures identified in the missing child policy should be followed.

Potentially Violent Situation

Please see Appendix 1.



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Utility Disruption

If utilities are disrupted in the setting every effort will be made to keep the setting open. The decision to close the setting will be based on the risk to the health and well-being of the children. Parents will be informed by phone if children need to be collected early or if sessions need to be cancelled.

Threatening Call

Calls of a threatening nature should be reported as accurately as possible and reported to the police. If possible, record the call and note any relevant information which may be useful to the police.

Suspicious Package

Evidence of a suspicious package or letter, should be reported to the manager immediately. Communicate concerns to the police. Do not attempt to move the article unless instructed to do so by the police. Follow advice given by the police regarding appropriate procedures to take within the setting.

Flooding

If your setting is liable to natural flooding, monitor announcements regarding flood warnings. Close or evacuate the setting if required and follow evacuation orders from emergency safety officials.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of the Early Years Senior and Lead Practitioner to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. Monitoring of the policy will be achieved through regular fire practices and reviews of risk assessment and the procedures to be followed in the event of a critical incident. Staff responsibilities and procedures will be reviewed as appropriate to implement or modify any changes to either procedures or personnel.



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The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is relevant and up to date. Training is available on Aldo to support this policy. <https://aldo.aberdeenshire.gov.uk>

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Potentially Violent Situations

Links to national policy:

National Care Standards 2,3,14

<http://www.nationalcarestandards.org/213.html>

Find out more:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

[www.legislation.gov.uk>ukpga](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga)

Fire Safety Officer (local), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

www.firescotland.gov.uk

Aberdeenshire Council, no date available, "Aberdeenshire Emergency Evacuation Guidance and Policy"

<https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/HR%20and%20OD/Health%20and%20Safety,%20Wellbeing%20and%20Risk%20Management/Health%20and%20Safety/E-H/Emergency-Evacuation.aspx>

Care Inspectorate, no date available, "Fire Safety Checklist"

<http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/1847/Fire%20safety%20checklist%20on-childminders.pdf>

Care Inspectorate, no date available, "Guidance notes for fire safety checklist"

<http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/152/Guidance%20notes%20for%20fire%20safety%20checklist.pdf>

Aberdeenshire Council, no date available, "Emergency Evacuation"

<https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/HR%20and%20OD/Health%20and%20Safety,%20Wellbeing%20and%20Risk%20Management/Health%20and%20Safety/E-H/Emergency-Evacuation.aspx>

Additional Aberdeenshire Council Fire Evacuation Information (PowerPoint)

https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/:p:/r/sites/Arcadia/services/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B9C745430-EA7A-4E03-B96A-B1F4AB366638%7D&file=Fire-Evacuation-Information-09.ppt&action=edit&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1





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Critical Incidents Policy – Appendix 1 Please use procedures in Evacuation Bag

Potentially Violent Situations

A potentially violent situation (i.e. hostage situation or aggressive person) may be cause for a selective evacuation procedure. The premise behind a selective evacuation is that it enables large numbers of children and staff to move out of harm's way when an individual is on-site who is potentially violent.

If a potentially violent individual gains access to your building:

- Immediately call 999/police and seek advice on how to handle the situation.
- Indicate to the police that you may have a situation that requires evacuation.
- Should you have any reason to believe the individual has a weapon, order evacuation if possible.
- Try to isolate the potential aggressor from as many adults and children as possible. Seek to draw the individual(s) to the office or other less populated space. If the individual has entered a playroom, seek to draw him/her into the least used part of the room. Always endeavour to keep yourself between the aggressor and a means of exit to allow you to escape the situation if necessary.
- Do not physically restrain or block their movements.
- Try to engage the potential aggressor in conversation to de-escalate the situation.
- Remain calm and be polite.
- While you are engaging the potentially violent individual, other available persons should direct unaffected rooms to move to locations around the facility that are farthest from the incident point. This selective evacuation should proceed room by room in as orderly and quiet a manner as possible, being careful to use routes not visible to the incident point.
- Other staff should make sure no other individuals, other than emergency personnel, enter the space where you have isolated the potentially violent individual.
- Once the police arrive they will take over the situation, negotiate and dictate further movements.
- If a decision is made to relocate to an alternative site while negotiations go on, follow the appropriate evacuation procedures within the Critical Incidents Policy.



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Random Acts of Violence

If the setting is affected by random acts of violence (e.g. shooting incident), do the following:

- Remain calm.
- Immediately call 999.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility and have the children lie down on the floor.
- Brief the police of the problem once they arrive.
- Report the incident to management as soon as possible.

Aggressive employees, parents or members of the public

In the event of having to deal with aggressive employees, parents or members of the public do the following:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Try to diffuse the situation and encourage the person to leave the building if appropriate, or seek to draw the individual to the office or other less populated space.
- If the person becomes confrontational call 999 if possible.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility to isolate the incident.
- If an aggressive parent's child is present during an incident, move the child to another room if possible, away from any incident.
- If a parent has acted in an aggressive manner and then demands to take their child with them as they leave, you are required to release the child to the parent in accordance with setting procedures unless you have good reason to believe they intend harm to the child.
- Report the incident to management.



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Parents under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If you have reasonable cause to suspect that any person collecting a child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs and that going with them may put the child at risk, you may have cause to refuse to release the child. If so, request that another adult be called to pick up the child or call the numbers listed on the child's enrolment form.

In the event of having to deal with employees, parents or members of the public who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs do the following:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Try to diffuse the situation and encourage the person to leave the building if appropriate.
- If the person becomes agitated and/or confrontational, immediately call 999.
- Staff members who are aware of the situation will alert any remaining staff of the problem.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility to isolate the incident.
- Report the incident to management.

Hostage Situations

In very rare circumstances the setting may be subject to a hostage situation. In the event of a hostage situation:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Follow the hostage taker's instructions.
- Do not resist.
- Any available staff member will call 999.
- Staff members will alert other staff of the problem if time permits. Do not put yourself in danger.
- Alerted staff members will close the doors of their areas of responsibility.
- If staff members believe it is safe, evacuate children from the building moving in the opposite direction from the incident. Report your location to the police immediately.

Reviewed February 2023