

Wildlings



Emergency closure Policy

Policy statement

The Emergency Closure Plan is implemented by the Emergency Management Team. This consists of The Manager, The Deputy Manager and The Chair of Wildlings Committee.

An emergency is “An event or circumstance which happens with or without warning that causes or threatens injury to people, disruption to the setting’s operations, or damage to property or to the environment.”

Procedures

We may implement the emergency closure of the setting under the following circumstances:

- Fire damage
- Flooding
- Snow
- Ice
- High levels of sickness among staff or children
- Infectious disease pandemic
- A break in, burglary of the setting’s or personal property
- Lack of water or heating in the building
- Death of an adult or child in the setting
- Under Community Emergency Planning Procedures
- If there are contractual implications
- Any other reason that the management team believes hinders the ability of Wildlings to operate safely

Fire Damage

The most important factor in the event of a fire is the safety of the children and adults in the setting. Fire drills are practiced regularly, and evacuation procedures are on Wildlings notice boards. The staff should raise the alarm, if it has not already been activated, and safely evacuate the premises following our fire evacuation procedure. A designated member of staff should call 999. We phone Ambergate Primary School on our mobile to let them know that we need a place of shelter and safety, until parents can collect their children. We take the register and a laptop computer with us if possible and we phone parents once we are in a place of safety (at the school) and ask them to pick up their children as soon as possible. All staff will remain with the children until they have been collected.

Depending on the level of fire damage, the Management Team will need to inform parents as to whether the setting will remain open, whether it is necessary to temporarily close the setting or whether temporary alternative accommodation can be arranged. Ofsted must be informed of any changes to the premises or the operation of the childcare provision within 14 days of the incident occurring. Ofsted will need to inspect any temporary accommodation provided during the renovation of the premises to ensure it is suitable and will also re-inspect the premises.

Any fire which results in suspension of normal working activities for more than 24 hours should be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR requirements.

An incident report should be filled out and file within the risk assessment file.

Flood

Flooding can be caused by an internal plumbing problem, a pipe bursting for instance or by an external problem such as a burst water main or severe weather conditions. Should an evacuation of the premises be necessary during a session because of flooding, we would follow the fire procedure and take the children to a place of safety, Ambergate Primary School, where parents will be contacted and asked to collect their children. The Methodist Church Committee should be contacted immediately so they can arrange for emergency repairs. An incident report should be filled out and filed in the risk assessment folder.

Our insurance company should be contacted as soon as possible to inform them and make a claim. We should take photographs of the flood damage for the claim and should not throw any items away until agreed by the insurance provider. Ofsted will be notified within 14 days of flooding to the premises.

Children and staff should not return to the setting until all areas and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned and restored to their normal condition. The local authority may be able to assist parents to find alternative childcare arrangements during this time. If the setting is able to arrange temporary accommodation during renovation of the premises, Ofsted must be informed so they can inspect the new premises to ensure it is suitable.

Powercuts

There may be a loss of electricity due to external problems such as damage to power lines caused by bad weather or vandalism.

To be prepared in the event of a power cut, we use a mobile phone and ensure emergency contact numbers are saved on it and in a place that is easy for staff to access them (in rucksack for woods/outings and in cupboard at setting). It is possible that if a full or short circuit occurs, the fuse or circuit breaker will cut off power before the wiring overheats and causes fire. The electricians in the hall are separated into lighting distribution and socket distribution. A check can be made as to where the fault is and power switched back on. The Methodist Church Committee would need to be informed of a recurrent problem so they could arrange for an electrician. An incident report should be filled out and filed in the risk assessment folder.

Snow and Ice

The Manager assesses the risk to staff and children and makes the decision whether to close. When the decision to close has been made before opening time, a message is posted on the parent Facebook page and we send email/text message to parents to let them know. Where we do not receive an acknowledgement of having received the message, we will call the parents directly. It is possible in the event of snow to predict and prepare parents for potential closures in advance. This is done by announcing our procedure for closure on our parent Facebook group.

Should there be heavy snowfall during the session, parents will be called to pick children up early. This should be done as early as possible to provide time for parents, children and staff to get home safely.

High levels of sickness among staff or children

Infections can spread easily in Early Years settings where groups of children, whose young immune systems are still developing, share activities and play closely together. Although most cases of illnesses in settings will be minor, some infections have serious health implications. In all cases, infections need to be managed effectively by the setting to prevent an outbreak. This may mean short term closure. The Management Team will work together with the local authority. We will monitor the length of the outbreak so we can decide to safely restart suspended activities. This will help us to identify recurring patterns in illness and identify whether the illness is new or a continuation of a previous outbreak. Closures may also be necessary if staff become ill and there are not enough practitioners to maintain ratios determined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Welfare Requirements.

Infectious Disease Pandemic

It is possible that, during a national emergency such as a pandemic where an illness spreads quickly throughout the country infecting large numbers of people, that the government will decide that it is in the best interests of the welfare of adults and children for schools and childcare settings to temporarily close. A plan for responding to a pandemic is in place and our local authority keeps us up to date with any national guidance for planning an emergency response as it is released.

Break in, burglary, theft of personal or setting property

We consider the security of the setting when carrying out risk assessments of the premises. Doors, windows and gates are well maintained, and staff always ensure all doors are secure before they leave.

The setting only holds small amounts of cash on the premises. Laptops and expensive ICT equipment is kept in a locked cupboard to which only Wildlings staff hold keys for.

We have appropriate insurance cover in case of a break in burglary or theft taking place. Any break-in burglary or theft will be reported to the police to investigate. A police crime number will be used when making an insurance claim.

If there is damage to the premises, staff should notify the Methodist Church Committee who have the responsibility for the maintenance of the property. Children should be kept away from the area and once police give permission, the damage should be repaired. Where there is extensive damage or disruption to the premises, it may be necessary to temporarily close the setting while repairs take place. If this is the case, the children's parents, the staff and Ofsted should be informed as soon as possible.

If any bank cards, cheque books or account information go missing, the relevant bank should be informed immediately.

An incident report should be completed and filed in the risk assessment folder.

An intruder gaining unauthorized access to the premises

An intruder is anyone who enters the setting without permission. Sometimes an intruder may be known, such as a parent or relation of a child trying to gain access to their child when there is a court order preventing them. Alternatively, a stranger may try to get into the premises. This could

be down to a misunderstanding of the boundaries of the property or with the intention of committing a crime.

Many of the security measures listed to deter break-ins, will also help to prevent unauthorized intruders gaining access to the premises. This setting shares the premises with other village groups. We ensure that we have sole use of our part of the building during our hours of operation and that no other users can access the setting without permission during this time.

Appointments for visitors are agreed in advance where possible and all staff are made aware. Visitors are asked to sign in when they arrive and leave the setting. Staff check the identification of strangers and confirm the organisation details on an ID card are genuine.

To ensure staff are aware of who has legal access to a child, if not the parent or carer, we confirm whether they have parental responsibility and/or legal contact. In these instances parents are asked to let us know who will be collecting their child and have an agreed password for them to use, and ensure it is the correct password.

When faced with an intruder, calmly inform them in the first instance that they are trespassing and are not allowed on the premises and then ask them to leave. If the intruder is violent or abusive, or if there is reason to believe the person is dangerous, staff and children should move to a safe place and call the police. If any attempt is made by an intruder to remove a child by force the police must be called immediately.

An incident form should be completed and filed in the risk assessment folder.

Death of a child or an adult

When an unexpected or sudden death occurs in the setting it is extremely distressing for the staff and children.

If a child or adult dies unexpectedly in the setting, the staff should call 999 immediately and follow the advice of the emergency services, moving other children and adults to a place of safety. The police will normally inform the individual's next of kin. We would follow the instructions of the police while they collect evidence and carry out their investigation and would check with the police as to what information can be given to the staff and families at this time. When carrying out an investigation into the circumstances of the death of a child, the police will work closely with the local safeguarding children's board and local children's social care.

The Management Team should report any deaths that occur in relation to their work activities to the Health and Safety Executive and Ofsted as soon as possible, and comply with their investigations and any actions they advise. Our insurance company should also be informed. We may want to contact the Early Years Alliance Press Team for advice on managing media enquiries relating to the incident. An incident report will need to be completed and filed in the risk assessment folder.

Coping with the shock and grief following a sudden death will be difficult for all at the setting. The Child Bereavement Charity provides advice on ways to support children and adults who have been affected by death and can be contacted on 01494446648.

A terrorist attack or the threat of one

Terrorism is an on-going danger in society today. Terrorists plan attacks, using methods such as suicide bombings and chemical weapons, to cause mass casualties and public intimidation. A terrorist attack can have a major impact on settings that are located, or are on an outing visiting a place, near the site where a terrorist attack takes place.

In the event of a terrorist attack, where staff and children at the scene of an incident they should stay together and follow the advice of the emergency services at the scene, who will be working to evacuate the area and treat the wounded or injured. If advised to do so by the emergency services, staff and children should evacuate following their emergency evacuation procedures. If on an outing, the Manager would contact a member of the Management Team to inform them of the incident. Parents would need to be contacted as the likelihood of returning to the setting on time would diminish and this may cause distress.

An incident form should be completed and filed in the risk assessment file.

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