

Emergency Lock Down Policy

At The Orchard Day Nursery Kingston the safety and wellbeing of our children, staff, families and visitors is our highest priority. We take all reasonable steps to ensure our premises remain safe and secure and that all staff understand how to respond quickly and effectively during an emergency.

This policy has been developed in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Working Together to Safeguard Children, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Civil Contingencies Act 2004, ProtectUK guidance and current Ofsted expectations.

All staff receive induction and regular refresher training on emergency procedures, including lockdown arrangements. Parents are informed of our emergency procedures through our welcome information, policies and regular communications.

Purpose of a Lockdown

A lockdown is implemented when it is safer for everyone to remain inside the nursery building rather than evacuate. The aim is to protect children, staff and visitors from immediate danger while emergency services manage the incident.

The decision to initiate a lockdown will always be based on a dynamic risk assessment and information available at the time.

Situations That May Require Lockdown

A lockdown may be initiated following, but not limited to:

- An intruder entering or attempting to enter the premises.
- Violent or threatening behaviour in or near the nursery.
- A police incident within the local community.
- A missing person or dangerous individual nearby.
- A terrorist threat or major security incident.
- Dangerous animals in the local area.
- A significant fire, explosion or structural incident nearby where remaining inside is safer than evacuating.
- Hazardous smoke, chemical release, gas leak or poor air quality.
- Any other emergency where remaining inside presents the lowest level of risk.

Lockdown Alert

The nursery will use the following agreed signal:

Lockdown Signal: *[Verbal announcement through the walkie talkie.]*

All Clear Signal: *[Verbal announcement through the walkie talkie.]*

All staff, including agency staff, students and volunteers, will be familiar with these signals through induction and regular drills.

Lockdown Procedure

When the lockdown signal is given, staff will remain calm and act quickly to reassure the children.

Children and adults will immediately move to the nearest safe room if it is safe to do so. If children are outdoors, staff will calmly bring them inside using the nearest safe entrance, provided doing so does not increase the level of risk.

All external doors and windows will be secured immediately. Internal doors may also be closed where appropriate. Curtains and blinds will be drawn where possible and safe to do so.

Children and adults will move away from doors, windows and glazed areas and remain in the safest part of the room.

Lights, electronic devices and noise will be kept to a minimum where appropriate. Staff will use quiet activities, books, songs or calming techniques to help children remain settled and reduce anxiety.

Attendance registers, visitor records and staff signing-in records will be used to ensure every child, member of staff and visitor is accounted for as quickly as possible.

Medication, emergency contact details and first aid equipment will be available where practicable without compromising safety.

Communication

The Nursery Manager, or the most senior person on site, will take overall responsibility for coordinating the incident.

Emergency services will be contacted immediately by dialling 999 where appropriate.

Internal communication between rooms will take place using agreed communication systems such as:

- Internal telephones
- Nursery mobile phones
- Two-way radios
- Secure messaging systems

Staff should avoid unnecessary use of mobile phones or social media throughout the incident. No member of staff should contact parents independently unless directed to do so by the Nursery Manager, as this may increase anxiety, create misinformation or interfere with emergency procedures.

Parents and Carers

Parents will be informed as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

If emergency services advise that parents should not attend the nursery, this instruction will be followed to avoid increasing risk or obstructing emergency responders.

Where collection arrangements need to change, parents will receive clear instructions regarding reunification arrangements.

Supporting Children

Throughout the lockdown, staff will provide reassurance appropriate to each child's age and stage of development.

Children will not be given unnecessary information that may increase anxiety. Staff will respond honestly and sensitively to children's questions while maintaining a calm and reassuring environment.

Following the incident, practitioners will continue to monitor children's emotional wellbeing and behaviour. Some children may require additional reassurance or opportunities to talk, play or express their feelings through age-appropriate activities.

Where concerns remain, staff will work in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, seek advice from relevant professionals.

After the Incident

Once emergency services confirm it is safe, the Nursery Manager will issue the agreed all-clear signal.

Normal routines will resume gradually, recognising that children and adults may need additional reassurance following the incident.

The Nursery Manager will:

- Complete a full incident report.
- Record the actions taken and any lessons learned.
- Inform Ofsted where the incident meets the requirements for notification.
- Notify the Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate.
- Review safeguarding and health and safety risk assessments.
- Debrief staff and provide wellbeing support where required.
- Update this policy and emergency procedures if improvements are identified.

Training and Practice

Lockdown procedures are practised regularly using age-appropriate, non-frightening scenarios to ensure staff remain confident in their responsibilities.

Following every drill, the management team will evaluate the effectiveness of the procedure, identify any improvements required and record the date, time, outcomes and any actions taken.

New staff, students, volunteers and agency staff receive information about lockdown procedures as part of their induction before working unsupervised with children.

This policy is reviewed annually, following any emergency incident, changes to statutory guidance or recommendations from emergency services or safeguarding partners.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
07/08/2026	F.Joyce	December 2026

