



Crisis Management Policy

Version 3.

This policy is applicable to all Minibugs Nurseries sites

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1. Aim of the Policy

At Minibugs Nurseries we recognise that emergency situations can occur at any time both inside the setting and outside in the surrounding community. Minibugs carry out risk assessments to reduce the chances of emergency situations effecting the children, families, and staff members at the setting, and aims to provide a healthy and safe environment where in the event of emergencies, staff members are prepared and informed as to how to take control without putting themselves or anyone else at risk. Keeping the welfare of both children and adult's paramount.

2. Parent / Carer Communications

If any incidents impact on the ability of the nursery to operate, we will contact parents via phone and/or email at the earliest opportunity.

In the event that telephone lines are out of service all calls will be forwarded to either the Nursery Manager's mobile telephone or to our Head Office Team. If this is not possible advice must be sought from the appropriate telephone provider regarding putting a redirecting message on the lines via the local exchange. In the interim an external communication to parents/carers will note the redirection of calls.

Other communication channels include:

- Minibugs secure parent/carers community Facebook page
- Minibugs Public Facebook page
- Minibugs website
- Parentzone App
- Emails
- Parent/ carers contact details are held securely on our nursery admin system. This is cloud based and subject to data backups and strict service level agreements with the IT provider.
- Contact details are therefore accessible by the Minibugs Head Office Team for direct communications to be made where necessary.

3. IT Disaster Recovery

Minibugs IT systems are securely hosted by its Wider Group Partner Equity Solutions. Robust IT back up procedures, secure fire walls and disaster recovery procedures are in place.

4. Emergency Situations

4.1. Fire

In the event of a fire and/or the alarm sounding, the Nursery Management Team will start the evacuation process. Minibugs Nurseries fire alarm systems are tested weekly and are monitored and maintained by a third-party company. Regular fire evacuations are also conducted to ensure staff members are prepared, and aware of the correct procedure in order to exit the building safely in the event of a fire. Parent/carers will be contacted as soon as possible if deemed necessary e.g. nursery closure.

See Fire Safety Management and Fire Emergency Plan for more details.

4.2. Adverse Weather

In the event of inclement weather such as a heavy snowfall, the Nursery Manager will contact the Head Office Team as soon as possible to inform them of a decision regarding the opening of the Nursery. Parent / carers should then be contacted to inform them of the decision.

If the event of serious inclement weather occurs whilst nursery sessions are occurring, the Nursery Manager, will supervise any children who attend as normal and their parents will be contacted to make necessary arrangements to collect their children. Should there be no contact available; the children will remain in the Nursery.

See Daily Care Routines Policy in the event of a heat wave.

4.3. Flood

There is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions or through the failure of water/central heating systems. We cannot anticipate severe adverse weather; however, we can ensure that we take care of all our water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the option of flooding in this way. Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered gas engineer and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the nursery day, the nursery manager will make a decision based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the fire evacuation procedure. In this instance children will be kept safe and parents will be notified in the same way as the fire procedure.

4.4. An Intruder Gaining Unauthorised Access to the Premises

An intruder is anyone that enters the setting without permission. When faced with an intruder, the staff member should 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 there is reason to believe the person is dangerous, staff and children should be moved as far away as possible from the situation and the nursery management team should call the police on 999.

See Arrivals, Collections and Visitors Policy for further information.

4.5. Abduction or Threatened Abduction of a Child

Minibugs Nurseries have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including safety from abduction. Staff must be vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering around nursery property immediately to the Head Office Team and/or Police. All doors and gates to the nursery are locked and cannot be accessed unless staff members allow individuals in. Parents are reminded on a regular basis not to allow anyone into the building whether they are known to them or not.

Children will only be released into the care of a designated adult; see the Arrivals, Collection and Visitors Policy for more details.

Parents are requested to inform the nursery of any potential custody issues or family concerns as soon as they arise, so the nursery is able to support the child. The nursery will not take sides in relation to any custody issues and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent with parental responsibility arrives to collect their child, Minibugs will not restrict access unless a court order is in place. Parents are requested to issue the nursery with a copy of these documents should they be in place.

If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from nursery we have the following procedures which are followed immediately:

- Ensure safety of child(ren) targeted
- The police must be called immediately
- The staff member will notify management immediately and they will take control
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure and calmed down where necessary
- The police will be given as many details as possible including details of the child, description of the abductor, car registration number if used, time and direction of travel if seen and any family situations that may impact on this abduction.
- Internal incident review

4.6. Bomb Threat/Terrorism Attack

If a bomb threat is received at Minibugs or to surrounding area/properties which could affect the setting, the person taking the call will record all details given over the phone as soon as possible and raise the alarm as soon as the phone call has ended. The management team will follow the Fire Evacuation Plan and take advice from the Emergency Services to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible. See Lockdown Procedure, if evacuation isn't possible.

If Minibugs is involved or caught up in the incident, staff must advise parents not to attempt to come to the setting, unless asked to collect, as this may put the parent and the children at greater risk. As much as possible, parents will be informed of the actions we are taking via the appropriate communication channel.

If a parent is caught up in an incident, Minibugs will continue to look after the child until they are able to return, or a person nominated is able to collect them. If after every attempt collection is still not possible, the Arrival, Collection and Visitors Policy must be followed.

4.7. Burglary

Minibugs consider the security of the setting when carrying out risk assessment of the premises. There are burglar alarms at all sites and security lights around the building these are monitored by a 3rd party contractor who will receive the notification should the alarm system be triggered. Doors, windows and gates are well maintained and staff always ensure all doors are secure before they leave.

Should the alarm system fail and the staff member opening the nursery suspect a burglary has happened, under no circumstance should they attempt to enter the building alone. They must:

- Dial 101 if it is suspected that the intruder is no longer within the nursery. Dial 999 should there be any reason to suspect the intruder is still within the nursery. The call should include as many details as possible, i.e. name and location, details of what has been found and emphasise that this is a nursery and children will be arriving soon
- Notify the Head Office Team to allow them to assist with the enquiry and make relevant notifications to the directors

- Contain the area to ensure no-one enters until the police arrive. The staff will direct parents and children to a separate area as they arrive. If all areas have been disturbed staff will follow police advice to ensure the safety of the children
- The manager on duty will help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- A manager will be available at all times during this time to speak to parents, reassure children and direct any enquiries.
- Management will assess the situation with the support from Head Office following a theft and ensure parents are kept up to date with developments relating to the operation of the nursery

5. Other Incidents

Most existing procedures for handling an emergency situation will involve evacuation of the premises and will be focused on an event happening in the building. However, in some situations, it may be safer to stay put (lockdown) rather than evacuate the premises.

In the event of an incident, 'lockdown' of a building or buildings is an emergency procedure to secure and protect occupants near an immediate threat. By controlling movement in an area, emergency services can contain and handle the situation more effectively.

5.1. Lockdown procedures

If an emergency happens the setting management team must act quickly to assess the likelihood of immediate danger. A member of the management team must immediately contact the Police on 999 and await further instruction. In most cases the assumption should 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 it is essential staff comply with instructions at all times.

Upon alert to lockdown

- Stay calm.
- Ensure staff and children stay in their designated areas. Staff members should stay in the room they are working in, unless advised otherwise, secure all doors and windows, and await further instructions.
- If appropriate and instructed to do so children, staff, parents & any visitors at the time will make their way calmly to the safest nominated rooms (Manager's office, kitchen, or staff room).
- Close curtains and blinds where possible.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- Stay low and keep calm.
- Stay out of sight and minimise movement.
- Tune into a local TV or radio station for more information where possible.
- Do NOT make non-essential calls on mobile phones or landlines.

- If the fire alarm is activated, remain where you are and await further instructions from emergency services unless the fire is in your area. In which case, move to the next room/area, following the usual fire procedures.
- If anyone is outside, they must be contacted to return indoors. If this is not possible, the Police must be notified, and further instruction must be sort from them.
- Senior management will be responsible for ensuring headcounts are completed regularly.
- Everyone must remain in lockdown until the all-clear has been given by the Police.

Following the Lockdown

- Co-operate with the emergency services to help in an orderly evacuation.
- Ensure you have the register and children's details with you.
- Anybody who has witnessed an attack or incident will need to tell the police what they saw.

5.2. Managing parents

In the event of an incident it is inevitable parents will want to come to the setting and collect their children immediately. They must be discouraged from doing so, until the emergency services give the all clear.

Even then, depending on the severity and type of incident, children may need to be checked by medical teams or questioned by the police. It must be made absolutely clear to parents that you will be acting on the advice of the emergency services at all times.

With regard to getting information to parents during 'lockdown', Minibugs staff members should use the existing systems that are in place for sending group messages, such as social media, text, emails. Staff should discourage parents from ringing the nursery directly for further updates during 'lockdown'; it will be vital your phone lines remain clear.

6. Incident Review

What we will do after an incident:

- Review events and actions
- Assess any areas for improvement or training.
- The necessary external agencies will be informed.

7. Staffing Shortages

Minibugs ensures to adhere to the child to adult ratio requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2023). In the event that these requirements cannot be met the nursery management team will review the sessions offered to ensure they can accommodate as many children as possible.



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