



# AUTUMN COTTAGE CHILDCARE

# CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

EYFS – Section 3.53, 3.65-3.65

*Issued: April 2026*

*Next Review: April 2027*

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Autumn Cottage has plans to manage incidents that could critically affect the running and health & safety of the setting. These include:

- Extreme weather.
- Setting systems failure – Heating, pipe burst etc.
- Fire
- Third party action - bomb threat, terrorist attack, intruder etc.
- Burglary
- Abduction or potential abduction of a child
- Serious accident or illness incl. death
- Pandemic

If any of these incidents impact on the setting operation, AC will contact parents at the earliest opportunity, typically before the start of the nursery day.

## **EXTREME WEATHER**

See the AC Extreme Weather Policy.

## **SETTING INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE**

All infrastructure systems within the setting - Eversley Village Hall (EVH) - are the responsibility of the Landlord. AC liaises with them to ensure that key systems receive the appropriate maintenance.

In the event of a critical system failure (power, water, heating), or discovery of such a failure on opening up, a decision will be taken as to whether to close the setting and ask parents to come and collect.

In the event of other infrastructure failure, the system or area would be made safe, EVH informed, and access limited until repaired by a competent engineer. If the failure represented a significant risk to safety, the setting may be closed and parents asked to come and collect.

## **FIRE**

See AC Fire Emergency Procedures.



## **THIRD PARTY ACTION**

Depending on the nature of incident, AC has procedures to either evacuate building (bomb threat etc.) to either the primary or secondary assembly point or locking down the building (attempted entry etc.). These include close liaison with the emergency services and communication with parents.

## **Protective Security and Emergency Incident**

Depending on the nature of incident, AC has procedures to either evacuate building (bomb threat etc.) to either the primary or secondary assembly point or locking down the building (attempted entry etc.). These include close liaison with the emergency services and communication with parents. Kelly Smith is the named Security Lead Ali, Lurna and Michelle are Deputy Security Lead. These staff member will oversee the organisation and give instruction during an emergency. We have an emergency evacuation bag kept in our lockdown space in the men's toilets. The security lead is also responsible for obtaining this in the evacuation or lockdown.

If an intruder or armed intruder tries to gain entry or enters the building this would evoke and Emergency Lockdown. All staff, visitor's and children will retreat to our safe place and lock down, calling emergency services to assist. The Security Lead will ensure they have the nursery mobile phone and call '999' reporting the incident and asking for police assistance. All staff should lead children into the two main Bathrooms and lock the door. They should take their registers and tablets and follow protocol as detailed in peanut drill/serious incident policy. All staff are trained in the 'Run, Hide Tell' procedure during their induction. If there is a bomb threat we would evacuate as per our fire evacuation policy but assemble to our safe space at Charles Kingsley School.

All staff watch the SCaN video as part of their workplace training and are advised to be aware of their surroundings. If the See anything that concerns them, they should Check and Notify the security lead.

Staff members should consider the HOT protocol when concerned there may be a bomb threat;

### **Hidden?**

- has the item been deliberately hidden, or has a deliberate attempt been made to conceal it from view?

### **Obviously suspicious?**

- are there wires, circuit boards, batteries, tape, liquids or putty-like substances visible? Could it be an Improvised Explosive Device (IED)?
- has the item been found after seeing suspicious behaviour? Check with others in the area and use CCTV, if available
- based upon what you can see, do you think the item poses an immediate threat to life?

### **Typical of what you would expect to find in this location?**



- most lost property is found in locations where people congregate or wait, so ask if anyone nearby has left the item or saw who did. Check and see if maintenance staff have been working at the location
- if the item is assessed to be unattended rather than suspicious, then examine further, paying particular attention to the contents, before applying lost property procedures. The security lead should complete the bomb threat checklist at this time?

**Clear – the immediate area**

- do not touch it further
  - take charge and move people away from the hazard. Move at least 100 meters away from a small item, such as a rucksack; at least 200 metres away from a small vehicle or large item, such as a car or a wheelie bin; and at least 400 metres away from a large vehicle, such as a van or lorry
  - keep yourself and other people out of line of sight of the item. It is a broad rule, but generally, you are better protected from fragmentation if you are behind hard cover and cannot see the item
  - think about what you can shelter behind. Pick something substantial, such as concrete or brick, and keep away from glass such as windows and skylights
- Cordon off the area

**Communicate – call 999**

- inform your control room and/or supervisor and be prepared to explain why you consider the item suspicious
- do not use radios or phones within 15 metres of the item and place yourself out of line of sight

**Control – access to the cordoned area**

- members of the public should not be able to approach the area until it is deemed safe
- try and keep eyewitnesses on hand so they can tell police what they saw, or try and get contact details before witnesses move away. Bomb threat checklist will be kept in the evacuation bag in the men's toilets and a copy will be kept in our administration Cupboard in the annex.

**BURGLARY**

All security systems within the setting are the responsibility of the EVH Landlord. AC is responsible for locking the premises and setting the alarm on closing. The alarm is remotely monitored and in the event of an intruder being detected during closed hours the monitoring company will inform the EVH landlord who will inform AC.

Should a burglary be discovered on opening up, AC will contact the Police and inform the EVH landlord. In both cases, subject to advice from the Police, the AC Manager will communicate with parents at the earliest opportunity as to whether the setting will operate that day.



## **ABDUCTION OR POTENTIAL ABDUCTION OF A CHILD**

### **General**

- All doors are kept locked, and entry is only permitted by staff to known persons.
- Staff are vigilant and will report any persons lingering around the property to the Manager. If of sufficient concern, the Manager will call the Police.
- Children are only released into the care of a designated adult.
- The external play areas are surrounded by fencing of the required height to prevent snatching and outside play is continuously supervised.

### **Custody Disputes**

Parents are requested to inform the nursery of any disputes over custody or other related concerns. AC will require sight of any court orders etc. so that they can make appropriate arrangements, in particular who is authorised to collect the child.

### **Abduction Incident**

If there is an actual or potential abduction from nursery:

- The Manager will be informed and who will take charge.
- The Police will be called.
- The parents will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure – would they be sent home/lockdown?

An abduction could obviously lead to potential prosecution, what procedures would you have to be able to provide evidence that all security policies/procedures had been followed?

## **SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS INCL. DEATH**

The Manager in charge would take charge of the situation. Priority would be to get emergency assistance, giving full details of the person, location, incident, and medical situation.

- 1) A parent or next of kin should be contacted immediately.
- 2) The Local Authority should be contacted for support in contacting all the necessary agencies that need to be informed, including Ofsted, Social Care and Health and Safety Executive.
- 3) The staff team must be updated and debriefed.
- 4) Children must be managed and reassured.
- 5) The Insurance Company must be informed.
- 6) With legal advice, management must decide what will be said to the media if necessary to ensure consistency. Advice may also be given by Hampshire County Council Early Years Team.
- 7) A factual report must be written, using clear, specific language giving the facts about what happened.
- 8) There must be a review of AC procedures for lessons learnt from the incident, and an risk assessment.
- 9) Counselling may be offered to those in need.



***Death of Child outside the Setting***

If AC is notified of a child's death, there may other actions and issues to be addressed. These can include distress for staff, children, and parents, as well as Social Care and Police Investigations, and possible media interest. The Manager will liaise with the relevant bodies and determine the best course of action.

**PANDEMIC / EPIDEMIC**

In the event of a pandemic/epidemic situation AC will take advice from the Local Authority or DfE on appropriate measures, including closing.