



Critical Incident –

Managing and Supporting People

At Clare House Nursery, we recognise that a critical incident can have a significant emotional impact on children, families, staff and visitors. During any critical incident, our priority is to ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of everyone involved, whilst responding in a calm, compassionate and professional manner.

The Nursery Manager will coordinate the response to the incident, ensuring that appropriate support, communication and safeguarding procedures are followed throughout.

Supporting Staff

- Staff involved in a critical incident may experience a range of emotions, including anxiety, shock, distress or upset. This is a normal response following a traumatic event.
- The Nursery Manager will ensure that all staff are treated fairly, respectfully and sensitively throughout any investigation or review process.
- Staff will be offered appropriate emotional support and, where necessary, signposted to additional wellbeing services or counselling.
- Staff should not speculate, discuss or share information regarding the incident with colleagues, parents, visitors or on social media.
- Any concerns or worries should be discussed directly with the Nursery Manager.

Supporting Families

- Families affected by a critical incident will be treated with empathy, dignity and respect.
- Information will be shared sensitively, honestly and in accordance with advice from the relevant agencies.
- If parents or carers become distressed or upset, staff will remain calm and professional.
- Wherever possible, difficult conversations should be conducted by the Nursery Manager or a designated senior member of staff, with another member of staff present.
- Clare House Nursery operates a zero-tolerance approach towards abusive, threatening or aggressive behaviour. Where staff or others are placed at risk, appropriate action will be taken, including contacting the police if necessary.

Supporting Children

- Children may notice changes within the nursery or be affected emotionally by a critical incident.
- Staff will continue to provide a calm, reassuring and nurturing environment.
- Children will be supported according to their age, stage of development and individual needs.
- Any questions from children will be answered honestly using language that is appropriate to their level of understanding.
- Staff will avoid discussing the details of the incident in front of children.

Confidentiality

- Information relating to a critical incident will only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- All staff must maintain confidentiality at all times and comply with the nursery's Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Data Protection (GDPR) policies.
- Records relating to the incident will be stored securely.

Media Enquiries

- Staff, students and volunteers must not make comments to the media or post information on social media regarding any critical incident.
- Any enquiries from journalists, members of the public or external organisations should be referred immediately to the Nursery Manager or Chair of Trustees.
- Only an authorised spokesperson will communicate with the media where appropriate.

Learning and Reflection

Following a critical incident, the Nursery Manager will:

- Review the incident and any actions taken.
- Complete any required notifications to Ofsted and other relevant agencies.
- Update risk assessments where necessary.
- Identify any learning to improve future practice.
- Provide opportunities for staff to reflect and debrief appropriately.
- Review policies and procedures if changes are identified.

Clare House Nursery is committed to supporting the emotional wellbeing of children, families and staff following a critical incident. We recognise that recovery may take time, and we will work closely with external agencies where appropriate to ensure everyone receives the support they need.

