



Emergency and Critical Incident Plan

Policy Statement

At Clare House Nursery, the safety, health and wellbeing of every child, family, visitor and member of staff is our highest priority. While emergencies are rare, we recognise the importance of being prepared to respond quickly, calmly and effectively to minimise risk and protect everyone in our care.

Through careful planning, regular training and clear emergency procedures, we aim to ensure the nursery is prepared to respond to a wide range of emergency situations. This plan has been developed in line with the **EYFS Statutory Framework (September 2026)**, relevant health and safety legislation and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

Aim

To ensure Clare House Nursery can respond promptly, safely and effectively to any emergency or critical incident, protecting children, staff, families and visitors while working closely with the emergency services and other relevant agencies.

Objectives

We aim to:

- Establish an effective emergency response framework.
- Maintain up-to-date emergency contact details for all children and staff.
- Ensure emergency services have access to accurate information when required.
- Communicate quickly and effectively with families and relevant agencies.
- Maintain the highest standards of welfare for children, staff and visitors.
- Keep accurate records of all actions and decisions taken.
- Return to normal nursery operations safely as soon as reasonably possible.

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is an unexpected event which significantly disrupts the normal running of the nursery and requires an emergency response beyond everyday procedures. Such incidents may threaten the safety, health or wellbeing of children, staff, visitors or the nursery environment.

Examples include:

- Fire within or near the nursery.
- Serious accident or medical emergency.
- Death of a child, staff member or visitor.
- Missing or abducted child.
- Violent intruder or terrorist incident.
- Chemical, gas or hazardous substance release.
- Utility failure (electricity, water, heating or communications).
- Infectious disease outbreak or pandemic.
- Severe weather including flooding or storms.

- Structural damage or building collapse.

Emergency Grab Bags

Emergency Grab Bags are stored in each nursery room and are easily accessible at all times.

Each bag contains:

- Children's emergency contact details.
- Medical information and dietary needs.
- Staff emergency contacts.
- Committee contact details.
- Charged nursery mobile phone.
- Parent communication script.
- High visibility vests.
- Grab-and-go First Aid Kit.
- Emergency food and bottled water.
- Torch.
- Foil blankets.
- Disposable gloves.
- Notebook and pen.

Grab Bags are checked regularly to ensure contents remain accurate and in date.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation

The evacuation signal is the continuous sounding of the fire alarm.

Whenever the fire alarm sounds it will always be treated as a genuine emergency.

Staff will:

- Remain calm.
- Escort children quickly and safely to the nearest available fire exit.
- Collect the room register and Emergency Grab Bag if safe to do so.
- Close doors behind them where possible.
- Assemble at the designated Fire Assembly Point.
- Carry out an immediate register check.
- Report immediately if anyone is unaccounted for.
- Await further instructions from the Fire and Rescue Service or Nursery Manager.

Staff must not:

- Stop to collect personal belongings.
- Re-enter the building unless authorised by the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Use the lift during evacuation.

Where a child, visitor or member of staff has reduced mobility, support will be provided in accordance with their Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), where applicable.

Alternative Safe Location

If it is not safe to return to the nursery building, children and staff will relocate to our designated place of safety:

St Gildas care home

Families will be contacted as soon as it is safe to do so and arrangements made for children to be collected.

Lockdown Procedure

Where there is a threat outside or inside the nursery that makes evacuation unsafe, Clare House Nursery will implement its Lockdown Procedure.

During lockdown staff will:

- Secure all external doors and windows where safe to do so.
- Bring all children indoors.
- Move children to the designated safe areas.
- Keep children calm and engaged in quiet activities.
- Complete a register.
- Await instructions from the emergency services.

Parents will be informed as soon as it is safe to do so. Families should not attend the nursery during a lockdown unless instructed by the emergency services or the Nursery Manager.

Communication During an Emergency

The Nursery Manager (or Deputy in their absence) will coordinate all communication.

This includes:

- Contacting emergency services.
- Informing the Committee.
- Communicating with families.
- Liaising with Ofsted and the Local Authority where required.

Staff must not:

- Share information on social media.
- Speak to the press.
- Share unconfirmed information with families or visitors.

All media enquiries will be referred to the Chair of the Committee or nominated spokesperson.

Business Continuity

If the nursery cannot reopen immediately following an emergency:

- Families will receive regular updates.
- Alternative arrangements will be considered where appropriate.
- The nursery will work with Ofsted, the Local Authority and other agencies.
- A recovery plan will be implemented to enable a safe return to normal operations.

Recording and Review

Following any critical incident:

- A full written record will be completed.
- Actions and decisions will be recorded chronologically.
- Relevant agencies will be notified where required.
- Policies and risk assessments will be reviewed.
- Staff will participate in a debrief.
- Lessons learned will be incorporated into future practice.

Supporting Children, Families and Staff

Critical incidents can have a significant emotional impact.

Following any emergency, Clare House Nursery will:

- Provide reassurance and age-appropriate support to children.
- Keep families informed throughout.
- Offer staff opportunities to debrief.
- Signpost staff and families to appropriate wellbeing or counselling services where required.
- Review individual support needs before returning to normal practice.

Our Commitment

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to providing a safe, secure and well-prepared environment for every child. Through regular training, emergency planning, risk assessment and partnership working with emergency services, we strive to ensure that every emergency is managed calmly, professionally and with the welfare of children at the centre of every decision.

