



# **Sutton Outdoor Preschool**

## **Emergency Procedure Policy**

including Procedure for Missing Children

**Reviewed October 2020**

Reviewed by Elizabeth Leddy - Preschool Manager

### **Introduction**

The welfare of the children at Sutton Outdoor Preschool is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the preschool has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times without compromising the safety of others.

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times. We have procedures in place to enable us to evacuate an area quickly and safely in the event of an emergency, we also have effective lockdown procedures which can be activated in response to a threat to the group. In the event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

All of our procedures are written in line with current guidance Early Years Foundation Stage – (EYFS) and where applicable Birmingham City Council. The preschool manager is responsible for ensuring all staff understand and follow these procedures, and that regular rehearsals take place.

Our staffing ratios of a minimum of 1 adult to every 4 children is in line with the statutory guidelines of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 2 years old and above the requirements for children aged 3 and over, this ensures each individual child is highly supervised while in our care.

### **Emergency Procedure Policy**

- All staff, volunteers and children will be briefed on what to do in case of emergency. For staff this begins during the induction process and continues with training and supervisions throughout the year. Visitors and volunteers are briefed on arrival at the setting as appropriate. Children participate in daily safety talks at the start of each day and practice drills are completed throughout the year.
- Each member of staff carries a whistle, the group are alerted to an emergency by three blasts of the whistle. On hearing the whistle, all activities are suspended and the group gather together by the whistle-blower (the whistle blower may choose to move away from the incident location slightly to reduce further risk). Key persons conduct a head count and all wait quietly for further instructions. The preschool manager will assess the situation, the nature and extent of the incident, threat, injury or accident and direct staff accordingly, ensuring that the group are safe and supervision levels are maintained.

### **Procedure for Accidents or Injuries** If anyone, child or adult, sustains a serious injury or illness:

- A member of staff trained in first aid will attend to the injured person, giving first aid if possible.
- In serious cases, the staff member will immediately call 999/112 using Sutton Outdoor Preschool's mobile phone. The parent/carer/family will then immediately be contacted followed by the Parks Department via Sutton Park Visitor's Centre (0121 354 4074).
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger, moved to safety.
- The staff member attending to the injured person will check if they have specific medical needs. If they do, they will retrieve the relevant health information sheet from the Contacts Folder.
- If an ambulance is required, a member of staff will unlock the metal gate allowing access to the area (if required), meet the ambulance and direct crew to the incident site.
- In cases of minor injuries to children, the child's key person will contact the parent of the injured child so they can be collected and taken to the hospital, doctor or home.
- An incident report will be completed later the same day including details of people involved and witnesses.
- Ofsted and the local safeguarding authority must be informed of any serious accident or injury.

**Procedure for Emergency Evacuation** *for example in the event of a fire or extreme weather,*

- The manager will complete daily weather checks as part of the risk assessment – if extreme weather is forecast a contingency plan will be discussed with staff before the children arrive at the site, parents will be notified as applicable, regular update checks will continue throughout the day until the threat is removed. Contingency plans may involve moving to open ground or sheltered areas, erecting shelters or cancelling the session and contacting parents to collect children.
- In the event of a fire – the group will evacuate the area and assemble safely away from the threat. Specific arrangements will be made those with disabilities to ensure they are supported during evacuation.
- Key workers will conduct a head count. The manager will assess the situation and decide whether to continue the session elsewhere within the park or cancel the session and contact parents to collect the children.
- All outbreaks of fire or any suspected fire should be reported immediately to the Fire Service by dialing 999 using Sutton Outdoor Preschool's mobile phone.
- The manager has overall responsibility to ensure that a roll call is conducted in the event of evacuation of the setting, including any authorised visitors on the premises at the time. The head count must be checked with the attendance register and visitors book to verify that everyone is out of the area.
- The emergency bag containing attendance registers and visitors book will be collected on evacuation

Evacuation drills will be carried out approximately once per term and logged.

**Firefighting** Any attempt to fight the fire must always be secondary to life safety. Circumstances will clearly dictate whether firefighting should be attempted. Any attempt to fight the fire must be based upon the type and degree of training received in the use of firefighting equipment employed in the premises. The children's safety is our top priority.

**Procedure for Emergency Lockdown** *in response to a threat to the group such as a disturbance in the local community, major fire in the vicinity, an unauthorised visitor to the setting.*

Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow when a Lockdown is activated. We have been advised not to circulate the full details of this procedure as this could render the plan ineffective.

- Lead staff will evacuate the setting leading the group to the nearest building for safety. Depending on our location at the time will depend which building we head to. Depending on the severity of the situation, the manager will contact the Emergency Services and/or the Parks Department via the Visitor's Centre (0121 354 4074) either on arrival or en route.
- If necessary, parents will be contacted to collect the children from the alternative location. Parents will be notified if we have had to use this procedure but this may happen later in the day to avoid panic and risk increase. Parents should be reassured that staff will do everything possible to ensure the child's safety and will act on any guidance from the Emergency Services. Any developments will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.

Lockdown drills will be carried out approximately once a year and logged.

**Procedure for Missing Child**

Procedures and routines are in place to minimise the risk of a child leaving the area unsupervised, however if a child is identified as missing the Emergency Procedure Policy will be followed.

- The manager will be notified and the lead member of staff will nominate staff to remain with the group and staff to search in the last known location for the child.
- If, after a five-minute search of the immediate area, the child has not been located, the search will be widened and the lead member of staff calls 999/112 and the Visitors Centre (0121 354 4074) to alert the Park keepers.
- A member of staff will meet the police at the nearest point. Staff will continue to search while waiting for the police then assist the police with the search.
- The manager will contact the child's parents and inform them of the situation.

**During the investigation**

- Staff should keep calm and should not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The senior staff members will speak with the parent/carer(s).

- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff should co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.

#### Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Reassure other children and adults
- The Preschool Manager will speak to the parents/carers to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Preschool Manager carries out a full investigation taking statements from all the staff present at the time, and then writes up an incident report and updates the incident log. Other agencies will need to be notified if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address, including Children Services and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board. Ofsted must also be informed.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- The manager may need to take action against any member of staff who they believe is found to be at fault. In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements in a report. The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appears to have happened, the length of time that the child was missing, lessons for the future and actions for changes in practice, policies and procedures.

#### Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person responsible for the safety of that child. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Preschool leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable. All staff involved will need support.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the preschool manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the preschool manager and the other should be a senior member of staff. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called. Staff should report any aggression/violence.
- The other children will also be sensitive to what is going on around them. Staff need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. The manager and owner will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without consultation with the preschool manager as well as the police investigating the incident.

| <b>Policy last reviewed on</b> | <b>Signed on behalf of the preschool</b> | <b>Date of next review</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <i>October 2020</i>            | <b><i>E.Leddy (Elizabeth Leddy)</i></b>  | <i>October 2021</i>        |