

26. FIRE SAFETY, EMERGENCY EVACUATION & LOCKDOWN

Policy statement

At ASK Kindergarten & Clubs (ASK) we ensure our premises present no risk of fire by ensuring the highest possible standard of fire precautions. The person in charge, and our members of staff, are familiar with the current legal requirements. Where necessary we seek the advice of a competent person, such as our Fire Officer or Fire Safety Consultant. A Fire Safety Log Book is used to record the findings of risk assessments, any actions taken or incidents that have occurred, and our fire drills. We ensure our policy is in line with the procedures specific to our building, making reasonable adjustments as required.

Procedures

Fire safety risk assessment

- The basis of fire safety is risk assessment, carried out by a 'competent person'.
- The deputy manager has received training in fire safety sufficient to be competent to carry out the risk assessment. This will be written, where there are more than five members of staff, and will follow the Government guidance Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Educational Premises (HMG 2006).
- Our fire safety risk assessment focuses on the following, for each area of ASK:
 - Electrical plugs, wires and sockets.
 - Electrical items.
 - Gas boilers.
 - Cookers.
 - Matches.
 - Flammable materials – including furniture, furnishings, paper etc.
 - Flammable chemicals.
 - Means of escape.
 - Anything else identified.
- As we rent our premises from All Saints' Church, we will ensure that we have a copy of the fire safety risk assessment that applies to the building, and that we contribute to regular reviews.

Fire safety precautions taken

- We ensure that fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from the inside.

- We ensure that smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BS EN standards, are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building, and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
- We have all electrical equipment checked annually by a qualified electrician. Any faulty electrical equipment is taken out of use and either repaired or replaced.
- We ensure sockets are covered. Our emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Safety Officer and are:
 - clearly displayed in the premises;
 - explained to new members of staff, volunteers and parents; and
 - practised regularly, at least once every six weeks.
- Records are kept of fire drills and of the servicing of fire safety equipment.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Covers procedures for practice drills including:

- How children are familiar with the sound of the fire alarm.
- How the children, staff and parents know where the fire exits are.
- How children are led from the building to the assembly point.
- How children will be accounted for and by whom.
- How long it takes to get the children out safely.
- Who calls the emergency services, and when, in the event of a real fire.
- How parents are contacted.

Fire drills

We hold fire drills at least once per term and record the following information about each fire drill in the fire drill record book:

- The date and time of the drill.
- Number of adults and children involved.
- How long it took to evacuate.
- Whether there were any problems that delayed evacuation.
- Any further action taken to improve the drill procedure.

Terrorist attack

In the unlikely event of a terrorist attack, we follow the advice of the emergency services with regard to evacuation, medical aid and contacting children's families.

Responding to Emergencies – Lockdown

In light of recent emergencies and possible security threats, the following guidelines enable us to consider how best to ensure the safety of children, parents and staff in the event of a local threat or emergency situation which may result in ASK being placed into 'lockdown'.

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

In the event of an incident, lockdown of a building 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.

It must be stressed that, given the location of our premises, an emergency procedure such as this is most unlikely. However, we will ensure that all members of staff are prepared if a lockdown becomes necessary.

Be prepared

- We risk assess the likelihood of an incident happening in our area i.e. consider our location, are we near places where crowds gather such as social and retail venues, tourist sites and transport networks (rail, road and airports)? The effectiveness of randomly targeting a public place comes from the likelihood of low security and the element of surprise.
- We check our local police force website for advice about managing a range of issues that may be prevalent in our area. Local police contact numbers are clearly displayed for staff to refer to.
- With regard to terrorism alert levels we check the current status on the MI5 website <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>
- We follow any advice for managing emergency situations issued by our Local Authority.
- We share information with parents to advise them of the actions we will take in the event of a lockdown and what they should do.
- We make sure all members of staff are aware of their role during lockdown.
- As soon as lockdown is announced, and we are sure the situation is not a false alarm, we will send out a text message to parents with the wording:

Due to an incident we have been advised by the emergency services to secure the premises and stay put until we are given the 'all clear'. Please do not attempt to collect

your child until it is safe to do so. We will let you know as soon as we are able when that is likely to be. In the meantime, we need to keep our telephone line clear and would appreciate your co-operation in not calling unless it is absolutely vital that you speak to us.

Lockdown procedures

- If an emergency happens, our manager will act quickly to assess the likelihood of immediate danger and, if necessary, call 999.
- In most cases the assumption will be that it is safer to stay put and place ASK into lockdown until the emergency services arrive.
- As soon as the emergency services arrive, all members of staff will comply with instructions at all times.

Upon alert to lockdown

- All members of staff must stay calm.
- All members of staff and children will stay in the room they are working in, secure all doors and windows, close all blinds and await further instructions.
- If children are in the Forest School area, they will return immediately to the church.
- Everyone must stay away from windows and doors, stay low and keep calm.
- We rehearse this with children in an age appropriate way in the same way that we rehearse fire evacuation.
- Lockdown is rehearsed and recorded at least once every term.
- We tune into local TV or radio for more information.
- We do not make non-essential calls on mobile phones or landlines.
- If the fire alarm is activated, we remain where we are and await further instructions from emergency services unless the fire is in the immediate area, in which case we move to the next room/area, following our usual fire procedures.

Be alert

- We will NOT open the door once it has been secured until we are officially advised 'all clear' or are certain it is emergency services at the door. This procedure will also be practised in an age-appropriate way with the children to avoid them becoming anxious when members of staff do not respond to the doorbell in the usual way.
- We will NOT move around the rooms or corridors.
- We will NOT assemble in large open areas including outside in the courtyard.

- We will NOT call 999 again unless we have immediate concern for our safety, the safety of others, or we feel we have critical information.

Following the lockdown

- We will co-operate with the emergency services to help in an orderly evacuation.
- We will ensure we have the Register and children's details with us.
- Any members of staff or children who have witnessed an attack will need to tell the police what they saw.
- The police may require other individuals to remain for questioning.

Managing parents

- In the event of an incident, it is inevitable that parents will want to come to ASK and collect their children immediately. They must be discouraged from doing so until the emergency services give the 'all clear'.
- Even after the 'all clear', depending on the severity and type of incident, children may need to be checked by medical teams or questioned by the police.
- It will be made absolutely clear to parents that we will be acting on the advice of the emergency services at all times.
- With regard to getting information to parents during lockdown, we will use the existing systems we have in place for sending messages, such as social media, text messages and emails.
- Parents are to be discouraged from ringing us directly for further updates during lockdown. It is vital that our phone line remains clear.

Threat levels

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack.

- **LOW** means an attack is unlikely.
- **MODERATE** means an attack is possible but not likely.
- **SUBSTANTIAL** means an attack is a strong possibility.
- **SEVERE** means an attack is highly likely.
- **CRITICAL** means an attack is expected imminently.

Members of the public should always remain alert to the danger of terrorism and **report any suspicious activity to the police on 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321.**

For non-emergency calls to the police, call 101.