

# LITTLE SPONGES MONTESSORI

## CRITICAL INCIDENT

At Little Sponges Montessori, we understand that we need to plan for all eventualities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the children for whom we care. With this in mind, we have a Critical Incident policy in place to ensure our Nursery is able to operate effectively in the case of a critical incident. These include:

- Flood
- Fire
- Burglary
- Abduction or threatened abduction of a child
- Bomb threat/terrorism attack
- Any other incident that may affect the care of the children in the nursery.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the Nursery to operate, we will contact parents at the earliest opportunity, e.g. before the start of the Nursery day.

### **Flood**

There is always a danger of flooding from adverse weather conditions or through the water/central heating systems. We cannot anticipate adverse weather, however, we can ensure that we take care of all our water and heating systems through regular maintenance and checks to reduce the option of flooding in this way. Our central heating systems are checked and serviced annually by a registered gas engineer and they conform to all appropriate guidelines and legislation.

If flooding occurs during the Nursery day, the Manager will make a decision based on the severity and location of this flooding, and it may be deemed necessary to follow the Fire and Emergency Evacuation procedure.

In this instance, children will be kept safe and parents will be notified as outlined in the Fire Safety Policy and the Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Should the Nursery be assessed as unsafe through flooding, fire or any other incident, we will follow our Emergency Evacuation procedures and contact parents as the Nursery will cease to operate until safe to do so.

### **Fire**

Please refer to the Fire Safety Policy.

### **Burglary**

The management of the Nursery follows a lock up procedure which ensures all doors and windows are closed and locked before vacating the premises. Alarm systems are used and in operation during all hours the Nursery is closed.

The Manager will always check the premises when arriving in the morning. Should a discovery that the Nursery has been broken into, the following procedure will be followed:

- Dial 999 with as many details as possible, i.e. name and location, details of what you have found and emphasise that this is a Nursery and children will be arriving soon.

- Contain the area to ensure no-one enters until the police arrives. The staff will direct parents and children as appropriate. If all areas have been disturbed, staff will follow police advice, including following the procedure under 'flood' wherever necessary to ensure the safety of the children.
- The Manager or Deputy will help the police with enquiries, e.g. by identifying items missing, areas of entry etc.
- The Manager or Deputy will be available at all times during this time to speak to parents, reassure children and direct enquiries.
- Management will assess the situation following a theft and ensure parents are kept updated with developments relating to the operation of the Nursery.

### **Abduction or threatened abduction of a child**

We have secure safety procedures in place to ensure children are safe while in our care, including safety from abduction. Staff must be vigilant at all times and report any persons lingering on Nursery property immediately.

Children will only be released into the care of an authorised adult. Parents are required to inform the Nursery of any potential custody battles or family concerns as soon as they arise so that the Nursery is able to support the child. The Nursery will not take sides in relation to any custody battle and will remain neutral for the child. If an absent parent arrives to collect their child, the Nursery will not restrict access unless a **Court Order** is in place. Parents are requested to issue the Nursery with a copy of these documents should they be in place.

If a member of staff witnesses an actual or potential abduction from Nursery, we have the following procedures which are followed immediately:

- The police must be called immediately
- The staff member will notify management immediately and the Manager will take control
- The parent(s) will be contacted
- All other children will be kept safe and secure and calmed down, where necessary
- The Police will be given as many details as possible including details of the child, description of the abductor, car registration number if used, time and direction of travel if seen and any family situations that may impact on this abduction.

### **Bomb Threat/Terrorism attack**

If a bomb threat is received at the Nursery, the person taking the call will record all details given over the telephone as soon as possible and raise the alarm as soon as the telephone call has ended. The Management will follow the Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan to ensure the safety of all on the premises and will provide as much detail to the emergency services as possible.

### **Other Incidents**

All incidents will be managed by the Manager or Deputy and all staff will co-operate with any emergency services on the scene. Any other incident that requires evacuation will follow the Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan. Other incidents e.g. no water supply will be dealt with on an individual basis considering the effect on the safety, health and welfare of the children and staff in the Nursery.