**3.4 Emergency Closure Policy**

**Policy statement**

The Emergency Closure Plan is implemented by the trustees and the Manager.

An emergency is an event or circumstance which happens with or without warning that causes or threatens injury to people, disruption to Pre-School operations, or damage to property or to the environment.

In the event of an Early Explorers Community Pre-School being subject to an emergency closure, for reasons listed below, staff will be paid the short term lay off fee as stipulated in their contracts. The amount of pay due to the staff will be worked out on an hourly basis, for the hours the staff member was scheduled to work. The staff will be paid the short term lay off pay for the hours they did not work. However, if staff are expected to complete necessary paperwork and/or online training from home at the discretion of the manager, this will implement full pay.

**Procedures**

We implement the emergency closure of a setting under the following circumstances;

* Fire damage
* Flooding
* Snow
* Ice
* High levels of sickness among staff or children
* Flu pandemic
* A break in, burglary of personal or setting's property
* No heating or water in the building
* Death of a child or adult in the setting
* If there are contractual implications
* Community Emergency Planning Procedures

**Fire Damage**

* The most important factor in the event of a fire is the safety of the children and adults in the setting.
* Fire drills are practised regularly, and evacuation procedures are displayed on the settings wall.
* Staff should raise the alarm (blow the whistle) if it has not already been activated, and safely evacuate the premises following our fire evacuation procedure.
* A designated member of staff should call 999.
* At Howden Church Hall, after taking the register to ensure all staff and children are accounted for we take the children to our Bishops Manor setting wherever possible. If this was not possible we would take the children to the Children's Centre on Hailgate.
* At Howden Bishops Manor, after taking the register to ensure all staff and children are accounted for we take the children to our Church Hall setting wherever possible. If this was not possible we would take the children to the Children's Centre on Hailgate.
* At Newport we take the children to the cricket building initially and then to the primary school.
* All settings will take the Pre-School mobile phone with us, and the registers where there are a list of contact numbers. We will also take a tablet with access to EYLOG. We will notify parents regarding the immediate collection of their children. All staff will remain with the children until they have been collected.
* Depending on the level of fire damage, the Manager will need to inform parents as to whether the setting will remain open, whether it is necessary to temporarily close the setting or whether alternative accommodation can be arranged.
* Ofsted must be informed of any changes to the premises or the operation of the children's provision within 14 days of the incident occurring.
* Ofsted will need to inspect any temporary accommodation provided during the renovation of the premises to ensure it is suitable and will also re-inspect the premises.
* Any fire which results in suspension of normal working activities for more than 24 hours should be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR requirements.
* An incident should be filled out on file within the risk assessments.

**Flood**

* Flooding can be caused by an internal plumbing problem, a pipe bursting for instance, or by an external problem such as a burst water main or severe weather conditions. Should an evacuation of the premises be necessary during a session because of flooding, we would follow the fire procedures and take the children to the relevant settings and await the collection of the children.
* The setting's landlord's representative will be contacted immediately so that emergency repairs can be arranged. An incident report should be carried out and filed in the risk assessment file.
* The insurance company should be contacted as soon as possible. We will take photos of the flood damage for the claim and will not throw any items away until agreed by the insurance provider.
* Ofsted will need to be notified within 14 days of flooding on the premises.
* Children and staff should not return to the setting until all areas and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned and restored their normal condition.
* The local authority may be able to assist parents to find alternative childcare arrangements during this time.
* If the setting is able to find temporary accommodation during renovations of the premises, Ofsted must be informed so they can inspect the new premises to ensure it is suitable.

**Power cuts**

* There may be a loss of electricity due to external problems such as damage to power lines caused by bad weather or vandalism.
* To be prepared in the event of a power cut, we keep a mobile phone and emergency contact numbers where staff can easily access them. A tablet with access to EYLOG must always be charged. It is possible that a full or short circuit occurs; the fuse or circuit breaker will cut off power before the wires over heat and causes fire.
* If necessary our landlord or an electrician will be called to offer advice or repair.
* An incident report should be filled out and filed in the risk assessment file.
* Staff can call 105 to determine if the power cut is specific to the setting or is a wider community fault.

**Snow and ice**

* The manager will assess the risk to the staff and children and makes the decision whether to close.
* The manager will inform the trustees immediately
* When the decision to close has been made before opening time, a message is posted on the Facebook page, parents will be emailed and an attempt will be made to text all parents.
* It is possible in the event of snow to predict and prepare parents for potential closure in advance. This is done via email and text messaging.
* Should there be a heavy snowfall during the session; parents will be called to pick children up early. This is to provide time for parents, children and staff to get home safely.

**High levels of sickness among staff or children's**

Infections can spread easily in early years settings where groups of children, whose young immune systems are still developing, share activities and play closely together. Although most cases of illness in settings will be minor, some infections have serious health implications. In all cases, infections need to be managed effectively by the setting to prevent an outbreak. This may mean short term closure. The Manager and trustees will work together with the local authority to monitor the length of the outbreak so we can decide to safely restart suspended activities. This will help us to identify recurring patterns in illness and identify whether the illness is a new or continuation of previous outbreak. Closure may also be necessary if staff become ill and there are not enough practitioners to maintain the ratio's determined by The Early Years Foundation Stage (2017) Statutory Welfare Requirements.

**Flu Pandemic**

It is possible during a national emergency, such as a pandemic where an illness spreads quickly throughout the country infecting large numbers of people, that the government will decide that it is in the best interests of the welfare of adults and children for schools and childcare settings to temporarily close. A plan for responding to a flu pandemic is in place and our local authority keeps us up to date with any national guidance for planning an emergency response as it is released.

**Break in, burglary, theft of personal or the settings property**

We consider the security of the setting when carrying our risk assessments of the premises. Doors, windows and gates are well maintained and staff always ensure all doors are secure before they leave.

The setting only holds a small amount of cash on the premises. ICT equipment is stored out of sight.

We have appropriate insurance cover in case of a break in, burglary or theft taking place. Any break in, burglary or theft will be reported to the police to investigate. A police crime number will be used when making an insurance claim.

* If there is damage to the premises, the manager should notify the landlord asap.
* Children should be kept away from the area and once police have given permission, the damage should be repaired.
* Where there is extensive damage or disruption to the premises, it may be necessary to temporarily close the setting while repairs take place. If this is the case, the children's parents, the staff and Ofsted should be informed as soon as possible.
* An incident report should be completed and filed in the risk assessment fine.

**An intruder gaining unauthorised access to the premises**

An intruder is anyone that enters the setting without permission. Sometimes an intruder might be known, such as a parent or relation to a child trying to gain access to their child when there is a court order preventing them. Alternatively, a stranger may try to get into the premises. This could be a misunderstanding of the boundaries of the property or with the intention of committing a crime.

Many of the security measures listed to deter break ins, will also help to prevent unauthorised intruders gaining access to the premises.

* Our Howden Church Hall setting shares part of the premises with Rev James Little and his family who live in the rectory. We have sole use of the Pre-School grounds and ensure no one can access the setting during opening hours.
* Our Howden Bishops Manor setting shares the premises with other users, however we have sole access to the ground floor and outside area. All areas accessed by the children are sole use and we ensure no one can access these areas during opening hours.
* Our Newport setting is located in the Village Hall which is a community building. We have use of one room which is securely locked from the inside during use. Only authorised persons have access to the rest of the Hall.
* To ensure staff are aware of who has legal access to a child, if not the parent or carer we confirm whether they have parental responsibility and/or legal contact. In these instances parents are asked to let us know who will be collecting their child if it is not them. A password is agreed to allow parents to arrange collection by another adult.
* Appointments for visitors are agreed in advance where possible and all staff are made aware.
* Visitors are asked to sign in when they arrive and leave the setting.
* Staff check the identification of strangers and confirm the organisation details on an ID card are genuine.
* When faced with an intruder, calmly inform them in the first instance that they are trespassing and are not allowed on the premises and then ask them to leave. If the intruder is violent or abusive, or if you have reason to believe the person is dangerous, staff and children should move to a safe place and call the police. If any attempt is made by the intruder to remove a child forcefully, inform the police immediately.
* An incident form should be completed and filed in the risk assessment folder.

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