**Stratton Playgroup**

**8.5 Fire safety and responding to an emergency**

**Policy statement**

Fire Safety - at Stratton Playgroup, we ensure the highest possible standard of fire precautions are in place. The person in charge and our 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 is used to record the findings of risk assessment, 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.

Emergency Procedures - we have procedures for evacuation of the premises and this focusses on an event that is happening within our building.

However, in some situations, it is likely that we will be advised to stay put (Lock-In) rather than evacuate the premises; In the event of an incident, ‘Lock-In’ of a building or group of buildings, we must have an emergency procedure intended to secure and protect occupants in close proximity to an immediate threat. By controlling movement in an area, emergency services are able to contain and handle the situation more effectively.

In the event of a local threat or any other emergency situation, we must consider how we can best ensure the safety of children, parents and staff, which may result in our setting being placed into ‘Lock-In’.

**Procedures**

***Fire safety risk assessment***

* The basis of fire safety is risk assessment, carried out by a ‘competent person’.
* The Health & Safety Officers have 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 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 the setting:
* Electrical plugs, wires and sockets.
* Electrical items.
* Cookers.
* Lighter.
* Flammable materials – including furniture, furnishings, paper etc.
* Flammable chemicals.
* Means of escape.
* Anything else identified.

*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 all empty playroom / child accessible sockets are covered with locked socket covers.
* 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 term.
* Records are kept of fire drills and of the servicing of fire safety equipment.

*Emergency evacuation procedure*

Every setting is different and the evacuation procedure will be suitable for each setting. It must cover procedures for practice drills including:

* How children are familiar with the sound of the fire alarm and smoke 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 who by.
* 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.
* The session lead will assign roles, such as who will ensure that the register, a phone, back-up phone (to be able to call the emergency services (999), also informing the Primary School if necessary); & I-pad (to be able to text parents if necessary) are taken on the evacuation.

*Fire drills*

We hold fire drills termly and record the following information about each fire drill in the fire drill in the Register / filing cabinet:

* 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.

***Emergency ‘Lock-In’ risk assessment***

* + Risk assess the likelihood of an incident happening in your area i.e. consider your location, are you near to a busy tourist attraction, power station, or city centre?
  + Check your Police force website for advice and guidance about managing a range of issues or incidents that may be prevalent in your area. With regard to terrorism alert levels check the current status on the MI5 website www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels
  + Follow any advice for managing emergency situations that is issued by your Local Authority.
  + Review your existing emergency procedures and add to them if necessary. Give particular consideration to Lock-In’.
  + Share information with parents to advise them of the actions you will take in the event of a ‘Lock-In’ and what they should do.
  + Make sure that all staff are aware of their role during ‘Lock-In’: The session lead will assign roles, such as who will secure all doors and windows; and who will ensure that a phone, back-up phone & I-pad are taken into each designated area (to be able to call the emergency services (999), also informing the Primary School if necessary); who will pick up a tablet to take into a designated area (to be able to text parents if necessary; and tune into a local TV or radio station for more information); who will collect some drawing paper & pens / books for the children, etc. Also taking phones & I-pads into each designated area means that staff will be able to communicate with each other.
  + Consider the wording of a text or phone message that will be issued to all parents as soon as Lock-In is announced and you are sure that the situation is not a false alarm. Details of how to send a group text will be placed in our designated areas, and staff will be given training.

*Emergency ‘Lock-In’ procedure*

Every setting is different and the ‘Lock-In’ procedure will be suitable for each setting. It must cover procedures for practice drills including:

If an attack happens the setting manager / lead must act quickly to assess the likelihood of immediate danger. In most cases the assumption should be that it is safer to stay put and place the setting into ‘Lock-In’ until the emergency services arrive.

As soon as the emergency services arrive at the scene it is essential that staff comply with their instructions at all times.

Upon alert to Lock-In

• Stay calm.

• Ensure that staff and children move to in the designated areas (adult toilet and children’s toilets). The manager or lead must secure all doors and windows; call the emergency services (999), also informing the Primary School if necessary; and pick up a tablet to take into a designated area (to be able to tune into a local TV or radio station for more information).

• Stay away from windows and doors.

• Tune into a local TV or radio station for more information.

• Stay low and keep calm, it might be an idea to rehearse this with children in an age appropriate way, in the same way that you would rehearse fire evacuation.

• Do NOT make non-essential calls on mobile phones or landlines; and await further instructions from the emergency services.

• If a smoke alarm is activated, the session lead would go to investigate, other staff would remain where they are and await further instructions from the session lead / emergency services.

Be alert

• Do NOT open the door once it has been secured until you are officially advised ‘all clear’ or are certain it is emergency services at the door. This is another element of your ‘Lock-In’ procedure that can be practiced in an age appropriate way with the children to avoid them becoming anxious when staff do not respond to the doorbell in the usual way.

• Do NOT assemble in large open areas.

• Do NOT call 999 again unless you have immediate concern for your safety, the safety of others, or feel you have critical information.

Following the Lock-In

• Cooperate with emergency services to assist in an orderly evacuation.

• Ensure that you have the register and children’s details with you.

• Any staff or children who have witnessed an attack or incident will need to tell the police what they saw.

• The police may require other individuals to remain available for questioning.

Managing parents

In the event of an incident it is inevitable that parents will want to come to the setting and collect their children immediately. They must be discouraged from doing so, until the emergency services give the all clear. Even then, depending on the severity and type of incident, children may need to be checked by medical teams or questioned by the police. It must be made absolutely clear to parents that you will be acting on the advice of the emergency services at all times.

With regard to getting information to parents during ‘Lock-In’, you should use the existing systems that you have in place for sending group messages, such as social media, text, emails. Discourage parents from ringing you directly for further updates during ‘Lock-In’; it will be vital that your phone lines remain clear.

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.

**Legal framework**

* Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

**Further guidance**

* Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Educational Premises **(HMG 2006)**

**Responding to an emergency – Mini Guides (PLA 2016)**

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| This policy was adopted by | Stratton Playgroup | *(name of provider)* |
| On | 23/11/2020 | *(date)* |
| Date to be reviewed | Nov-2023 | *(date)* |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  | |
| Name of signatory |  | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) |  | |

**Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications**

* Fire Safety Record (2015)

**Wording for Texts:**

Fire Evacuation – Playgroup has been evacuated due to an incident. Please collect your child from ***SUPERVISOR TO ADD COLLECTION POINT – eg THE GREGSON CENTRE.*** This is not a false alarm.

Lock-In – Playgroup has been placed into a Lock-In. Please do not attempt to collect your child as, it is not safe to do so. We will continue to keep you updated. This is not a false alarm.

Lock-In Clear – Playgroup is now clear from Lock-In. It is now safe for you to come and collect your child.