

LOCKDOWN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Statement

EDG Nursery is committed to protecting children, staff, visitors and others on the premises during an emergency or serious security incident.

Where leaving the building could place children and adults at greater risk, the nursery may initiate a **lockdown**.

The purpose of lockdown is to:

- secure children and adults away from an identified threat;
- prevent or restrict unauthorised access;
- account for everyone on site;
- communicate effectively during the emergency; and
- keep children safe, calm and appropriately supported.

This policy should be read alongside EDG Nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection, Security and Access, Fire and Emergency Evacuation, Health and Safety, Critical Incident and Severe/Extreme Weather procedures.

When Lockdown May Be Required

A lockdown may be initiated where remaining inside or moving to a designated secure area is safer than evacuation.

Examples include:

- police advice to lockdown due to an incident nearby;
- a dangerous or suspicious person near the nursery;
- an intruder attempting to enter or entering the premises;
- serious violence or criminal activity nearby;
- a threatening telephone call, email or communication;
- civil disturbance;
- a dangerous animal on or near the premises;
- an external environmental hazard where remaining inside is advised; or

- another serious threat identified by management or the emergency services.

This list is not exhaustive.

Lockdown or Evacuation?

Staff must understand the difference:

EVACUATE – where it is safer to leave the building, for example during a fire or dangerous internal incident.

LOCKDOWN – where it is safer to remain inside or move to a secure area away from an external or security threat.

Some incidents may require the response to change.

The Lockdown Lead will make decisions using the information available and advice from the police, fire service, local authority or other emergency services.

Emergency-service instructions always take priority.

Lockdown Lead

The person coordinating the emergency will be the **Lockdown Lead**.

The normal chain of responsibility is:

1. Nursery Manager
2. Assistant/Deputy Manager
3. Third in Charge
4. Senior Room Leader

The most senior appropriately designated member of staff present will assume responsibility if senior management are absent.

Nursery Manager / DSL: Shazel McFarlane

Deputy DSL: Guzal Juraeva

The Lockdown Lead will coordinate the response, emergency communication, parent communication and all-clear.

Initiating Lockdown

Where lockdown is required, the Lockdown Lead will communicate through the nursery walkie-talkie system:

"SAFE ROOM, SAFE ROOM – INITIATE LOCKDOWN – [BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THREAT]."

Staff must respond **immediately and calmly**.

Children should not be unnecessarily frightened or provided with distressing information.

Immediate Lockdown Procedure

On hearing the lockdown instruction, staff must:

1. **Gather the children** in their immediate care.
2. Move immediately to the **designated safe area shown on the room Lockdown Poster**.
3. Secure doors and accessible windows where safe.
4. Close blinds/curtains where available.
5. Position children away from windows, doors and direct sightlines.
6. Complete an immediate **headcount and check the register**.
7. Account for staff and visitors within the area.
8. Take the walkie-talkie to the safe area where possible.
9. Keep children calm, reassured and as quiet as reasonably possible.
10. Remain secure until further instructions are given.

Once secured and everyone is accounted for, staff must communicate:

"[ROOM/FLOOR NAME] SECURE."

Any child, staff member or visitor who cannot be accounted for must be reported immediately to the Lockdown Lead.

Lockdown Posters and Designated Safe Areas

Every nursery room must display an up-to-date Lockdown Procedure Poster.

The poster must clearly show:

- the room's designated safe area;
- where children should be positioned;
- immediate staff actions;
- responsibilities for doors/windows and blinds;
- responsibility for the register/headcount;
- responsibility for the walkie-talkie;
- the lockdown command; and
- the all-clear command.

Staff must familiarise themselves with the poster and designated safe area during induction and whenever they are deployed to another room.

Staff must **not wait until an emergency to establish where children should be positioned.**

The Room Leader/senior person present should allocate responsibilities appropriately according to staffing on the day.

Protecting children always takes priority over completing a predetermined staff role.

Lockdown arrangements must be reviewed following significant room/environmental changes, an actual lockdown or learning from a drill.

Children and Adults Away From Their Usual Room

During lockdown, staff should use the **nearest safe and secure location**.

Children must not be moved across the nursery simply to return them to their usual classroom where doing so could expose them to greater risk.

This applies to children and adults who may be:

- in toilets or changing areas;
- in corridors or communal areas;
- sleeping;
- attending an activity outside their normal room;
- in reception or the kitchen.

Reception and kitchen staff should secure their immediate area where appropriate and move to their designated safe location.

Sleeping babies and children must be accounted for and moved where necessary and safe.

Children with SEND or Additional Needs

Children with SEND or additional needs may require additional support during lockdown.

Staff should consider children's individual:

- communication needs;
- sensory needs;
- mobility;
- understanding;
- emotional regulation; and
- medical or developmental needs.

Where a child's needs could significantly affect their safety during an emergency, these should be considered within their individual risk assessment/emergency planning.

Staff should provide appropriate reassurance and safety of the wider group.

Children Outside When Lockdown Begins

Where children are in the garden or another external area, staff must **not automatically attempt to return to the building.**

If the route inside is safe

Children should be moved promptly through the nearest safe entrance to the appropriate secure area and the entrance secured.

If returning inside would move children towards the threat

Do not re-enter the building.

Children should be moved to the nursery's predetermined **External Lockdown Safe Zone**, as identified within the site-specific risk assessment.

Children must be:

- kept together;
- moved away from the identified threat;
- kept out of direct sight where possible;
- reassured;
- continuously accounted for.

Staff should communicate:

"[ROOM NAME] - EXTERNAL SAFE ZONE - SECURE."

Emergency-service instructions must be followed where circumstances require an alternative response.

Communication During Lockdown

EDG Nursery- Policy Version | Policy Version 1 | Created March 2026 | EY489739

All policies contained within this handbook have been created in line with current legislation and statutory guidance. EDG Nursery reviews all policies annually and updates them sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, and recognised sector best practice.

Internal Communication

Walkie-talkies are the nursery's primary internal communication method.

Communication must remain:

- brief;
- factual;
- necessary; and
- clear.

Unnecessary radio traffic must be avoided.

Walkie-talkies will continue to be checked daily at:

9:00am | 1:00pm | 4:00pm

Faults must be reported promptly.

Calling 999

Where there is an immediate threat to life or serious danger, **999 must be called as soon as it is safe to do so.**

Management/Lockdown Lead will normally coordinate emergency communication.

However, **any member of staff who reasonably believes there is an immediate threat to life may call 999 where it is safe to do so.**

Staff must not delay an urgent emergency call solely while waiting for management permission.

Parents and Lockdown

During an active lockdown:

- parents must not be admitted unless directed by emergency services;

- children must not be released unless authc response;
- staff must not open secured entrances because a parent is outside;
- parents must not be encouraged to travel towards an active incident.

Only management or a person authorised by the Lockdown Lead may communicate with parents.

Individual practitioners must not independently contact parents unless specifically instructed.

Parents will be informed **as soon as it is safe and operationally appropriate**, taking account of emergency-service instructions.

Parent Message – Ongoing Lockdown

Important safety message

The nursery is currently in a precautionary lockdown following advice/information regarding an incident in the local area.

All children and staff are safe and secure.

Please do not call or come to the nursery at this time, as we need to keep telephone lines and entrances clear.

We will update you as soon as it is safe to do so and will notify you when the all-clear has been given.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Information provided to parents must remain factual and must not compromise security or an ongoing investigation.

Threatening Calls, Emails or Communications

Where a member of staff receives a threatening call, email or other communication, they should:

- remain calm;
- record as much information as possible;
- preserve the communication;

- not delete or alter potential evidence; and
- immediately notify the Nursery Manager/Lockdown Lead.

Staff must **not investigate the threat themselves.**

The Lockdown Lead will determine the immediate response and contact the police where required.

Supporting Children During Lockdown

Staff should remain calm and reassuring.

Children should not be unnecessarily exposed to frightening conversations, speculation, graphic information or distressing views through windows.

Where appropriate and safe, staff may use quiet stories, songs, familiar comfort items, calm conversation or simple activities.

Children should receive explanations appropriate to their age and understanding without unnecessary detail.

All Clear

Staff must **never end lockdown independently.**

The Lockdown Lead will communicate:

"ALL CLEAR, ALL CLEAR."

This will normally follow confirmation that the threat has passed or advice from the emergency services.

Staff should wait for further instructions before reopening doors or returning children to normal activities.

Where emergency services have taken control, **their instructions take priority.**

Following a Lockdown

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Following an actual lockdown, management will

- confirm that all children and adults are accounted for;
- support children and staff who are distressed;
- determine whether normal nursery operations can resume;
- decide whether parents should collect children;
- communicate appropriate factual information to families;
- complete an incident/debrief record;
- review the effectiveness of the response;
- identify any lessons or improvements;
- update procedures, risk assessments or Lockdown Posters where necessary;
and
- consider whether external agencies require notification.

Any safeguarding concern arising from the incident must be managed under the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Ofsted and Other Notifications

A lockdown does **not automatically require notification to Ofsted**.

The Nursery Manager and Directors will consider the circumstances against the current EYFS and Ofsted notification requirements.

Where an incident is notifiable, EDG Nursery will notify Ofsted **within the applicable statutory timescale**.

For example, serious accidents, illnesses, injuries or deaths of children while in the provider's care are subject to specific EYFS notification requirements.

Nick Ng – Nursery Director must be informed of significant safeguarding or regulatory incidents and will support/submit required Ofsted notifications in accordance with EDG's safeguarding arrangements.

Where there is uncertainty, management must check the current statutory requirements rather than assume that notification is or is not required.

Lockdown Drills, Training and Monitoring

Lockdown procedures form part of staff induction.

Staff, students, agency workers and relevant volunteers must know:

- the lockdown command;
- where the Lockdown Poster is located;
- their room's designated safe area;
- basic emergency responsibilities; and
- walkie-talkie arrangements.

EDG Nursery will undertake a **lockdown drill at least once each term**.

Drills must be appropriate for young children and conducted calmly without unnecessarily frightening them.

Following each drill, management will consider:

- Were all children and adults accounted for?
- Did staff know where to go?
- Did the safe areas work?
- Did communication work?
- Were there difficulties relating to individual children's needs?
- What needs improving?

A **Lockdown Drill Record** must be completed and actions followed through.

Management/Health and Safety Officer will periodically ensure that:

- room Lockdown Posters are current;
- designated safe areas remain appropriate;
- staff understand procedures;
- walkie-talkies are operational;
- drills are completed; and
- identified actions are addressed.