



POLLYANNA PRE-SCHOOL CIO

LOCK DOWN POLICY

1. Purpose and Statement of Intent

Pollyanna Pre-School CIO recognises that, although serious incidents are unlikely, circumstances may arise where the safety of children, staff, volunteers or visitors is put at serious risk.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Pollyanna Pre-School CIO has clear, proportionate and effective arrangements for protecting children and adults in the event of a threat or emergency where remaining inside the building is safer than leaving.

The safety and welfare of the children is our first priority.

This policy should be read alongside Pollyanna Pre-School's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Emergency Contact arrangements
- Business Continuity/Emergency Planning arrangements.

The procedure will always be adapted to the circumstances of the incident and to instructions given by the police or other emergency services.

2. What is Lockdown?

A lockdown is a procedure used when it may be unsafe to leave the building.

A lockdown may be necessary because of a threat or danger:

- outside the building;
- within the Community Centre;
- within or immediately around the preschool premises; or
- in the local area.

Examples may include:

- an unauthorised person attempting to gain access to the Community Centre or preschool;
- a person carrying a weapon;
- a serious incident or civil disturbance nearby;
- a dangerous animal in the immediate area;
- a significant environmental or air-quality incident;
- a police or emergency-services instruction to remain indoors;
- another situation where leaving the premises could place children or staff at greater risk.

Every incident will be different. Staff must use their professional judgement and follow instructions from the emergency services.

3. Levels of Response

Pollyanna Pre-School CIO uses a two-stage lockdown procedure.

Stage 1 – Secure/Shelter

Stage 1 is used where there is a danger outside the building but there is no immediate need for children and staff to hide.

The purpose is to keep everyone inside and prevent access to or exposure to the external danger.

Examples may include:

- a local air-pollution warning;
- a dangerous animal nearby;



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- a police warning about an incident in the local area;
- severe weather or another environmental hazard where remaining indoors is safest.

Stage 2 – Full Lockdown

Stage 2 is used where there is an immediate or potential threat to the safety of children and staff and there is a need to hide or secure themselves.

Examples may include:

- an unauthorised person believed to pose a danger attempting to enter the Community Centre;
- a person with a firearm or other weapon;
- a serious incident or civil disturbance in the immediate vicinity;
- a direct threat to the preschool or Community Centre.

4. Responsibility for Initiating Lockdown

Any member of staff who becomes aware of an immediate threat may initiate the lockdown procedure. Staff should not wait for the Manager or Deputy Manager to confirm the threat if immediate action is required to protect children.

The member of staff should clearly state: **"LOCKDOWN"**

This will be the signal for staff to immediately implement the lockdown procedure.

The Manager or Deputy Manager will take overall responsibility where they are present and able to do so.

If neither is immediately available, the most senior or appropriately experienced member of staff present will coordinate the response until the Manager, Deputy Manager or emergency services take over.

5. Stage 1: Secure / Shelter Procedure

When a Stage 1 lockdown is required:

1. The Manager, Deputy Manager or designated member of staff will inform all staff of the situation as quickly and calmly as possible.
2. All children and adults will remain inside the preschool building.
3. All external doors will be secured where this can be done safely.
4. Windows and external doors will remain closed.
5. Curtains or blinds will be closed where appropriate.
6. Children will be moved away from windows or external doors where this is necessary.
7. Staff will maintain normal supervision and reassurance of the children as far as possible.
8. Staff will continue to monitor the situation and await further information or instructions.
9. The Manager or Deputy Manager will contact the emergency services on **999** where appropriate.
10. Parents/carers will not be asked to attend the setting while the lockdown remains in place.
11. Staff will remain alert to any change in circumstances. If the situation escalates and children need to hide, the procedure will move to **Stage 2 – Full Lockdown**.

6. Stage 2: Full Lockdown Procedure

When a Stage 2 lockdown is required, staff will act immediately.

6.1 Raise the lockdown alert

The member of staff identifying the threat will clearly state:

"LOCKDOWN"



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All staff will immediately implement the lockdown procedure.

Where possible, staff should avoid shouting unnecessarily once the alert has been communicated, in order to minimise noise and prevent drawing attention to the children.

6.2 Contact emergency services

The Manager, Deputy Manager or another designated member of staff will call **999** as soon as it is safe to do so.

The caller should provide:

- the name of the setting – Pollyanna Pre-School CIO;
- the full address – Community Centre, Eskdale Road, Stoke Mandeville, Bucks, HP22 5UJ;
- the nature of the incident;
- the location of the threat if known;
- the number of children and adults present, where known;
- any known injuries;
- any other information requested by the emergency services.

The caller should remain on the telephone if instructed to do so.

If it is not possible to make a call safely, another staff member should do so as soon as practicable.

7. Moving to the Safe Place

The Manager, Deputy Manager or designated member of staff will direct children and staff to the designated **Safe Place**.

Staff should:

- remain calm and reassure the children;
- gather children together safely;
- keep children away from doors and windows;
- close and secure doors where possible;
- close curtains/blinds where practicable;
- turn lights off where appropriate;
- put mobile phones on silent;
- minimise noise;
- keep children as quiet and settled as reasonably possible;
- remain out of sight where practicable.

Staff should not place themselves or children at unnecessary risk in order to complete any particular action.

Important

Pollyanna Pre-School CIO has designated secure areas within the premises which have been identified through the setting's security risk assessment. The location of these areas is communicated to staff as part of their induction and lockdown training and is not published within this policy for security reasons. Staff will use the safest available secure area according to the circumstances of the incident and will follow instructions from the emergency services. If the normal Safe Place is unsafe or inaccessible, staff should use the safest available alternative location and follow police/emergency-service instructions.

8. Accounting for Children, Staff and Visitors

Once everyone is in a safe location, staff will account for:

- all children;
- all staff;
- volunteers;
- students;
- visitors; and
- any other person known to be on the preschool premises.

The signing-in/attendance information and visitor information should be used to assist with this.



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The Manager or designated member of staff should ensure that the number of children present is checked against the attendance register.

Where practicable, the emergency contact information and other essential emergency information should be taken into the Safe Place.

However, no person should leave a safe location or expose themselves to danger simply to obtain paperwork or equipment.

9. Missing Child or Adult

If a child, member of staff or visitor cannot be accounted for:

- staff must not put themselves at risk by searching an unsafe area;
- the emergency services must be informed immediately;
- the last known location of the missing person should be provided to the police;
- staff should follow any instructions given by the police.

If a child is known to be in another area of the building, staff should only attempt to retrieve the child if this can be done safely.

10. Children with SEND or Additional Needs

Staff must consider the individual needs of children who may require additional support during a lockdown.

This may include children who:

- have SEND;
- have communication difficulties;
- are particularly anxious or distressed by changes in routine;
- have sensory needs;
- require medication or medical equipment;
- may not understand verbal instructions;
- may find remaining quiet or still particularly difficult.

Individual risk assessments and support plans should identify any reasonable adjustments or specific strategies required.

Staff should use familiar language, reassurance and visual or other communication methods where appropriate.

The safety of the child and the group should remain the priority.

11. Medication and Essential Equipment

Where it is safe and practicable to do so, the Manager or designated member of staff should take essential emergency items into the Safe Place, including:

- mobile phone;
- attendance/signing-in information;
- emergency contact information;
- essential medication;
- emergency medical equipment;
- any other item identified as necessary through individual risk assessments.

Staff must not delay moving children to safety in order to collect equipment.

12. If the Threat is Inside the Community Centre

Because Pollyanna Pre-School operates within a shared Community Centre, staff must consider the possibility that an incident may occur elsewhere within the building.

If the threat originates elsewhere in the Community Centre:

- staff should not move towards the threat;
- children should remain within the preschool's safest available area where appropriate;
- doors should be secured;
- staff should move children away from the direction of the threat;



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- 999 should be contacted as soon as safely possible;
- staff should inform police of the location of the preschool within the building;
- staff should follow police instructions regarding evacuation, movement or continued lockdown.

If the usual Safe Place is compromised, staff should use the safest alternative available.

13. If the Threat is Outside the Building

If the threat is outside the building:

- children and staff should remain inside;
- external doors should be secured;
- windows should remain closed;
- curtains/blinds should be closed where appropriate;
- children should be moved away from windows where necessary;
- staff should monitor information provided by the police or emergency services;
- staff should not allow children or adults to leave unless instructed that it is safe to do so.

14. Communication During Lockdown

Communication should be kept to what is necessary for safety.

Mobile phones should be kept on silent where possible.

The Manager or designated member of staff will maintain communication with the emergency services where required.

Staff should not make unnecessary telephone calls or send messages that could create additional risk.

Staff should not post information about the incident on social media.

Confidential information about children, families or staff must continue to be protected.

15. Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

Parents/carers should not come to the Community Centre while a lockdown is in progress unless specifically instructed to do so by the police or Pollyanna Pre-School.

Parents/carers should not attempt to enter the building or collect their child during a lockdown.

This is important because arriving at the setting could:

- place the parent/carer at risk;
- interfere with the emergency response;
- draw attention to the location of the children; or
- prevent emergency services from carrying out their work.

Once the incident has been resolved, parents/carers will be provided with information about collection arrangements.

16. All-Clear

Staff must not assume that a threat has passed simply because the situation appears quiet.

The lockdown will remain in place until:

- the police or other emergency services confirm that it is safe to leave the Safe Place; or
- the Manager/Deputy Manager, having received reliable information, determines that the threat has ended and it is safe to do so.

If emergency services are present, their instructions take priority.



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Staff should then carefully return to normal operations or follow instructions for evacuation or relocation.

17. After the Lockdown

Once it is safe to do so:

1. Children will be reassured and comforted.
2. Staff will check children for any injuries or signs of distress.
3. First aid will be provided where necessary.
4. Parents/carers will be contacted and provided with appropriate information.
5. Collection arrangements will be confirmed where necessary.
6. The incident will be recorded appropriately.
7. Any safeguarding concerns arising from the incident will be dealt with under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
8. The Manager will notify the relevant agencies where required.
9. The Manager will consider whether the incident is notifiable to Ofsted or any other relevant body and will make any required notification within the applicable timescale.
10. Staff will be given an opportunity to debrief following the incident.
11. The impact on children and staff will be considered and appropriate support arranged where necessary.
12. The Manager will review the effectiveness of the response and identify any improvements required.
13. The lockdown policy and relevant risk assessments will be reviewed following a significant incident.

18. Recording and Confidentiality

A written record should be made following any actual lockdown incident.

The record should include, where appropriate:

- date and time;
- nature of the incident;
- reason for lockdown;
- actions taken;
- number of children and adults present;
- any injuries;
- involvement of emergency services;
- communication with parents/carers;
- any safeguarding concerns;
- notifications made;
- actions taken following the incident;
- lessons identified.

Records will be stored securely and confidentially in accordance with Pollyanna Pre-School's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

19. Training and Practice

All staff will be made aware of the lockdown procedure as part of their induction.

Staff will receive appropriate refresher information so that they understand:

- how lockdown is initiated;
- their individual responsibilities;
- the location of the Safe Place;
- alternative arrangements if the Safe Place is unavailable;
- how children should be supervised and supported;
- how attendance and visitor information is checked;
- how emergency services are contacted.



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Lockdown procedures will be reviewed and practised periodically to ensure staff are familiar with their responsibilities.

Any practice should be age-appropriate and proportionate to the needs of young children. Pollyanna Pre-School will not conduct unnecessarily realistic or frightening simulations with children. Following any practice, staff will consider what worked well and whether any changes are required.

20. Visitors, Volunteers and Students

Visitors, volunteers and students must follow the instructions of Pollyanna Pre-School staff during a lockdown.

Where practicable, visitors should be included in the attendance/visitor information so that the setting can account for everyone present.

Visitors must not leave the Safe Place or attempt to leave the building unless instructed that it is safe to do so or directed by emergency services.

21. Relationship with Other Emergency Procedures

A lockdown may change into another emergency procedure depending on circumstances.

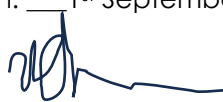
For example, if there is a fire or another immediate hazard inside the Safe Place, staff may need to evacuate.

Staff must therefore use their judgement and follow emergency-service instructions. The lockdown procedure must never prevent staff from taking immediate action to save life where remaining in the building would create a greater danger.

The Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation procedures should be followed where evacuation becomes necessary.

Review and Approval

This policy was reviewed and adopted on: 1st September 2026

Signed by Management Committee: 

Print Name: Nikita Wehrle

Version: 1.0 2026

This policy is reviewed **annually** or sooner in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or setting practices.