

Lockdown and Emergency Closure

Little Lanes Out of School Club | October 2026

Purpose and responsibilities

Little Lanes takes prompt action when a threat, unsafe premises or another emergency affects children, staff or visitors. This policy covers breakfast and after-school club, including outdoor play and school handover. It works alongside the Emergency Evacuation and Fire Safety Policy and the school's agreed emergency arrangements.

Megan Garratt or Clare Greenham leads the response when present. Otherwise, the session leader takes charge and delegates tasks. Kelise Sparrow and other staff support supervision and accounting for children. Megan or Clare coordinates parent contact; the session leader nominates someone if they are unavailable. Inform Cheri promptly when safe. Any staff member may call 999 or take immediate protective action without waiting for management permission.

Choose the response to the actual danger

- Lockdown restricts access and movement when a security threat makes it safer to remain in a protected part of the building.
- Sheltering indoors may be needed for an external hazard, such as smoke, pollution or severe weather. Follow emergency-service advice; the precautions may differ from a security lockdown.
- Evacuation moves people away from danger when remaining inside is unsafe. Follow the fire policy for a fire, and police advice for threats or suspicious items. The usual assembly point may be unsafe for some incidents.

The response can change as information develops. Do not automatically gather children in the canteen, send them outside or lead them towards a threat. Use a safer route or space appropriate to the danger and the agreed site plan. Never remain in an area affected by fire solely because a lockdown has been called.

Before sessions and during handover

Management agrees the site arrangements on page 3 with the school, including coverage during Club hours. Staff must know the alert, safer spaces, access controls, communication method and who can authorise the all-clear. Brief all staff and cover staff, including those collecting children from classes or supervising outdoors.

Maintain an accurate live paper register at the front table in the canteen. Emergency contacts are in the folder in the Little Lanes cupboard. Megan's authorised work phone can provide access to contact information where available; it does not replace a live attendance record. Collect records, phone and emergency medicines only if immediately accessible without delaying safety. Do not return through danger to retrieve them.

Raising the alert

Use the school-agreed lockdown signal and communication method when available. If no agreed signal can be used during an immediate emergency, alert nearby staff directly and clearly, stating the danger and the action needed. Do not use the fire alarm to signal a lockdown unless this is specifically part of the school's assessed arrangements. Make sure staff outside or on handover receive the warning where this can be done safely.

Immediate lockdown actions

Protect children and call for help

- Move children into an appropriate safer space if the route is safe. If returning from outdoors or another area would take the group towards danger, use another safe option and tell the response lead or emergency services your location.
- Secure external doors and other access points where safe and using the agreed arrangements. Do not confront an intruder, search for an attacker or ask children to investigate. Do not improvise unsafe door fastening or prevent escape from a developing fire.
- Keep children away from windows, glazed doors and exposed sightlines. For a violent threat, reduce visibility and noise where useful, silence phone sounds and give calm, simple instructions. Adapt actions to the hazard rather than applying silence or darkness to every incident.
- Call 999 if there is immediate danger. Give the Club and school name, exact location, threat, numbers and locations of children and adults, injuries and relevant access information. Follow instructions.
- Take a name-by-name check against the live register if available and account for staff and visitors. Tell the lead or police immediately about anyone unaccounted for, their last known location and relevant needs. Do not send staff or children into danger to search.

Supervision communication and medical needs

Keep children supervised and reassured. Explain that staff are keeping them safe without frightening detail. Support children with sensory, communication, mobility or emotional needs using agreed individual arrangements. Keep required emergency medicines with the child's group where safely available and provide necessary first aid; call 999 for a medical emergency.

Staff may use authorised phones wherever necessary for emergency communication, including with children present. Keep essential channels available and avoid unnecessary calls. Report location, headcount and urgent needs to the response lead when safe. If communication fails, continue protective action and follow emergency-service instructions as they become available.

Do not open the door for routine parent collection during an active lockdown. Explain to parents, when safe to communicate, that collection is suspended and they must stay away from the site until instructed. Do not share protected locations, children's details or police tactics in public messages. Check any instruction to open or move the group through an agreed trusted channel.

Ending the lockdown and reunification

Do not end lockdown because the area appears quiet or a parent requests collection. Use the agreed all-clear from the authorised school or Club lead, taking account of police or emergency-service instructions. Recheck every child and adult, provide first aid or welfare support and decide whether normal provision can resume.

If collection is required, use a safe location agreed for the incident. Release children only to authorised collectors after identity or password checks where required. Record the time and collector on the register. Keep children supervised until collected. Follow the Uncollected Children Policy where contacts cannot be reached; never send children home alone as an emergency shortcut.

Suspicious items and threats

Do not touch or move a suspicious item. Move people away by a safe route and contact police from a safe position. Do not automatically use the normal assembly point. Preserve details of a telephone, email or other threat without forwarding it widely and follow police advice on evacuation, safe distances and communications.

Emergency closure and school arrangements

When the Club may close

Management may close or delay opening if safe childcare cannot be provided, for example because of severe weather, loss of essential services, unsafe premises, a security incident, a serious health incident or insufficient safe staffing. Consider the actual risk and available alternatives. A school closure does not by itself confirm the Club's arrangements; coordinate with the school and tell families clearly.

Before opening, notify parents through the Club's usual contact channels as promptly as possible and contact the school about any children expected to transfer to us. Do not accept children into unsafe provision. During a session, maintain safe supervision, account for everyone and arrange collection once it is safe. Where evacuation is needed, follow the fire policy and incident-specific advice. Do not take children to a staff member's home.

Temporary safe waiting or reunification is different from running childcare at a new venue. Before providing sessions elsewhere, check registration and notification requirements, permission to use the premises, staffing, safeguarding, accessibility, risk assessment and essential facilities. Communicate fees, refunds or credits under published terms and applicable consumer law; this policy does not create a new charging rule.

Recording practice and reopening

Record incidents, decisions, headcounts, communications, collections and advice received. Management assesses required Ofsted notifications: report significant events affecting safety, premises or childcare as soon as possible and within 14 days. A brief closure without a significant effect is not automatically reportable. Follow safeguarding and other reporting duties where relevant.

Reopen only after management has checked that the hazard is controlled and safe staffing, facilities and access are restored, with school or emergency-service confirmation where needed. Review the response, offer support to children and staff, update plans and brief everyone on changes.

Practise through proportionate staff discussions and calm, age-appropriate exercises agreed with the school. Record what was tested, difficulties and actions. Include breakfast and after-school arrangements, handover, outdoor groups and individual needs. Do not simulate an armed attack or create a frightening surprise for children. Review annually and after changes or incidents.

Site arrangements to confirm with the school

Complete this section and brief staff before adopting the site procedure. Keep sensitive details in the staff copy and share parent instructions separately.

Arrangement	Agreed detail
Lockdown alert and all-clear authority	-----
Primary safer space and alternative	-----
Outdoor and school-handover response	-----
Doors access keys and safe escape	-----
Contact and communications during Club hours	-----
Safe waiting or collection location	-----

School representative: _____ Club representative: _____

Date confirmed: _____ Date staff briefed: _____

Date approved: October 2026 Review date: October 2027

Signed:MG Name and role: Megan Garratt - Manager

Sources: DfE Emergency planning and response for education childcare and children's social care settings; School and college security (gov.uk); ProtectUK evacuation invacuation lockdown guidance; Ofsted serious childcare incident guidance.