# Little Acorns Montessori

*Ascot | Bracknell | Crowthorne*

# LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE POLICY

*Statutory Policy | Version 1.0*

*Date Adopted: [DATE] | Review Date: [DATE]*

## Document Control

| Policy Title | Lockdown Procedure Policy |
|---|---|
| **Setting** | Little Acorns Montessori |
| **Setting Type** | Private Day Nursery — Children Aged 0–5 |
| **Locations** | Ascot, Bracknell & Crowthorne, England |
| **Version** | 1.0 |
| **Date Adopted** | June 2026 |
| **Review Date** | June 2027 |
| **Written By** | Jonathan Duffy - Director |

## Section 1 — Policy Statement

Little Acorns Montessori is a private day nursery providing care and education for children aged 0–5, operating across our Ascot, Bracknell, and Crowthorne settings.

We are committed to providing a safe, secure environment for every child, member of staff, and visitor on our premises. This policy sets out the procedures that must be followed in the event of a lockdown — defined as the requirement to restrict movement within and access to the nursery premises in response to an immediate or potential threat to safety.

Little Acorns Montessori recognises that threats requiring a lockdown response may arise from a variety of sources. Our Crowthorne setting operates in close geographic proximity to Broadmoor Hospital, a high-security psychiatric hospital. Accordingly, this policy must be read alongside our Proximity to Broadmoor Hospital Policy, which addresses the specific context of the Crowthorne setting in detail.

### Our Commitments

- Preparedness — We will maintain up-to-date lockdown procedures that are understood, practised, and immediately actionable by all staff.
- Compliance — We will meet all statutory obligations under the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025 and all relevant health and safety legislation.
- Child-Centred Response — The safety and welfare of children in our care is paramount in all decisions during an emergency.
- Partnership — We will cooperate promptly with Thames Valley Police, West London NHS Trust, and local authority partners where required.
- Transparency — We will communicate clearly and promptly with parents and carers in the event of any incident.
- Proportionality — Our procedures will be proportionate to the level of risk and will avoid causing unnecessary alarm to children or families.
- Continuous Improvement — This policy will be reviewed annually and immediately following any incident or change in guidance.
- Local Partnership — We will cooperate with the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board (BFSB) and its statutory safeguarding partners (Bracknell Forest Council, Thames Valley Police, and Frimley Health Integrated Care Board) in safeguarding matters arising from any emergency incident, in line with the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Bracknell Forest."

## Section 2 — Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed at Little Acorns Montessori, including permanent, part-time, bank, and agency staff.
- Volunteers, students on placement, and any other adults working within the nursery.
- All three settings: Ascot, Bracknell, and Crowthorne. Procedures relating to proximity to Broadmoor Hospital are primarily directed at the Crowthorne setting; however, all settings must be familiar with this policy.
- Parents and carers, who will be informed of relevant procedures and their responsibilities within them.

This policy is triggered in any of the following circumstances:

- Thames Valley Police issue a community alert, shelter-in-place, or lockdown notification affecting any area in which the nursery operates.
- The Broadmoor Hospital siren is activated (Crowthorne setting).
- West London NHS Trust activates its public information protocol following a critical incident (Crowthorne setting).
- A member of staff observes or becomes aware of a credible threat to the safety of children or staff on or near nursery premises.
- The Manager, DSL, or designated senior member of staff determines that a precautionary lockdown is necessary.

## Section 3 — Statutory & Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed in compliance with, and with reference to, the following verified UK legislation, statutory frameworks, and guidance:

### Primary Statutory Framework

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2025 (Department for Education, effective 1 September 2025) — specifically the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, which place a duty on providers to ensure children are kept safe and that suitable arrangements are in place to respond to emergencies. The 2025 edition strengthens safer recruitment requirements, the role of the DSL, child absence follow-up procedures, and whistleblowing obligations.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 — the primary legislation establishing the duty of employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees and all others on their premises.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 — requiring employers to conduct suitable and sufficient risk assessments and implement appropriate emergency procedures.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 — establishing the paramountcy of child welfare and the duty to safeguard children from harm.
- Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended by the Mental Health Act 2007) (further reformed by the Mental Health Act 2025, provisions to be implemented in phases from 2027) — providing the legal context for the detention of patients at Broadmoor Hospital, relevant to the Crowthorne setting.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 — requiring fire and emergency evacuation procedures to be documented and practised.

### Statutory Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (Department for Education, published 18 March 2026) — the current statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, replacing the 2023 version. The 2026 edition places increased emphasis on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice, safeguarding of babies and unborn children, domestic abuse, complex and extra-familial harms, and the Families First Partnership programme.
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework — Renewed Framework for inspections from November 2025 — inspectors evaluate settings against 11 evaluation areas on a five-point scale. Safeguarding is assessed separately as met or not met. Inspectors will consider the adequacy of emergency procedures as part of their assessment.
- Bracknell Forest Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements 2024 (Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board, published December 2024) — the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Bracknell Forest, developed in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Care Act 2014. The Manager must ensure familiarity with and adherence to these arrangements in the event of any incident with a safeguarding dimension. Available at: bracknellforestsafeguarding.org.uk.

*Note for Inspectors: This policy directly addresses EYFS Statutory Framework 2025, Section 3 (Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements), which require providers to have policies and procedures in place to keep children safe and to respond to emergencies appropriately. References to Working Together 2026 are current as of adoption date. This policy must be read alongside the Little Acorns Montessori Proximity to Broadmoor Hospital Policy (Version 1.0) for full coverage of site-specific emergency arrangements at the Crowthorne setting.*

## Section 4 — Understanding Lockdown

### 4.1 Definition

A lockdown is a procedure used to restrict movement and access to nursery premises in response to a threat or potential threat from outside or within the building. A lockdown may be full or partial, depending on the nature and location of the threat.

### 4.2 Types of Lockdown

- Full Lockdown — All external doors and windows are secured. All children and staff move to designated safe room(s). No access to or from the building until the all-clear is confirmed by an authorised official.
- Partial Lockdown — Specific areas of the building are secured. Normal activities may continue in unaffected areas. Used where a threat is localised or precautionary.
- Shelter-in-Place — Children and staff remain indoors but normal routines may continue in a modified form. Used in response to environmental hazards, air quality issues, or low-level community alerts.

### 4.3 Specific Context — Crowthorne Setting

The Crowthorne setting of Little Acorns Montessori is located within audible range of the Broadmoor Hospital siren warning system. Staff at the Crowthorne setting must be aware that:

- A continuous siren tone indicates a critical incident is in progress. Staff must initiate full lockdown immediately upon hearing the siren, without awaiting further instruction.
- An all-clear signal will be sounded when the incident has been resolved. The Manager must independently confirm the all-clear with Thames Valley Police before resuming normal operations.
- Staff must not assume the nature of any incident. All siren activations must be treated as requiring immediate lockdown.

*Important: The Broadmoor siren system and alert protocols are subject to change by West London NHS Trust and Thames Valley Police. The Manager must verify current alert arrangements annually and update this and the Proximity to Broadmoor Hospital Policy accordingly. Contact the Thames Valley Police Engagement Team or West London NHS Trust Estates for current protocols.*

## Section 5 — Lockdown Procedures

**CRITICAL: These procedures must be rehearsed with all staff at least once per year. A record of each rehearsal must be kept. All new staff must be briefed on these procedures prior to working unsupervised with children.**

### 5.1 Triggers for Immediate Lockdown

A lockdown must be initiated immediately upon any of the following:

- The Broadmoor Hospital siren is activated (Crowthorne setting).
- Thames Valley Police contact the nursery directly and advise a lockdown, shelter-in-place, or community alert.

- A member of staff observes an intruder on nursery premises who poses a credible threat to safety.
- The Manager, DSL, or most senior staff member present determines there is a credible immediate risk to children or staff.
- A community-level emergency (e.g. gas leak, civil disturbance, major incident) is notified by police or local authority.

## 5.2 Immediate Actions — Indoor Lockdown (Step-by-Step)

The most senior member of staff present must immediately take the following actions in chronological order:

1. Call "LOCKDOWN — ALL STAFF ACT NOW" clearly and calmly. Use the nursery's designated internal alert signal.
2. Close and lock all external doors and windows immediately. Draw blinds or curtains on ground-floor windows facing outside.
3. Bring all children indoors without delay. Do not stop to collect belongings, bags, or equipment.
4. Move all children and staff to the designated safe room(s) identified in the nursery's building risk assessment. Safe rooms should be internal, away from external walls and windows where possible.
5. Take an immediate register. Account for every child and every member of staff.
6. Telephone 999 if there is an immediate risk to life or ongoing danger. Follow all police instructions precisely.
7. Telephone Thames Valley Police non-emergency line (101) if appropriate, to receive guidance and confirm status.
8. Contact the Manager and DSL immediately if they are not already present.
9. Do not open any external door for any reason — including to admit parents or visitors — until the all-clear is confirmed by police or an authorised official.
10. Maintain a running log of all actions taken, times, and communications throughout the lockdown.
11. Do not post on personal or professional social media regarding the incident.

## 5.3 Lockdown — Children Outdoors or Off-Site

If the lockdown trigger occurs whilst children are in the nursery garden or on an off-site activity:

- The lead member of staff must immediately direct all children and accompanying adults to the nearest safe, lockable indoor location.
- If on nursery premises: proceed immediately to the designated safe room and follow the indoor lockdown procedure above.
- If off-site: seek immediate shelter in the nearest available secure building. Inform the building's responsible person of the situation.
- Contact the nursery base immediately by mobile telephone to confirm location, headcount, and any welfare concerns.
- The nursery base must record the off-site group's confirmed location and maintain regular contact throughout the lockdown.
- Do not attempt to travel back to the nursery until the all-clear has been confirmed by police and communicated to the off-site group leader by the nursery base.
- Maintain a continuous register and account for all children throughout.

### 5.4 Special Considerations for Children with Additional Needs

The Manager must ensure that individual arrangements are in place for any child with additional needs, a disability, or a mobility requirement that may affect their ability to follow standard lockdown procedures. These arrangements must be:

- Documented in the child's individual care plan or risk assessment.
- Communicated to all staff who may be responsible for that child.
- Reviewed at least annually and whenever the child's needs change.

### 5.5 All-Clear Procedures

Following an all-clear signal from Thames Valley Police or another authorised official:

- The Manager must independently confirm the all-clear directly with police before resuming normal operations. Do not rely solely on the siren all-clear tone.
- Conduct a full headcount of all children and staff.
- Assess the welfare of all children and staff. Provide age-appropriate reassurance and support as needed.
- Complete an incident record as described in Section 7 of this policy.
- Contact parents and carers in accordance with Section 8 of this policy.
- Notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted if the incident involved a safeguarding dimension, in accordance with EYFS statutory requirements.

## Section 6 — Communication During Lockdown

### 6.1 Internal Communication

- All internal communication during a lockdown must be calm, clear, and purposeful.
- Staff must use the nursery's agreed internal alert signal to notify colleagues of the lockdown.
- Mobile phones may be used for internal communication between staff in different rooms or off-site groups. Phones must be kept on silent or vibrate during lockdown.

### 6.2 Communication with External Agencies

- All communication with external parties (police, local authority, media) must be managed exclusively by the Manager or DSL.
- No other member of staff must speak to the media or external agencies regarding the incident without the express authorisation of the Manager.
- The Manager must maintain a written log of all external communications, including time, recipient, and content.

### 6.3 Communication with Parents During Lockdown

- Parents must not be permitted to collect their child during an active lockdown. This is for the safety of all concerned.
- Parents who arrive at the nursery during a lockdown must be spoken to through a closed door or intercom. They must not be admitted until the all-clear is confirmed.
- Where resource allows, the Manager or a designated senior member of staff should send a brief, factual message to parents via the nursery's communication platform (e.g., Famly,

ParentZone, or equivalent), confirming that the nursery is in lockdown, that all children are safe and accounted for, and that further updates will follow.

- The message must not include specific operational details that could compromise the police response or cause unnecessary alarm.
- Staff must not make individual telephone calls to parents during the lockdown except in a direct emergency.

### 6.4 Social Media

- No member of staff must post on personal or professional social media about an incident during or immediately following a lockdown.
- The Manager may issue a factual statement after the all-clear has been confirmed and advice has been sought from police and, if appropriate, legal counsel.
- Breach of this requirement may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## Section 7 — Roles & Responsibilities

| Role | Name | Campus |
|---|---|---|
| Designated Officer / Nominated Individual | Jonathan Duffy | All Campuses |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Elaine Eastham (Manager) | Ascot Campus |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Agata Payne (Manager) | Bracknell Campus |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Emma Gray (Manager) | Crowthorne Campus |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) | Jessica McGrath/Katy Cooley (Deputy Manager) | Ascot Campus |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) | Joanne Broughton (Deputy Manager) | Bracknell Campus |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) | Martine Loveridge (Deputy Manager) | Crowthorne Campus |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) | Kira King | Crowthorne Campus (in the absence of Emma and Martine) |
| Manager on Duty | As rostered | All Campuses |

### 7.1 The Manager

- Has overall responsibility for the implementation, review, and communication of this policy.
- Must ensure all staff are trained in and familiar with lockdown procedures prior to working unsupervised with children.
- Must ensure an up-to-date risk assessment is in place and reviewed at least annually.
- Must maintain relationships with Thames Valley Police, West London NHS Trust, and the Local Authority.
- Is solely responsible for all external communications during and after an incident.

- Must ensure lockdown rehearsals are conducted at least once annually and that records are maintained.
- Must ensure this policy is reviewed following any incident, near-miss, or change in legislation or guidance.

## 7.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

**DSL:**

- Supports the Manager in implementing this policy and acts as the lead in the Manager's absence during an incident.
- Is responsible for liaising with statutory agencies including police, children's services, and Ofsted following any safeguarding-related incident.
- Must ensure safeguarding considerations are embedded within lockdown and risk assessment procedures.
- Must maintain up-to-date training in safeguarding, including awareness of local risks specific to each setting.

## 7.3 The Deputy DSL

**Deputy DSL:**

- Assumes all DSL responsibilities in the absence of the DSL.
- Supports the DSL in reviewing and maintaining this policy.
- Must be fully familiar with all lockdown and communication procedures.

## 7.4 All Staff

- Must read and sign to confirm understanding of this policy upon induction and at each annual review.
- Must participate in all lockdown rehearsals.
- Must act immediately and without hesitation upon a lockdown trigger.
- Must not use personal social media during or immediately following an incident.
- Must report any concerns, near-misses, or changes in local circumstances to the Manager without delay.
- Are responsible for the children in their care at all times and must prioritise their physical safety above all other considerations during a lockdown.

## 7.5 Parents & Carers

- Must provide up-to-date emergency contact details at all times, including details for a minimum of two emergency contacts per child, at least one of whom must be a person authorised to collect. The EYFS Statutory Framework 2025 requires settings to hold more than two emergency contact numbers where possible. Parents are asked to provide as many authorised contacts as practicable.
- Must not attempt to collect their child during a lockdown without explicit authorisation from the Manager or police.
- Must follow the instructions of nursery staff and police during any incident.
- Are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy, which is available upon request and on the nursery's parent communication platform.

# Section 8 — Reporting & Recording

## 8.1 Incident Recording

Following any lockdown, near-miss, or incident to which this policy applies, the Manager must complete a written incident record on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable. The incident record must include:

- Date, time, and duration of the incident.
- Nature and source of the trigger (e.g., siren activation, police instruction, staff observation).
- Names of all staff and children present at the time.
- A chronological account of all actions taken.
- Details of all external communications made (police, parents, Local Authority, Ofsted).
- Any injuries, welfare concerns, or near-misses arising from the incident.
- Actions taken to support the welfare of children and staff following the incident.
- Any learning points or recommended amendments to procedures.

## 8.2 Where Records Are Stored

- Incident records must be stored securely in the nursery's designated safeguarding and incident file, held in the Manager's office.
- Electronic records must be stored in a password-protected folder accessible only to the Manager and DSL.
- Records must be retained for a minimum of three years, or in line with the nursery's broader data retention policy, whichever is the longer period.
- Records must be made available to Ofsted inspectors, the Local Authority, or police upon request.

## 8.3 Statutory Notifications

The Manager must notify the following bodies as required:

- Ofsted — must be notified of any significant event that may affect the welfare of children in the setting. Under the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025, this notification must be made as soon as reasonably practicable. The Manager should check the current Ofsted notification portal for the applicable timescale, as the renewed Ofsted inspection framework (effective November 2025) operates on a report-card model with safeguarding assessed as 'met' or 'not met'. Failure to notify may directly affect the safeguarding judgement.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) — must be notified if the incident involves any safeguarding concern relating to a member of staff or volunteer.
- Bracknell Forest Children's Services — must be notified if any child is considered to be at risk of harm as a result of an incident. In Bracknell Forest, this is done via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) — see below.
- Bracknell Forest Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) — the single point of contact and front door for all child safeguarding concerns in Bracknell Forest, bringing together social care, early help, health, policing, and education professionals. The Manager must contact the MASH where any child is considered to be at risk of harm, or where a safeguarding concern arises from or is connected to an incident.
- The nursery's insurers — must be informed of any incident that may give rise to a claim or liability.

### 8.4 Rehearsal Records

A record of each lockdown rehearsal must be maintained and must include:

- Date and time of the rehearsal.
- Names of staff who participated.
- Names of any staff who were absent and the arrangements made to brief them subsequently.
- Any actions or improvements identified.
- Signature of the Manager confirming the rehearsal took place.

## Section 9 — Communication with Parents

### 9.1 During an Incident

- Parents must not be permitted to collect their child during an active lockdown, for the safety of all concerned.
- The Manager or a designated senior member of staff should send a brief, factual communication via the nursery's communication platform confirming that the nursery is in lockdown, that all children are safe and accounted for, and that further information will follow.
- The message must not include details that could compromise the police response or cause unnecessary alarm.

### 9.2 Following an Incident

Once the all-clear has been confirmed and normal operations have resumed, the Manager must:

- Send a written communication to all parents and carers within 24 hours of the all-clear.
- The communication must confirm that the incident has been resolved, that all children were safe throughout, and outline the actions taken by the nursery.
- Offer parents the opportunity to speak with the Manager or DSL if they have concerns.
- Remain sensitive to the potential anxiety of young children, and offer guidance to parents on how to speak with their child about the incident in an age-appropriate way.

### 9.3 Media Enquiries

- Any enquiries from the press or media must be directed to the Manager only.
- No member of staff should speak to the media regarding an incident without the express authorisation of the Manager.
- Any public statement must be factual, proportionate, and, where appropriate, confirmed with legal advice before release.

## Section 10 — Staff Training & Awareness

### 10.1 Induction

- All new staff must be briefed on this policy as part of their induction programme, prior to working unsupervised with children.
- New staff must sign to confirm they have read, understood, and will comply with the policy.

- The Manager must ensure new staff are shown the location of the designated safe room(s) and are familiar with the nursery's emergency plan before their first unsupervised shift.

### 10.2 Annual Training Requirements

All staff must complete the following on an annual basis:

- Review and re-sign this policy following its annual review.
- Participate in at least one full lockdown rehearsal.
- Complete or refresh their core safeguarding training, which must include awareness of local risks specific to their setting.

Safeguarding training requirements, including compliance with Annex C of the EYFS Statutory Framework 2025, are set out in the Staff Training and Qualifications policy.

### 10.3 Training Records

- The Manager must maintain a training record for each member of staff, confirming dates of policy reviews, rehearsal participation, and safeguarding training.
- Training records must be available for inspection by Ofsted.

### 10.4 Staff Wellbeing Following an Incident

Little Acorns Montessori recognises that a lockdown or emergency incident may be distressing for staff. Following any such incident, the Manager must:

- Hold a structured debrief with all staff involved at the earliest appropriate opportunity following the all-clear.
- Assess the wellbeing of all staff and signpost to the nursery's Employee Assistance Programme or other appropriate support.
- Ensure that no member of staff is required to return to normal duties before they feel able to do so safely.

## Section 11 — Policy Review

### 11.1 Scheduled Review

- This policy must be reviewed by the Manager and DSL at least once every 12 months.
- The review date is recorded in the Document Control Table at the front of this policy.
- Following each review, all staff must re-read and re-sign the policy.

### 11.2 Triggered Review

This policy must be reviewed immediately, outside of the scheduled cycle, in the following circumstances:

- Following any lockdown or emergency incident to which this policy applies.
- Following any change to the alert protocols operated by West London NHS Trust or Thames Valley Police.
- Following any change in legislation, statutory guidance, or Ofsted inspection frameworks.

- Following any Ofsted inspection at which recommendations are made regarding emergency procedures.
- Following a significant change in the nursery's physical environment, layout, staffing structure, or operating context.
- Prior to April 2027, review compliance with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) and update procedures accordingly.

### 11.3 Consistency with Related Policies

This policy must be reviewed alongside and remain consistent with the following related policies:

- Proximity to Broadmoor Hospital — Risk Assessment, Community Awareness & Lockdown Procedures Policy (Little Acorns Montessori, Version 1.0).
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Policy.
- Missing Child Policy.

### 11.4 Version Control

- Each revised version of this policy must be assigned a new version number and date.
- Superseded versions must be archived securely and retained for a minimum of three years.

## Policy Sign-Off

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| **Policy Author** | Jonathan Duffy |

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| **Date** | June 2026 |

*This policy was adopted by Little Acorns Montessori on June 2026 | Version 1.0 | Review Date: June 2027*