Unity Stars Nurseries

Lockdown Policy

Approved by:	Management Committee	Date: July 2026
Last reviewed in:	July 2026	
Next review due by:	July 2027	

Document Control

Issue No	Date	Amended by	Summary of Changes
1	July 2026	Karen Davies & Laurel Parry	New Policy for Unity Stars Nurseries (strengthened July 2026)

Authorisation (Responsible Owner)

Name	Role	Approval Date
Karen Davies	Nursery Manager – Chalkstone	July 2026
Laurel Parry	Nursery Manager – Norton	July 2026

Approval (Accountable Owner)

Name	Role	Approval Date
Jemma Lynch	Trust Safeguarding Lead	July 2026

Distribution List – Once authorised (Informed)

Name	
Setting Leads	For uploading to Famly and distributing to parents and carers
Dave Gooderham	For uploading to Trust website

Review Period (at least annually or whenever statutory guidance changes)

Date Document Reviewed	By Whom
July 2026	Jemma Lynch – Trust Safeguarding Lead

We take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of children, staff, visitors and any other person on the nursery premises. This policy sets out the action to be taken where it is safer for children and adults to remain inside the building, or within a secure area of the building, rather than evacuate. Staff will be made aware of this policy during induction, through regular reminders and through practice arrangements appropriate to the age and needs of the children. Parents and carers will be made aware of the arrangements through the prospectus, website, Famly and/or routine communications.

In the event of an emergency requiring a lockdown, the following procedure will be implemented. The safety of children and adults will remain the priority at all times. Staff should act calmly, follow instructions from the Manager or Acting Manager, and avoid taking any action that may place themselves or others at further risk.

Lockdown procedure

We will use the lockdown procedure when the safety of children, staff or others on the premises may be at risk, and when the safest response is to remain inside the current building, or move to a safer internal area, with doors and windows secured and blinds and/or curtains closed where it is safe to do so.

The procedure may be activated in response to a range of situations. Examples may include:

- Cartwheels Family Hub going into lockdown or advising the nursery to take immediate safety precautions;
- a report, incident or disturbance in the local community which may pose a risk to children, staff or visitors;
- an intruder or unauthorised person on, or near, the nursery site;
- a warning regarding a local environmental risk, such as smoke, air pollution, a gas cloud or hazardous substance;
- a major fire, explosion or police incident in the vicinity of the nursery, where remaining inside is safer than leaving;
- any instruction from the police, local authority, emergency services or Cartwheels Family Hub to secure the premises.

Staff will be notified using the following actions:

Signal for lockdown: short whistle bursts with circular hand motions.

Signal for all-clear: verbal confirmation in person from the Manager or Acting Manager only.

Immediate action by staff

All individuals, including children, will remain in the area they are in if it is safe to do so. If children are outside, staff will promptly and calmly direct them into the building or to the safest available area, but only where doing so does not increase the risk. Staff should not open external doors or leave the building unless instructed that it is safe to do so by the Manager, Acting Manager or emergency services.

Staff will close and secure doors and windows where it is safe to do so. Blinds and/or curtains should be closed where available. Lights and equipment should be managed in a way that supports safety and calmness. Mobile phones and nursery communication devices should remain available for emergency communication only.

Children and adults will be kept away from windows and doors. Children will be reassured and occupied as calmly as possible, taking account of their age, stage of development and any additional needs. The agreed safer internal areas are: Twinkling Stars - the centre of the room; Rising Stars - the Construction area. These areas should be used unless the circumstances mean another area is safer at the time.

Responsibilities during lockdown

The Manager, or Acting Manager in their absence, will co-ordinate the response. This will include accounting for all children, staff, visitors and contractors; checking the register, staffing arrangements and visitor information; maintaining communication with staff; and making decisions based on the information available at the time.

If the nursery is in immediate danger, or there is an intruder or immediate threat on or near the site, the police will be called as a matter of urgency using 999. Where the lockdown has been triggered by the police, local authority, emergency services or Cartwheels Family Hub, the nursery will follow their instructions and await further guidance. The Manager or Acting Manager will contact the main landline for Cartwheels Family Hub to inform them that the nursery is in lockdown, unless doing so would create further risk or prevent urgent contact with emergency services.

Staff should not share details of the incident externally, including on social media. All external communication will be managed by the Manager, Acting Manager, Trust Safeguarding Lead, Trust central team or another agreed senior person, depending on the circumstances.

Communication with parents and carers

Parents and carers will be informed at the earliest safe and appropriate opportunity. Updates will be shared through the nursery's usual communication channels, for example Famly, text message, email or phone call. Information shared will be factual, proportionate and will avoid unnecessary detail which could compromise safety or any emergency service response.

Parents and carers must not come to the nursery site during a lockdown unless specifically instructed to do so by the nursery or emergency services. Attending the site may place them, their child and others at greater risk. Parents and carers should also avoid contacting the nursery directly during an active lockdown so that communication lines remain available for emergency use and are not overwhelmed by enquiries.

All-clear and recovery

The all-clear will only be given internally by the Manager or Acting Manager following confirmation from the relevant external agency, such as the police, emergency services, local authority or Cartwheels Family Hub, or where the Manager/Acting Manager is satisfied that the immediate risk has passed. Staff must not leave their secured area or resume normal routines until the all-clear has been given.

Once the all-clear has been given, staff will return children to normal routines as calmly as possible. Any child showing worry, distress or confusion will be supported by their key person or another familiar adult. Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed of any support provided to their child.

Following any lockdown or lockdown practice, the Manager will complete a post-incident evaluation. This will consider whether the procedure was followed, whether all children, staff and visitors were accounted for, whether communication was effective, whether any child or adult requires additional support, and whether the policy or risk assessment requires updating. The Trust Safeguarding Lead and/or central team will be informed. Ofsted and any other relevant agency will be notified where required by statutory guidance or regulation.

Practice and review

Lockdown arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and after any incident, near miss, significant site change or relevant change in guidance. Staff will be reminded of the procedure regularly. Any practice activity with children will be planned carefully, delivered calmly and sensitively, and adapted to the age and needs of the children so that it does not cause unnecessary fear or distress.