



Incapacitated Parent or Carer

Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school is committed to safeguarding children and ensuring their safety in all situations. This policy outlines the procedures to follow if a parent or carer appears incapacitated and unable to safely care for their child due to intoxication, erratic behaviour, or other impairments.

Aim

To protect children from potential harm when a parent or carer is incapacitated, while responding appropriately and sensitively to the situation.

Objectives

We respond to concerns about an incapacitated parent by:

- Ensuring the child's safety at all times
- Involving emergency contacts or social care as necessary.
- Maintaining accurate records of all incidents.

Definition of Incapacitation

A parent or carer may be considered incapacitated if they demonstrate behaviour that renders them unable to safely care for their child. This may include:

- Appearing drunk
- Appearing under the influence of drugs
- Displaying angry, threatening, or aggressive behaviour toward the child, staff, or others
- Acting erratically or showing manic behaviour

Procedures

1. Informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- If a staff member is concerned about a parent or carer's condition, they inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
- The DSL assesses the risk and decides whether further intervention is required.

2. Low-Risk Situations

- If the child's welfare is not deemed at risk, the DSL documents the concern clearly using a Log of Concern Form

3. Intervention and Emergency Contacts

- Where intervention is required, the DSL speaks with the parent/carer privately and appropriately
- With the parent's agreement, an emergency contact listed for the child is asked to collect them
- The emergency contact is informed of:
 - The parent's condition
 - The need for alternative collection
 - The setting's duty to inform social care if appropriate

4. Involving Social Care

- If no suitable adult is available to collect the child, the DSL contacts Children's Social Care to ensure the child's safety
- If the parent threatens violence or behaves aggressively, the police are contacted immediately



5. If the Parent Insists on Taking the Child

If the parent removes the child despite concerns:

- The DSL contacts the police immediately
- A referral is made to social care without delay

Recording and Reporting

- The DSL records all actions and decisions in the child's safeguarding record
- If social care or the police are involved, a Log of Concern Form is completed and shared with The Board of Trustees
- Any additional phone calls, conversations, or follow-up information is documented

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if changes in legislation or safeguarding practice occur.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy aligns with the following:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2021)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Acknowledgment

All staff, trustees, volunteers, parents, and carers must acknowledge they have read and understood this policy. By doing so, they agree to follow all outlined procedures to ensure the child's safety in the event of an incapacitated parent or carer.