

Management of Critical Incidents

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Updated:

Aim: To prevent where possible and appropriately manage all critical incidents which may affect the preschool, its staff, visitors and children and in doing so provide support and reduce the effect that the incident may have.

Relevant Legislation: Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011, Children (Education and Care Services National Law), 2010, Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Strategies:

In meeting its obligations under relevant legislation, guidelines, industry codes of practice The Meeting House Kindergarten will:

1. Develop, implement and regularly review procedures and plans of action for the management of critical incidents and emergencies to ensure they reflect the highest possible standards
2. Allocate individual responsibilities to specific staff
3. Ensure all staff are aware of and familiar with these procedures
4. Identify and reduce risks and hazards through regular assessments
5. Organise and monitor regular practice drills
6. Establish close liaison with all local emergency services
7. Organise staff development activities where necessary.

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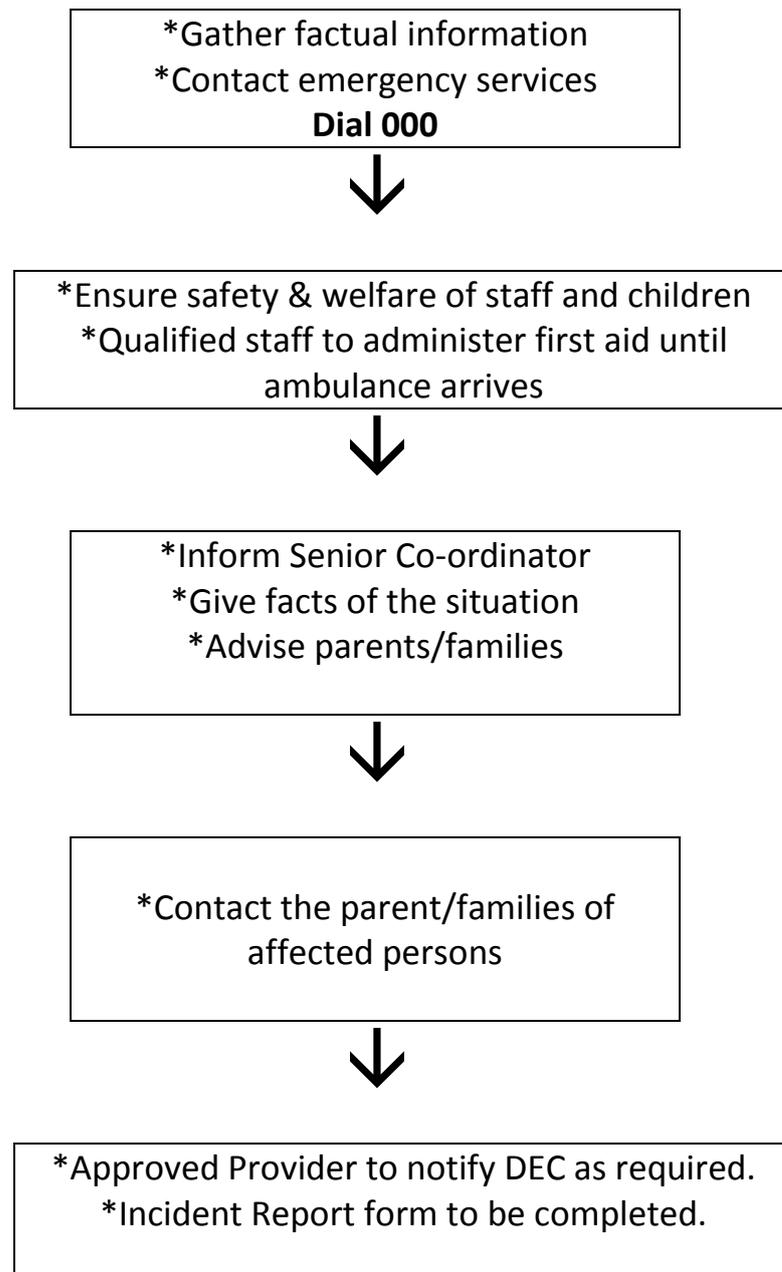
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1. CRITICAL INCIDENTS – SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1.1. Immediate Actions

The Nominated Supervisor is to allocate responsibility for each of the following steps:



1.2 Immediate Key Contact List

Organisation	Details	Telephone
Emergency Services Emergencies only	Police Ambulance Fire Brigade	000 000 000
Local Police	Chatswood	9411 0999
Poisons Information		13 1126
Electricity	24 hours	13 1388
Gas	24 hours	13 1909
Water	24 hours	13 2090
Telstra	24 hours Corporate Services	13 2255
Child Protection Helpline (for reporting of Child Abuse to Community Services)	24 hours	13 3627 (For mandatory reporters)

1.3 Later Actions

* convene brief meeting of Nominated Supervisor/Director with Senior Co-ordinator to:-

- discuss intervention plan
- obtain support from Meeting House Inc. Committee

*contact local support personnel

*convene a full staff meeting to:-

- present information
- discuss the action plan
- allow staff response
- decide how children will be informed or given additional information

*Set up a recovery room in the preschool

- provide fluids
- comfortable chairs/mats
- support personnel

*inform children of:-

- facts of the incident
- preschool's actions
- allow children's discussion or response

*identify "at risk" staff and children

*contact parents or families of "at risk" staff or children

*arrange a debriefing for "at risk" staff or children

*inform all parents by letter with:-

- the facts of the incident
- the preschool's response plan
- possible reaction of children
- sources of help for families
- encourage 2 way communications between parents and the preschool

*restore the preschool to regular routine asap;

*obtain updated factual information

- continue to inform staff, children & parents

*continue to monitor the well-being of staff and children.

2. EVACUATIONS

Inform the Director or Nominated Supervisor of the treat who will then call:-

- relevant emergency services
- Senior Co-ordinator

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an evacuation:

- 1 REMOVE anybody from immediate danger
- 2 RAISE the Alarm

Notify the Director/Nominated Supervisor and ensure that emergency services have been contact.

- 3 EMERGENCY signal and sound!

EVACUATE to the nominated assembly area remaining clear of danger

Remember: TAKE THE ROOM ROLL, A PHONE & MEDICAL SUPPLIES!

- 4 REMAIN at the assembly area until the “all clear” has been given by the emergency services

ACCOUNT for all staff and children.

Remember: only if it is safe to do so, fight the emergency!

3. FIRES

Signal: Fire alarm is activated or emergency whistle is blown.

Actions:

- Implement the Evacuation Procedures if necessary. Doors and windows should be closed on departure of rooms in order to prevent spread of fire and smoke;
- A staff member should wait at the front driveway to direct Emergency Services to the location of the fire;
- Fire extinguishers and hose reels should only be used if staff are confident in doing so and there is no additional risk to them or children OR in the case of potential entrapment.

3.1 BUSH FIRES:

If evacuation of staff and children is required, it should take place under the direction of authorized Emergency Personnel (Bush Fire Brigade, Fire Brigade or Police). If it is apparent that lives will be endangered unless evacuation occurs immediately and the Nominated Supervisor/Director is unable to contact the Emergency Officer in Charge, the Nominated Supervisor/Director should make immediate arrangements to evacuate to a place of safety.

If the organised movement of staff and children is impossible;

- Direct staff and children to remain within the buildings;
- If time allows, block gutters, fill with water and hose down buildings;
- All windows and doors should be closed (BUT NOT LOCKED), block under doors to prevent smoke entry;
- Children should be assembled away from the part of the building that will be initially exposed to fire;
- When the fire has passed, children should leave the building in an orderly manner assembling away from the building and fire. Carry out a roll call;
- If it is safe to do so, attempts to extinguish any remaining fire may now be carried out.

4. BOMB THREATS

Telephone Threats

Procedures

If you receive a threat, **REMAIN CALM**. Try to complete as much of the form as possible, trying to keep the caller on the telephone for as long as possible. Note any background noises.

All of this information is vital for the Police and their investigations.

Procedures

1. On receipt of a bomb threat **IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY POLICE AND IF DIRECTED IMPLEMENT EVACUATION PROCEDURES.**
2. On evacuation, staff and children should only take their personal belongings that are in their immediate area and then proceed to the evacuation area.
3. After the evacuation, notify the Senior Co-ordinator.
4. The person who received the threat should complete as much of the Bomb Threat Report form as possible **AFTER EVACUATING**. Give this form to the Nominated Supervisor/Director and then the Police.
5. The Senior Officer of the **Emergency Services** is the only Authorised person to give the **“all clear”** for the return of staff and children to the Preschool.

5. SUSPICIOUS DEVICE RESPONSE

Suspicious devices may take the form of a suspect article, either found in the building or grounds, or an article being delivered by messenger or mail.

<p style="text-align: center;">SUSPICIOUS DEVICES SHOULD NEVER BE TOUCHED, TILTED OR TAMPERED WITH!!</p>

Procedure

1. The Nominated Supervisor/Director or delegated person should contact the Police as soon as possible, providing the following information:
 - exact location of the device
 - description of the device, if known exact location of Authorised Supervisor or person who can assist in the investigation on Police arrival:
2. The Nominated Supervisor/Director must assess the threat and make the decision to evacuate. Staff and children should evacuate the area or building to the evacuation area. The designated area should be one that affords safety in respect to the detonation of the device. This may be a different location to the normal evacuation area, dependant on the location of the threat.

3. The Nominated Supervisor/Director, if possible, should ensure that confidential documents or valuables are secured;
4. Ensure that all staff and children reach and remain in the evacuation area;
5. Place a responsible staff member at the entry point to the Preschool to prevent visitors or others approaching the suspected danger area until the arrival of the Police;
6. Where required the Nominated Supervisor/Director should accompany the Police to show the exact location of the device and to also assess that safety measures implemented have remained in place;
7. The Nominated Supervisor/Director and individual teaching staff should be prepared to assist the Police, if required to make a full search of buildings or classrooms for other suspected devices as long as staff: child ratios are followed.

6. LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

Where there has been an identified threat outside of the Preschool the Preschool will implement a Lock Down Procedure. This is to occur where the Preschool is not required to evacuate the building, but is required to protect the staff and children inside the building from an external threat.

When the threat is identified inform Nominated Supervisor and sound alarm:-

- Gather children to a safe area within the Preschool, usually this should be away from windows and doors.
- One staff member will be directed to lock all windows and doors of the Preschool.
- Staff to contact emergency services and await further instruction.

7. CHEMICALS, GAS AND EXPLOSIONS

Within the Preschool

Whenever there is a major escape of gas, chemicals or threat of explosion within the Preschool **immediate evacuation** from the building must be implemented.

Actions:

- Notify the Nominated Supervisor/Director immediately;
- Remain calm and keep the children as calm as possible
- Attempt to leave the building as long as you are completely certain the route is safe.
- If you are unsure of the safety of the exit, then stay where you are until assistance arrives.

Adjoining Facilities or Buildings

Where adjoining building, homes or facilities are affected, the Authorised Supervisor should act in accordance with the instruction of Emergency Services present, or order immediate evacuation where deemed necessary.

In some cases it may be necessary to keep staff and children within the building rather than evacuate them.

8. TRANSPORT OR INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

In the event of a transport or industrial accident always ensure that children and staff are safe. Assess the situation and take action accordingly.

Actions:

- If danger to children exists in Preschool evacuate immediately. If however children are safer within the Preschool keep them there;
- If roads are closed keep children at the Centre until parents are able to pick them up or inform the staff of their wishes.

9. NATURAL DISASTERS

9.1 Wind Storms

Warning of an impending windstorm may be received in time to allow children to go home before the emergency. However if warning time is insufficient to allow this or if high winds develop during opening hours without warning the following should be implemented:

- Direct children and staff to assemble inside building:
 - Stand against interior walls away from windows
 - Avoid rooms that will bear the full force of the wind
 - Close all windows and blinds/curtains on the windward side.
- Secure all loose objects in the open that may become missiles e.g. garbage bins;
- Close down any Centre utilities that may cause additional hazards, e.g. power, gas;
- Ensure all staff and children have taken shelter, conducting a roll call at the first appropriate time;
- The Director/Nominated Supervisor should notify the Senior Co-ordinator of action taken;
- Notify utility companies of any break or suspected break in lines;
- Keep children and staff at the Centre until it is safe to return to normal activities or to go home.

9.2 Earthquake

The effects of any earthquake vary depending on geographic location, ground type, intensity of the event and the construction of the buildings.

In the event of an earthquake the following procedures should be implemented:

Indoors

- If you are indoors, stay there. You could be hit by falling debris outside;
- Take cover under a door frame, table, bench or desk
- Keep away from windows.

Outdoors

- if you are outdoors, move away from buildings, high walls, electric power lines and dangling electrical wires;
- sit down;
- if you are near a large building, seek refuge under archways or doorways which could offer protection from falling debris.

When the Earthquake Stops

- immediately evacuate buildings, if safe to do so;
- assemble staff and children well clear of buildings, but not under trees;
- take the roll for all rooms and account for all;
- liaise with Emergency Services if possible.

If time permits and it is safe to do so, turn off heaters and other appliances prior to the evacuation.

If damage has occurred, turn off gas and electricity, if it is safe to do so.

Do not use telephones other than for emergencies. Telephone exchanges needed for rescue and medical services become overloaded.

10. SERIOUS INJURY / DEATH

Staff or children who witness a serious injury or death must receive immediate assistance and support (trauma counselling or crisis debriefing). By preference, this should occur on the same day as the incident or immediately the next day and must be provided by an experienced professional.

Actions:

- The Nominated Supervisor must be informed immediately;
- The Nominated Supervisor must put into place adequate support mechanisms for all those who require it (by contacting the Senior Co-ordinator and the relevant trauma/grief counsellor).

The Nominated Supervisor is required to refer to the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy for further reporting requirements.

11. VIOLENCE INTRUDER

To ensure the safety of staff and children, follow all instructions of the intruder. The safety of staff and children is paramount and nothing should be done to threaten that safety.

The Nominated Supervisor must be notified of the presence of the intruder as soon as it is safe to do so. **Never** endanger a staff member or children in doing this.

Try to observe and remember as much detail as possible for later police investigation.

12. HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

Actions:

- Staff and children not involved should be evacuated to a safe area if possible;
- The Nominated Supervisor must be notified of the situation as soon as it is safe to do so. **Never** endanger a staff member or children in doing this;
- The Nominated Supervisor or other staff must inform the Police;
- Follow all Police instructions and provide trauma counselling where required.

SIEGE / HOSTAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Date/...../..... Time Reported By

2. Exact Location of Hostage Incident

.....
.....

3. Number of Hostages

4. Name(s) of Hostage(s)

.....
.....

5. If Name(s) Unknown, Hostage(s) Details: Height

Sex

Age

Colouring

6. Number of Assailants

7. Notable Characteristics of Assailant(s)

.....

8. Number of Weapons

9. Description of Weapons

10. Mood of Assailant(s) eg calm, irrational, nervous

.....

11. Any Other Information

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Vandalism / break-in

Actions:

- Immediately inform the Nominated Supervisor
- The Nominated Supervisor must inform the Police;
- Do not touch anything nor let children into the area until Police have inspected the area and advised that it is safe to enter the area and to handle things. This may mean that the Centre opens late to families;
- The Nominated Supervisor must inform the Senior Co-ordinator.

14. CHILD LOST OR INJURED ON EXCURSION

Please refer to the “Excursion Policy” for conduct of excursions

Actions:

12.1 INJURY	12.2 LOST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give appropriate first aid treatment if injury is minor 	Conduct immediate search of area Contact Police or other emergency personnel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If injuries are major immediately contact Ambulance/Police (if required) • Contact the Nominated Supervisor • The Nominated Supervisor is to ensure any emergency information is provided to the staff member on the scene. • The Nominated Supervisor should contact the child’s parents and notify them of the details. 	Contact the Nominated Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more than one staff member is present, one to stay with the group and the other to remain with the patient 	The Nominated Supervisor should notify the child’s parents when necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible a staff member should go with the child to hospital (depending on the staff:child ratios) and ascertain the hospital the patient is taken to and inform the Centre. 	A staff member is to remain on site until relieved or directed to leave.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff member is to remain on site until relieved or directed to leave. 	Always ensure the safety of the group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always ensure the safety of the group. 	

15. TEMPERATURE EXTREMES

Heat

Transient periods of high temperatures will often occur during the summer months. The Centre should continue to operate without disruption to normal routines and children should not be sent home. The Centre is fully air-conditioned to decrease the chances of staff or children becoming affected by the heat.

Please refer to the 'Sun Protection Policy'.

Heat Stress

Heat stress is a serious condition that can lead to death if not treated. Symptoms include:

- * tiredness;
- * weakness;
- * visual disturbances;
- * headaches;
- * nausea;
- * muscle cramps;
- * breathlessness;
- * dizziness;
- * palpitations.

Prevention of Heat Stress

The following precautions should be taken to prevent heat stress in staff and children:

- * encourage staff and children to drink at least 2 litres of water per day (at least a glass of water every hour if inactive, or a glass of water every 1/2 hour if active) to avoid dehydration;
- * encourage the wearing of hats, the use of a 50+ sunscreen and protective clothing. Lightweight cotton, (closely woven) clothing provides protection from the sun and is cooler;
- * introduce the Summer Program so that outdoor activities are limited to the cooler parts of the day;
- * encourage children to remain in shaded areas during outdoor play periods;
- * enforce the "No hat – No Play" procedure;
- * as part of the regular maintenance program, ensure that blinds, fans, cooling and heating devices are working efficiently.

Cold

Period of extremely cold weather will also occur during the year. If the body temperature falls below a certain point, shivering will occur. Action should be taken to immediately warm the body. This can include exercise, wearing more clothing or moving the person to a warmer place.

16. MEDIA ATTENTION

Staff Authorised to Speak

No staff at the Centre are authorised to speak to the media, if they are approached for comment. All enquires should be referred to Council's Marketing and Events Manager. Inform the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person if you are approached by the media. The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will inform the Children's & Youth Services Manager and Marketing and Events Manager.

Unfavourable Attention

Actions:

- * inform the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person;
- * the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person should contact the Children's & Youth Services Manager and Marketing and Events Manager for advice;
- * the Nominated Supervisor should control "damage" through the Centre community via newsletters and parent meetings.

17. PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CRITICAL INCIDENTS

The effects of a critical incident on people can vary. They may be directly involved in the incident, they may be managing it or those who witness it. All will encounter different experiences. The following should be used as a guide in identifying those who may require assistance or support.

*** People Directly Exposed to the Incident**

Those who suffer intense trauma and experience either physical or psychological injuries.

*** Relatives and Friends**

Those who are grieving for the injured and affected, eg families, students and staff.

*** People with Previous Trauma or Grief**

Those who are not directly affected by the incident but who may be affected because of a previous incident or experience.

*** Helpers or Recovery Personnel**

Recovery personnel who are required to maintain functional efficiency during the incident and to cope with the psychological effects, eg staff, school counsellors, administrators and emergency service personnel.

*** The Community and People Indirectly Involved**

Those in the community affected but not directly involved, eg other parents, staff and students from neighbouring schools, those that could have been direct victims but were not due to chance, those for whom stress is triggered as a result of the incident.

18. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is essential for services to prepare for the roles and responsibilities of people before a critical incident occurs. Therefore services are to use the example below to develop a chart indicating who is responsible for managing different aspects of a critical incident.

Role / Title	Responsibilities	Person/s
Chief Emergency Officer/s	To make decisions and control Centre emergencies and evacuations	Nominated Authorised Supervisor or Certified Supervisor in charge Room Supervisors
Wardens	To ensure the area they control is completed evacuated in an emergency	All teaching staff
First Aid Officers	To administer first aid during the incident	Director Other staff with first aid certificates.

19. TIMEFRAME FOR ACTION

The successful management of critical incidents is dependant on the service taking appropriate action and providing support during and after the incident. Timeframes following a critical incident will vary depending on the circumstances.

The following is a guide to probable critical incident management at Council child Care services

Immediately - ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, arranging first aid if necessary; set up a recovery room or centre if necessary,

Within 24 hours - gather the facts;

- * where possible notify the time and place of debriefing to all relevant persons;
- * manage the media via Senior Co-ordinator;
- * keep staff, children and parents informed as appropriate;
- * arrange counselling and debriefing as necessary.
- * develop plans to restore normal functioning of the service

Within 48 - 72 hours

- * provide opportunities for staff and children to talk about the incident;
- * provide support for staff and helpers;
- * continue to debrief all relevant persons;
- * restore normal functioning and service delivery as soon as possible;
- * keep parents informed.
- * identify behavioural changes and the possibility of post traumatic stress disorder, refer to Child and Family Health Centre Counsellors for children, and Council's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for staff;

Within First Month

- * arrange a memorial service if appropriate;
- * encourage parents to participate in meeting to discuss children's welfare;
- * monitor progress of hospitalised staff or children;
- * monitor psychological and physical health of all helpers.

In the Short Term

- * continue to monitor staff and children for signs of post traumatic stress order disorder - refer for specialised treatment;
- * continue to provide support.

In the Longer Term

- * plan for and be sensitive to the disturbing influence of anniversaries, inquests and legal proceedings;
- * access specialist support whenever necessary

20. TELEPHONE THREATS RESPONSE CHECKLIST

RESPONSE BY RECEIVER OF CALL

- * Record the exact wording and nature of the threat.
- * Below are some examples of questions that you may have the opportunity to ask. These will help the police to investigate the incident.

GENERAL THREAT

What are you threatening to do?.....

Why are making this threat?.....

When do you intend to carry it out?.....

Do you intend to phone again?.....

What is your name?.....

Where are you?.....

What is your address?.....

BOMB THREAT

When is the bomb going to explode?.....

Where did you place the bomb?.....

When did you put it there?.....

What does the bomb look like?.....

What kind of bomb is it?.....

What will make the bomb explode?.....

Why did you place the bomb?.....

What is your name?.....

Where are you?.....

What is your address?.....

Please turn over and complete the details

IDENTIFYING / LOCATING THE CALLER

(Tick the appropriate boxes)

Caller's Voice

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow | <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracking voice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Old | <input type="checkbox"/> Soft | <input type="checkbox"/> Stuttering | <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young | <input type="checkbox"/> Loud | <input type="checkbox"/> Lipping | <input type="checkbox"/> Accented |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laughing | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy | <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive | <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well spoken | <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foul | <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded | <input type="checkbox"/> Message read by caller | |

Background Noises

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street noises | <input type="checkbox"/> House noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Office machinery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crockery | <input type="checkbox"/> Motor | <input type="checkbox"/> Factory machinery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voices | <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft | <input type="checkbox"/> Static |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PA system | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Fading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Muffled | <input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Long distance | |

Any other details.....