

Emergency Closure & Adverse Weather Policy

In the event of unforeseen circumstances including adverse weather conditions, it may be necessary to close the Nursery without prior notice.

There may be occasions when, due to unforeseen circumstances, Rainbow Corner Nursery School may be forced to close for a limited time.

Possible reasons for closure could be (but not limited to):

- Weather – heavy snow, flooding etc. resulting in staff not being able to get to work, access to site is not safe, or temperatures are prohibitively low within the nursery setting;
- Outbreak of illness leading to not enough staff being able to maintain the staff-child ratio within the nursery;
- Structural problem with building/garden/ surrounding area resulting in the nursery being unable to provide a safe and healthy environment for both children and staff;
- Outbreak of contagious disease leading to closure of the nursery to stop cross-contamination;
- Gas leak or power cut leading to lack of heat/light to the nursery building.

Bad Weather

In the event of heavy snowfall, which would make it hazardous for both staff and parents to travel or that we deem temperatures are simply far too low to safeguard children's welfare; the Nursery Manager will make the decision to close the nursery. If a large amount of schools within Portsmouth City Council are recommended to close due to safety reasons, we will also close.

If you wake up to heavy snowfall or heavy snowfall occurs before the start of the Nursery session the Nursery Manager and Staff will use **email** notification to inform you of the nursery closure. Please ensure you check your email before travelling to Nursery during inclement weather.

Should severe weather occur during a session, the staff will contact parents/carers by telephone and request they come and collect their child within the hour or as soon as feasibly/safely possible. If parents cannot be reached, then the emergency contacts from the registration form will be contacted. It is **VITAL** that correct contact numbers are kept up to date.

If severe weather continues the staff will make an assessment, based on local weather forecasts, whether to close the setting for an extended period. Parents would be informed by staff of such extended closures by email or telephone. Staff are advised not to make the journey to the Nursery if severe weather conditions make travel potentially hazardous.

If the setting can safely open in adverse weather conditions, a limited service may be offered due to limited staffing. *(It is important to remember that some members of staff may have to travel considerable distances and may be advised not to make the journey to the nursery in severe weather conditions. However, the setting will endeavour to have as many staff as possible at the setting when this situation occurs.)* The setting will work to ratios set out by Ofsted. The children will be entered into the setting on a first come first serve basis, until all ratios are met, at this point we will then have to turn away any more children arriving.

If the Nursery closes due to circumstances such as these which are beyond our control, fees will still be due for the session. In all circumstances and subject to availability, parents/carers may be offered an alternative session as soon as possible. This will only be if there are available spaces on other days.

Other reasons for emergency closure

Should there be a need to close the nursery prior to the session starting (due to unforeseen circumstances) the Manager and staff will endeavor to contact all parents as early as possible to advise them of the closure and give an idea of when the nursery will re-open. If staff are unable to contact all the parents/carers they will arrange for a notice to be displayed outside the premises or arrange for a representative to be at the premises at the time the setting is due to begin, to inform and explain the situation to parents/carers who turn up.

In the case of an emergency closure during a Nursery session, the staff will ensure the complete safety of the children either in the main building or follow the evacuation procedure and evacuate them all to the car park area located directly opposite the nursery entrance gate. Staff will contact parents/carers by telephone and request they come and collect their child within the hour. If parents cannot be reached, then the emergency contacts from the child's registration form will be contacted. It is **VITAL** that correct contact numbers are kept up to date. At least two members of staff will stay with the children until they have all been collected.

In the event of an evacuation, the agreed Evacuation policy will be followed. A staff member will fill an evacuation bag with the nursery mobile, register, pen and first aid kit.

If the Nursery closes due to circumstances such as these which are beyond our control, fees will still be due for the session. In some circumstances and subject to availability, parents/carers may be offered an alternative session. This will only be if there are available spaces on other days.

Virus epidemics – fees are payable in the event of closure due to epidemic. If government guidelines require self-isolation, we trust parents to adhere to advice and do not take responsibility if a parent ignores advice. If it is known that a child may be at risk of infection Rainbow Corner Nursery School has the right to exclude. Full fees will be payable.

* In a pandemic the nursery would be advised to close for an initial 2-3 weeks, with the advice then being reviewed. (It could be advised to stay closed)

* If we have reason to believe that any child is suffering from a notifiable disease we would inform OFSTED and act on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) www.hpa.org.uk .

Useful resources and websites

Health Protection Agency www.hpa.org.uk telephone no: 01372 0201 1700 Business Link: www.businesslink.gov.uk

This policy was reviewed on: 1st July 2024

By: Emma Fowles (Operations Manager)