

# Ramillies Hall Nursery



## Emergency Closure Policy

### Introduction

This policy covers situations where, due to circumstances beyond the control of the management, Nursery may be forced to close or to alter substantially normal arrangements for the care of children in attendance.

### Our Commitment

*Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Safety, Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in case of fire, or any other emergency.*

The Nursery will always try to stay open for all advertised session times but may be forced to close in the following circumstances. We aim to keep closures to a minimum.

- Certain extreme weather conditions, such as snow, ice, fog, floods which render extremely hazardous journeys by road and where it may be unsafe for children or staff to use or access the buildings.
- Fire
- Lack of essential utilities,, e.g. no water or heating
- The consultant for communicable disease, virus or serious illness control may close the nursery to restrict the spread of certain diseases / serious illnesses
- Government initiated holidays / closures e.g. additional bank holidays
- Acts of terrorism
- War
- Staff illness affecting so many members of staff that an acceptable staff to child ratio cannot be maintained (see supervision policy)
- A major incident
- The LEA or DFE may recommend closure or close the nursery due to any of the above

### Policy Statement

#### Making a decision to close the Nursery

- The Safety of children and staff must take priority in the decision to close the nursery and/or holiday club due to any of the above mentioned conditions
- We will keep the Nursery open if it is safe to do so, and if staffing ratios allow reorganising departments if necessary and appropriate
- The Nursery Manager will make enquiries into the current and forecasted weather conditions, using information from the media. The Estates Manager will advise the Nursery Manager on the local conditions, access to the school site and safety conditions for children, parents and staff.
- When there is a low ratio of staff to children, then a decision may have to be made to close the Nursery. A risk assessment will be carried out in the interests of children and staff safety
- The setting will try at all times to remain open where there are sufficient staff to ensure children are cared for safely and effectively This may mean temporary reorganisation of groupings and staffing.

**We will communicate using the following methods:-**

- A message via the Family app
- An email home if time allows
- A telephone call
- A message on the nursery answering machine
- A notice on the nursery gates

**Whenever we have to communicate with parents, we do so using the contact details we have been given on a child's personal record form. This information is input to Family. We update this if parents notify of any changes. It is very important that the nursery is kept up to date with any changes to contact telephone numbers or emergency contacts.**

**Snow conditions**

If a heavy snowfall occurs overnight, or is doing so in the early morning, it is important that parents establish that the nursery is going to be open before setting out where it is possible to do so. A decision will be taken at the earliest possible time and a message will be sent via the Family app.

**Re-opening**

Should the nursery need to close for any reason, parents are asked to check nursery communications to ensure the nursery will re-open before returning the following day.

- The decision to close is not made lightly but with consideration for safety of children, staff and parents
- If the nursery is closed due to unforeseen circumstances then fees will not be refunded.

**Information for Employees**

Staff living within reasonable walking distance of the Nursery will be expected to make every effort to get to work on occasions where the nursery will remain open. Staff will be informed via Family / What's App if the nursery is closing for any reason.

Where there is concern for travel arrangements of staff, the decision as to whether some staff should leave early in bad weather conditions will be taken by the Manager, Assistant Manager or Deputy in the manager's absence.

If staff are unable to attend due to adverse weather conditions, they must inform the nursery as early as possible.

If the nursery is closed due to unforeseen circumstances, then staff would continue to be paid where possible.

Date Written / reviewed	October 2023
Signed by manager	
Date due for review	October 2024