

## **Adverse Weather Policy**

### **Statement of intent**

It is the aim of Fennies Nurseries to ensure that our nurseries remain open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

Where possible closure of sites must be avoided in order to minimise service disruption to the children and families. If required Fennies Nurseries intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the nursery before the nursery day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the nursery.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the nursery during adverse weather conditions.
- Make clear the grounds for a nursery closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- Advise and inform staff and parents of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a nursery closure due to adverse weather conditions.

In the absence of the nursery manager, the deputy nursery manager will assume the responsibility of the nursery manager in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.

### **Nursery policies and procedures**

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following nursery policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Snow and Ice Risk Assessment
- First Aid Policy
- Staffing Policy

### **Remaining open in adverse weather conditions**

- When deciding whether the nursery will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment.
- If the nursery remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only, where applicable.
- The nursery manager will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

- All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.
- A notice will be erected to inform that vehicles and pedestrians entering the nursery grounds do so at their own risk.
- At the nursery manager's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the garden may be out-of-bounds to children and adults.
- All persons entering the nursery buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

### **Decision to close**

- The decision to close any nursery site will be made by the Chief Executive Officer.
- The Head of Operations or Regional Quality Manager will be consulted when making a decision about nursery closure.
- The nursery may be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:
  - Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
  - Staff numbers are insufficient for the nursery to be operated safely.
- In the event of nursery closure:
  - The nursery manager will inform staff and parents via text message and / or email
  - The Marketing Team will post an update on the nursery website and Facebook page..
  - The the person in charge, where applicable, will display 'closure' signs on the nursery's entrance gates.
- In the event of the nursery having to close during the day, parents will be contacted via text message, email or telephone, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the nursery.
- As per the contractual terms and conditions no refund of fees will be made, due to continued operational costs.
- A closure of the nursery during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

### **Health and safety**

- The nursery has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.
- The nursery manager will be liable if it is found that the nursery has been negligent in its responsibilities and has not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of children, staff, visitors and parents entering the nursery site.
- The nursery manager is responsible for ensuring safety on the nursery site, in accordance with the nursery's Health and Safety Policy.
- Staff, visitors and parents have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the nursery grounds.
- Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.
- If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter the nursery grounds and inform nursery manager so the safety can be reassessed.
- A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.
- Closing the nursery is a reasonable decision if children or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.
- When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

## **Limited staff numbers**

- During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.
- Staff members are expected to assess the availability of all public transport and consider the feasibility of walking to work, if they live relatively close and are fit and able to do so, in order to attend work.
- The nursery understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk.
- Staff members are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport, and fitness to walk when making their decision.
- Staff members are required to liaise with the nursery manager to discuss options of attending work, for example they may be able to work at another site closer to home.
- In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different age groups may be brought together to be cared for under the supervision of the available practitioners and support staff, in line with the child : staff ratios of the Early Year Foundation Stage and our Staffing Policy.
- The nursery will continue to strive to provide high-quality care and education in the given circumstances.

## **Attendance statistics (children)**

- Where the nursery is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.
- When a child cannot attend the nursery due to adverse weather conditions, the child will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence.
- If the nursery manager believes the child could have safely made it to nursery but did not attend, the child will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.
- Parents acting on the assumption that the nursery would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the nursery of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into nursery, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

## **Emergency procedures**

In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the nursery will follow their planned emergency procedures, for example the First Aid Policy.

Nursery Management teams must maintain:

- Information on where to find parent contact details.
- Staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies.
- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency.

All staff will be trained during the in-house induction programme to:

- Contact and liaise with emergency services.
- Provide first aid.
- Move children to a safe place.
- Calm and comfort children.
- Contact parents.
- Deal with any media interest.

## **Monitoring and review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Head of Operations, Regional Manager and nursery management team, and any necessary amendments will be made during the review. This policy will be reviewed annually.

*Internal use only*

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b>	<b>Date disseminated to staff</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<i>January 2019</i>			<i>January 2020</i>