



## Emergency Closure Policy

### Playhouse Pre-school

#### Broadwater

##### Statement of Intent

An emergency is an event which threatens to disrupt the normal running of the Pre-School. This includes fire, burglary, accidents, infectious diseases and adverse weather. This list is not exhaustive.

Emergencies may happen inside the Pre-School or outside it, during session times or outside hours. The key to coping with an emergency is good planning and preparedness. This procedure outlines the steps to be taken in case of emergency to ensure good communication and orderly conduct, so that the welfare of children, staff and other individuals is maintained.

In a real emergency, it may be necessary for the Manager to respond as they see fit and we recognise that this will be the case when dealing with real life, changing situations. However, this procedure gives a common approach which should make coping with an emergency easier.

##### Preparation

As the Pre-School room is rented from Longmeadow Primary School, we will always be affected by any school closure. We will follow the advice of the school in responding to an emergency or initiating pre-school closure based on an emergency. If the Pre-School initiates closure, the Manager will inform the Headteacher.

We prepare for emergencies by having an up to date fire and emergency evacuation procedure, through regular fire drills and by keeping records and contact lists up to date.

##### Action to take

In case of an emergency, the Headteacher will take overall charge and the Pre-School Manager will work closely with them.

The Pre-School contingency plan is as follows:

The priorities are

- the safety of children
- the safety of staff and other adults.
- minimise damage to buildings
- getting back to normal as soon as possible

The Headteacher will decide whether the school buildings (including the Pre-School) should be evacuated. The Headteacher or Admin Officer is responsible for calling the emergency services. As part of the Pre-School Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Pre-School staff should also be familiar with the process for calling the emergency services themselves. For example, if a fire is discovered in the Pre-School, they should initiate calling the emergency services as well as sounding the fire alarm and evacuating the children.

If the decision to close the school is taken early in the morning, the Headteacher will call the Pre-School Manager, by 7.30 am. The closure of both the school and Pre-School will be

announced on local radio stations. The information will also be added to our and the school's websites/social media platforms.

All staff should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone, as the usual telephone service may be disrupted. If the mobile network is down, we will use the website (if there is electricity) and local radio to communicate with parents.

The school are responsible for locating and turning off water, gas and electricity as necessary.

If parents must be called to collect their children, children will be looked after safely by staff until they can be contacted. Depending on the emergency, this may be in the Pre-School room, it may be in the school hall or other school room or it may be outside. If parents cannot be contacted, the Uncollected Child Policy will be followed.

Telephoning parents to ask them to collect their children will be the joint responsibility of the Manager and the Deputy Manager. The Manager is responsible for agreeing the division of phone calls with the Deputy, based on known availability. For example, if there is an emergency closure on a Wednesday morning and there are 30 children present, the Management team will know which 15 parents they should be ringing. If the Manager is not normally available on a Wednesday morning, the detailed list will show who this task has been delegated to e.g. Room Leader. The list must be updated each time a child changes sessions and when there are staff changes.

### **Infectious diseases**

We ask parents to inform a member of staff if their child has any infectious illness, so that we can display a sign to inform parents, staff and visitors that we have had a case of that infection or illness in pre-school. This allows other parents to be on the lookout for the symptoms in their child. Healthy children, with no symptoms, even if they have travelled to a region where there is an outbreak of a disease, should not be kept away from the pre-school.

Children who are unwell with an infectious disease should NOT be at Pre-School and they should NOT return until the risk of passing on the infection has passed. If a child displays the symptoms of infectious diseases, the parents should be contacted to take the child home and to seek medical advice. They should not return to the setting until they are symptom free.

We will follow the guidance outlined in 'The Guidance on Infection Control In Schools and Other Childcare Settings - Health Protection Agency' regarding all infectious diseases. Parents/carers will be informed when their child can return to preschool, following the guidance.

Where there is a risk of an epidemic or pandemic in the community, we will at all times follow the official government health guidelines, including closing the Pre-School if necessary to prevent the spread of infection. If the decision is taken to close the Pre-School, it will be taken by the Manager in conjunction with the appropriate health authorities and the Headteacher of Longmeadow Primary School. It will take effect from the end of the current working day and there is no need to send children home early unless they are displaying symptoms.

When we are informed that a disease is notifiable, we will advise the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) of any confirmed cases in our setting by telephoning 0300 123 1231.

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This must then be confirmed in writing to The National Business unit, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or by e-mail to [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

If the Pre-School is forced to close because of an emergency during the week in which a head count (to determine Free Entitlement) is carried out, we will contact the School Funding Post Point, CH0323, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor New Block, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF to discuss alternative head count arrangements.

### **Charging**

If the Pre-School is forced to close because of an emergency, fees will not be refunded for closures of up to a week (5 Pre-School days) after this period, the Management Team will meet to review the situation and to assess how long the closure might continue. This does not imply that fees will be refunded for closures that are longer than a week.

This policy was agreed by the staff of Playhouse Pre-School Broadwater.

Adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015 and will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025 by Z. Munford