

## ***Unforeseen Closure Policy***

Under exceptional circumstances, the Pre-School may be forced to close. An exceptional circumstance is defined as something which has happened beyond our normal level of control such as: accidental damage or vandalism to the setting making it unfit for purpose; failure in supply of services (water, sewerage, electricity and gas); advice from Health Officials or other agencies; inadequate adult/child ratio due to illness. Other circumstances may also include extreme or adverse weather conditions such as snow, flood or storm.

The Pre-School may also be forced to close if a critical incident arises. A critical incident is defined as: a fatal or serious incident or accident involving a child, practitioner or any other person in the setting; evacuation due to fire, threat of terrorism or intrusion; damage or threat of damage to the building making it unfit for purpose.

### **Statement of Intent**

Blakeney Pre-school will take the decision to close if the risk to staff and children is deemed sufficient to warrant it. We will ensure that parents and staff are given as much notice as possible in the event of a closure.

Blakeney Pre-school will also generally close if Blakeney primary school closes.

### **Aims**

- To be able to quickly identify and respond to any exceptional circumstances or critical incidents that may affect the playgroup.
- To have in place an effective method of contacting parents and staff as quickly as possible regarding an unexpected closure.
- To have a clearly defined procedure for staff pay and session refunds in the event of an unexpected closure.

### **In order to fulfil these aims**

- In order to assess whether a closure is necessary, Blakeney Pre-school must take the following into account:
  - The requirements of OfSTED and our insurers
  - The number of children expected at the setting
  - The number of appropriately qualified staff available
  - The age and specific need of each child expected in
  - Our ability to safeguard the children in our care in the event of a critical incident
  - The physical environment of our setting (risk assessment)
  - The advice of other professionals, Government Agencies or the County Council.
- *Unexpected closure before a session due to adverse weather*

In the event of closure due to adverse weather conditions, the Pre-School Leader will contact the management team. The play leaders will contact parents to inform them that the session is not taking place due to adverse weather conditions. A message will be posted on the website and on the Pre-school Face book page. If Blakeney School closes due to adverse weather condition –Blakeney pre-school also closes. Text messages will also be sent out.

- *Unexpected closure before a session due to other causes*

On discovering that a scheduled session is not able to run, the following procedure will start:

1. The first member of staff on site will inform the Pre-School Leader and management team. If necessary, the emergency services may also be contacted.
2. The first member of staff will stay at the site **if safe to do so** to advise any families that arrive that the premises are closed and display a sign if appropriate.
3. The Pre-School Leader will be responsible for contacting all staff members and families.
4. The registered person will be responsible, where appropriate, for informing OfSTED and the insurance company and for contacting the service provider and arranging any repairs or maintenance as necessary.
6. After the incident has been resolved any interested parties such as parents, practitioners, committee members, the insurance company and/or OfSTED will be informed in writing by the registered person.
7. A written report will be kept in the Incidents book.

- *Unexpected closure during a session*

On discovering that a scheduled session cannot continue to run, the following procedure will start:

1. If necessary, children will be evacuated to a place of safety as per the evacuation plan.
2. Parents will be telephoned and told to collect their children from an agreed location as soon as practicable.

- *Staff pay*

When a decision is taken to close Blakeney Pre-school at short notice and through no fault of the staff, staff will usually be paid for the sessions that they were due to work. Staff will, however, be expected to use their time at home constructively to update and catch-up on any paperwork that they have pending. The Pre-School Leader may also choose to provide staff with additional work to do from home whilst they wait for the Pre-School to reopen.

If after a risk assessment, it is the Pre-School Leader's intention to keep Blakeney Pre-school open but staff choose not to come in - thus forcing the Pre-School to close because of poor adult/child ratios - these staff will not be paid for the sessions that they have missed.

- *Session refunds*

Sessions missed due to the unforeseen closure of Blakeney Pre-school will be refunded to parents.