

## Emergency Closure Policy

At Bell House Nursery we have a very committed team of staff. In an emergency, we may not be able to open the nursery due to unforeseen circumstances.

The decision to close the nursery would be made in extreme circumstances including any health and safety issues which affect the wellbeing of the staff and children.

The management will make the decision to close the nursery in the event of:

- The building is unusable through accidental or malicious damage
- Flooding
- The breakdown of the heating system
- When the building is unusable due to required maintenance work. Where possible we will endeavour to negotiate scheduled work to be carried out during times of closure
- When an outbreak of illness within Bell House Nursery requires closure in line with Health Security Agency (HSA) and Ofsted guidelines
- When illness levels within the staff body mean it is impossible to maintain the correct ratios of suitable adults to children
- Adverse weather conditions
- Coronavirus outbreak or guidance on closure due to the government guidelines on the pandemic

If any of the above or a similar incident should happen, we will telephone, email, or contact parents via our Facebook page to ensure constant communication throughout the evacuation process. This will be done as soon as possible to give parents the opportunity to make alternative arrangements and we will keep parents informed of the situation on an hourly basis, either via a phone call, email or information posted on the website or our Facebook page.

### **Poor Weather Conditions**

In circumstances the Nursery Manager will discuss possible alterations to opening/closing times. Many of Bell House Nursery staff live outside of Godalming which will greatly impact the safe running of the nurseries should they be unable to get to work. We take the view that if we cannot guarantee the safety of the children, due to insufficient trained staff who know the nurseries routines and the children being left in their care, we will be forced to close the nursery. Should this difficult decision be made, parents will be given as much notice as possible.

- If snow falls heavily during the day, we will contact parents requesting they collect their children early (at a time to be decided).
- Parents unable to collect early: these children will remain at the nursery with the members of staff who live within walking distance of the nursery until their usual collection time.

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/careers may be offered an alternative session. This will only be if there are available spaces on other days.

\* 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)

\* In the event of a global pandemic such as Coronavirus - we will be guided by the government on staying open and if it is safe to do so.

\* If we have reason to believe that any child is suffering from a notifiable disease, we will inform OFSTED and act on any advice given by the UK Health and Security Agency. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency>

### **Useful resources and websites**

Health Security Agency <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency> telephone no: 020 7654 8000

We will contact parents by email to ensure there is consistency of communication between the staff and the parents. We will also ask parents to check the website for more information regarding the nursery opening hours.

**Reviewed by Clare Hayes and Amelia Pullen**

**Reviewed in March 2023**

**Next Review Date March 2024**