

Rainbow Pre-school
Rainbow Pre-school Spirit



Adverse Weather Policy and Procedure

Statement of Intent

At Rainbow Pre-school we have an adverse weather policy in place to ensure our pre-schools are prepared for all weather conditions that might affect the running and safety of the setting such as floods, snow and heatwaves.

If any of these incidents impact on the ability of the setting to open or operate, we will follow direction from Wordsworth Primary School, and contact parents via Tapestry. Ideally before 8am. Parents are advised to check both Tapestry and Wordsworth Primary School website for updates. In the instance of any threats of adverse weather during operational hours we may not take children outdoors where we judge that weather conditions make it unsafe to do so.

Flood

In the case of a flood our first priority will be the safety of children, staff and visitors, and we will liaise with Wordsworth Primary School and take direction from the emergency services. We will inform parents as soon as reasonably possible via Tapestry and telephone to enable all children to be safely collected.

Snow or other severe weather

In the case of snow, or another severe weather conditions such as dense fog, as soon as we are aware it is likely to have an impact during the session, the manager will take the decision as to whether to close the setting. This decision will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team. In the event of a planned closure during the session, we will contact all parents via Tapestry and telephone to arrange for collection of their child.

In the event of staff shortages due to snow or other adverse weather we will contact all available off duty staff and may group the children differently until they are able to arrive. If we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements after all avenues are explored we will contact Ofsted to inform them of this issue. If we feel the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised then we may take the decision to close the pre-school.

Heat wave

During prolonged periods of outside temperature's rising above 30 degrees celsius, we will reduce the times the children spend outside, and ensure children have access to plenty of fresh drinking water and wear hats and sun cream factor 30 plus at all times when outside. Children must arrive with sun cream on, children staying all day must have an all-day sun protection on. Staff will only apply sun cream if a child has a severe skin condition/allergy.

Rainbow Pre-school recognises that staff may face difficulties attending their place of work and returning home during periods of adverse weather conditions such as heavy snow falls, flooding,

or other adverse weather conditions which may result in journeys to work being extremely hazardous. However, whilst Rainbow Pre-school is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its staff, it must ensure that disruption caused to its services remains minimal.

Where an employee experiences substantial difficulty in attending work due to adverse weather conditions, they should notify their respective line manager or other senior member of staff immediately to explain the circumstances.

Adverse weather conditions and staff safety

Responsibilities of Staff

- Staff should not put themselves at unnecessary or inordinate risk when attempting to attend work
- It is the responsibility of the staff member to make every effort to attend for duty at their normal place of work, in accordance with their contract of employment. This includes adapting their means of travel if necessary, or using a combination of travel options, even if this results in arriving late for work. It should be noted that where additional expense is incurred as a result of using different travel methods these expenses cannot be reimbursed by Rainbow Pre-school.
- In the event of adverse weather conditions staff will take all reasonable steps to report his or her inability to attend work to their manager as soon as is practicably possible. This should be in line with the particular department's normal arrangements for reporting sickness absence or other unanticipated absence and this will apply for each day that the member of staff is unable to attend work. Please note that failure to comply with reporting arrangements may amount to unauthorised absence.
- In the event that a member of staff cannot attend work due to adverse weather, by agreement with their manager, any lost time will be treated in accordance with the options laid out in section 4 below. One or a combination of these options may be applied on each day of adverse weather conditions.
- If a member of staff has made all reasonable efforts to travel to their place of work but has failed due to adverse weather conditions or disruptions to public transport, upon agreement with the line manager, and subject to operational needs, the manager may agree one of the following options to account for time lost:

Options

- Working from home (if practicable).
- Making up the time/hours lost (usually within one month). This is dependent on contracted hours.
- Taking unpaid leave.
- Or apply a combination of the above options.

Adverse weather conditions and Forest School

Responsibilities

Rainbow Pre-school Southampton Limited has a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the safety of their employees, by carrying out risk assessments to assess the risks of activities and to put measures in place to control these risks and to inform the employees about these measures.

Rainbow Pre-school Forest School leaders will carry out prior risk assessments to ensure all reasonable steps have been put in place to reduce hazards to a minimum when carrying out off site Forest School activities. However all staff, students, parent volunteers and visitors, along with children, must be made aware that their own personal safety and the safety of others will depend on the individuals themselves.

The greatest risk to be considered when carrying out activities outdoors is the weather. The weather can change from minute to minute and there is always the chance that the weather can change. Severe weather and extreme weather conditions can have a detrimental effect on health and safety.

Procedures

The weather should not be a barrier to providing sessions. Light rain, a breeze and 2-3 centimetres of snow all bring exciting learning opportunities to a pre-school session. Staff, volunteers and children should all be suitably dressed in warm clothing, waterproof trousers and jackets, coats, scarfs, gloves, or sun hats and be wearing sturdy footwear i.e. wellington boots or walking boots.

The Forest School leader is responsible for researching the local weather conditions on the morning of a Forest School visit.

Depending on the locations being used, there will be impact on the suitability of the weather and adverse weather conditions;

Allotment; the impact of heavy rain will make the site slippery, this coupled with the uneven ground may require the session to be rescheduled. High winds could result in falling branches etc. therefore strong winds measuring more than 5 or above on the Beaufort Scale will require the session to be rescheduled. Electric storms will also require the session to be rescheduled

The group will congregate in the site shed to await transport back to pre-school. The Forest School leader will contact the Company Director/Pre-school Manager and advice of the situation and remain in constant contact until the group arrive back at the pre-school base. Whilst awaiting transport back the Forest School leader will ensure everyone is kept warm with a hot chocolate drink and by keeping active. In warmer weather cold drinks and snacks will be provided.

On return to the pre-school a written log of events will be made and reviewed during the team debriefing session.

During periods of extreme circumstances i.e. Covid-19, for reasons of health & safety Forest School sessions at the Allotment maybe suspended for a prolonged period of time.

This policy was adopted at a meeting held at Rainbow Pre-school in September 2021

Signed on behalf of Rainbow Pre-school

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Policy review date: September 2022