

Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup - Procedure

Response Procedure NO 4 – Adverse weather

1. Introduction

The last few winters have caused schools and pre-schools to close due to adverse weather conditions, especially snow.

Our provider agreement with Derbyshire County Council states:

11.49 Where a closure day occurs due to Provider illness, severe weather, staff training or accommodation issues, the Local Authority will allow funding to be retained for two days and the Provider is not required to offer alternative sessions to children.

However, where closure exceeds two days, the Provider should offer alternative sessions for all affected children as soon as possible within the same term. Where Providers are unable to offer alternative sessions they **must** inform the Local Authority of the missed sessions on day three and funding may be reclaimed.

GEP's priority is to ensure that our pre-school is open and operational wherever possible. We expect our staff to make every effort to get to work (whilst not putting their personal health and safety, or that of others, at risk) and we are always grateful for their efforts to do so.

The decision to remain open or to close will take into account the safety of the pre-school employees, the children and their families, the current weather conditions, the forecast for the period of the session and the plans of the local primary schools.

2. Preparedness

The following preparation actions should be carried out in the Autumn term to ensure that the above procedure can be implemented:

- The **parents** are:
 1. Emailed this policy so that they are aware of the procedure,
 2. Asked to share their contact details with other families to enable parents to make independent childcare arrangements should the pre-school be closed.
- The **staff** are asked to:
 1. Assess the safest route/method for reaching the pre-school in adverse weather
 - If this is by vehicle, ensure that they and their vehicles are best prepared for adverse weather (including equipment and possibly by pre-placing their vehicles on major roads)
 - If this is by public transport, ensure that they stay informed about any reduced or changed services.
 2. Staff should make every effort to have relevant work to complete at home. (If the pre-school is open but a member of staff cannot attend, payment for work at home is not automatic

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but is assessed on a case by case basis. In this instance, staff should provide proof that they have completed said relevant work).

3. If the decision has been made to close, staff will be paid for the session, subject to funding not being withdrawn.

3. Decision for closure

The decision is made by the Supervisor together with the Chair of the management committee. If required, the Supervisor will contact committee members within the village to assess the pavilion status (including car park, paths and steps).

The pre-school will close and be unable to receive children for the day, if any of the following conditions occur:

- The pre-school staff cannot get into work and therefore the correct ratios of adults to children cannot be maintained.
- The Pavilion area is assessed prior to the session and found to be unsafe
- During a session if the Supervisor assesses the weather to be worsening. At this time the Supervisor will request parents to collect their children early. Once parents start to arrive any employee facing particular difficulties getting home should be allowed to leave.

4. Communicating decisions

When adverse weather threatens, the following procedure applies:

- The Supervisor will ensure that staff and parents are aware of the decision, whether to open or to close, by asking Grindleford Primary School to send out a mobile text alert on the pre-school's behalf. Any parent who has not signed up for the text alert should be contacted by telephone (this may also apply to families who have recently started whose details have not yet been added to the system).
- In a situation where the school and pre-school have been closed for a day, the Supervisor should liaise with Grindleford Primary school about decisions for the following day, and subsequently update pre-school parents
- The pre-school will ensure that the pre-school contacts list is regularly updated with contact details for staff and families who have given their approval.

5. If the pre-school closes

- Supervisor to record in the pre-school diary:
 - Reason for decision e.g. unable to meet adult:child ratio
 - Who made the decision and at what time
 - Whether Grindleford Primary School was closed
 - How and when the parents were notified
 - If open, number of adults and number of children in setting
 - Any other relevant information (e.g. comments from parents, any house-keeping issues with clearance of the snow from the Pavilion)

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- The Committee organises and coordinates a volunteer work party to clear the Pavilion area of snow (when feasible); this clearance should be coordinated with the Playing Fields Committee
- The parents are encouraged to communicate between each other and coordinate independent and informal childcare for parents who must attend their work. Parents are advised that this is a voluntary arrangement which is the responsibility of parents not the pre-school, it is not within the remit of the pre-school or covered by pre-school insurance and does not occur in the Pavilion

This procedure was adopted at a meeting of Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup.

Held on:

Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the committee:

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory:

All staff, volunteers and committee members will sign to indicate they have read, understood and agreed with the above policy.