

39. Emergency Closure Policy

Version number	Dates produced and approved	Reason for production and revision	Author	Locations	Proposed next review date
V1.0	Jan 2018	Good practice to have a clear policy for when Pre-school cannot run.	K Coupe	Dropbox.com	2020
V2.0	29 Apr 2019	Reviewed and updated re website update	K Coupe	Dropbox.com Website	Apr 2021
V3.0	23 Sept 2019	Inclusion of information on password protected USB	K Coupe J Dyer	Dropbox.com Website	Sept 2021
V4.0	30 Mar 2020	Updated to include "forced closure" instigated by the Government	K Coupe	Dropbox.com Website	Mar 2022
V5.0	15 Dec 20	Updated re closure due to Coronavirus Pandemic	K Coupe	Dropbox.com Website	Dec 2022
V6.0	26 Nov 22	Review & update. Inclusion of "Associated Policies & Procedures" section re Safeguarding Audit section 175/157	J Dyer	Drop box Website	Nov 2023
V7.0	March 2024	Reviewed and updated	J Dyer	Dropbox Website	March 2025

Statement of Intent

North Nibley Pre-school staff and committee will endeavour to keep the Pre-school open unless it becomes necessary to close due to an emergency. Under the arrangements which govern pre-school we must operate to set guidelines.

An emergency is an event which threatens to disrupt the normal running of the Pre-school. This includes fire, burglary, accidents, no heating, no electricity, no water, an outbreak of an infectious disease, severe weather conditions, the Village Hall becoming unsafe or lack of services therein, or an unforeseen circumstance. [NB: this list is not exhaustive].

In a real emergency, it may be necessary for the person in charge to respond as they see fit, and we recognise that this will be the case when dealing with real life-changing situations. However, this policy gives a common approach which should make coping with the need to close the Pre-school easier. North Nibley Pre-school has a separate Fire Procedure and fire safety is contained within its Health and Safety Policy.

If, for any session, the following cannot be met, we will be unable to operate the Pre-school for that session and will be forced to close. The Pre-school will remain closed until the problem has been resolved.

North Nibley Pre-school will close when:

- We do not have enough members of staff to legally comply with the adult to child ratios.
- Services have been disconnected, ie. there is no water or electricity or failure of heating – meaning the temperature in the Village Hall is not acceptable. The minimum temperature in the workplace should be 16 Degrees Celsius. Conversely, the Pre-school will minimise high or maximum temperatures within Pre-school by providing ventilation, shade, drinking water and flexibility with uniform.
- There are any other health and safety issues, which make the building and/or immediate surroundings unsafe for children/adults (eg. as the result of severe weather conditions).
- Forced closure by the Government during a time of “crisis” or due to an incident occurring in close proximity to the setting¹.
- Due to our semi-rural location, occasional power cuts can be experienced which can affect our service. In such circumstances, and where there are no other health and safety issues, we will implement the following procedures:
 - flasks of hot water will be brought in by staff/volunteers (where prior notice has been given);
 - running cold water and appropriate hand wash or wet-wipes (fragrance free) will be used;
 - disposable plates, bowls and cups will be used for snacks;
 - battery operated light source will be used in the Pre-school’s store cupboard; and
 - where room temperature is affected (ie. heating), we will follow the guidelines as per ‘The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992’ and ‘The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999’.

Emergency staffing shortfall

In the event that we do not have enough appropriately trained adults to legally run the Pre-school session, we will follow the points set out below to try and resolve the situation:

- Call in another paid member of staff (ie. bank staff).
- Work through the Committee contact list to ask for someone to come in and help.
- If the above not possible, then Committee members or parent/carers will be asked to help by asking for volunteers to take their children home, thus bringing the adult to child ratios back to within legal requirement. Those who take their child/children home, will be offered an alternative session at a later date to compensate.

Closure of the Pre-school

If it is deemed necessary to close the Pre-school, either during a session or before a session commences, the Setting Support Officer and Play Leader or Deputy Playleader, or nominated person, will:

- Arrange for all parents/carers to be contacted by telephone, by text or by email². This will be done in advance wherever possible. If this is not possible, then a member of the Committee or staff will remain at the premises until it has been confirmed that all parents/carers have been informed.
- If parents/carers have been called to collect their children, children will be looked after safely by staff until they can be collected. Depending on the emergency, this may be in the Pre-school or outside the Pre-school (eg. the fire assembly point). If another safe place is needed, then we will assemble at North Nibley C of E Primary School, this will be clearly

¹ Notification received via the Government’s Emergency Alerts on setting mobile phone (www.gov.uk/alerts)

identified to parents/carers. Additional staff or Committee members may be required to assist.

- A notice of closure will be placed prominently outside the Pre-school by a member of staff or the Committee.
- North Nibley Pre-school's website and Facebook page will be updated as soon as practical.
- The Play Leader and Setting Support Officer/Chairperson will take responsibility for ensuring all relevant authorities are informed of the closure (eg. Health Protection Agency, Ofsted, Local Authority etc) and the emergency services, if necessary.
- All staff and Committee members should have a copy of these procedures and the fire procedure and be familiar with its contents.
- The contact details of all parents/carers will be kept by the Play Leader and Setting Support Officer securely off-site.
- Parents/carers will be kept up to date by text, by email, via the website³. Individual needs will be taken into account.
- If the Pre-school is forced to close because of an emergency during the week in which Gloucestershire County Council's Parent Declaration Forms (to determine Free Entitlement) are to be submitted, then we will contact the Gloucestershire Early Years Team to discuss alternative arrangements.

NB: North Nibley Pre-school is unable to run at all without a parent-run Committee.

Charging

Re: Emergency

If North Nibley Pre-school is forced to close because of an emergency, fees will not be refunded for closures of up to a week (ie. 5 Pre-school days). After this period, the Committee will meet to review the situation (including impact on staff, ie. salaries) and to assess how long the closure might continue. This does not imply that fees will be refunded for closures longer than a week.

Re: Pandemic (As declared by (WHO) The World Health Organization

If North Nibley Pre-school is forced to close due to a member of staff having to self-isolate or a pandemic and, as such, we do not have enough qualified members of staff to comply with the legal adult to child ratio, then parents of fee paying children will be asked to pay £1.25 for every hour that their child attends the setting each week. This will enable the committee to continue to pay overhead costs and salaries of those staff who are not claiming sick pay (only the individual self-isolating is entitlement to statutory sick pay).

Legal framework

- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999

Further guidance

Can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk or www.hse.gov.uk⁴, or other governmental websites. <https://www.who.int>

³ www.northnibleypreschool.co.uk

⁴ www.hse.gov.uk/temperature/faq.htm

Associated Policies and Procedures

- No 18 : Employment and staffing
- No 26 : Payment of children's invoices