

Adverse Weather Policy

Deadline for policy to be reviewed by:	Reviewed and shared on:	Manager/director initials:
Sep 2027	Sep 2026	LC

Bee in the Woods Kindergarten takes place outdoors; in woodland and on the beach, all year round. We embrace the changing seasons, ensuring the children are dressed accordingly for the different weather conditions. Please see our recommended clothing policy for further information.

However in certain extreme weather conditions, such as high winds, our settings at Foredown Woods, Stanmer Park or the Beach may become unsafe for use. We have an adverse weather policy in place to ensure our kindergartens are prepared for all weather conditions that might affect the running of the kindergartens such as high winds, thunderstorms, floods, snow, extreme cold and heat waves.

The safety of our children, families and staff is of the utmost importance to us. We will therefore endeavour to remain open where possible during adverse conditions that affect operational running, but this will heavily depend upon a number of circumstances.

If extreme adverse conditions are predicted and we are unable to find an alternative venue, we may make the decision to close our Kindergarten the following day. In this situation, we will contact parents via Family or telephone.

Weather that may affect our day

High Winds

As our setting within the woods cannot be used in high winds due to risk of falling branches. The direction of the winds affect the woodland in different ways, so a dynamic assessment of the woods will be made on the morning of the session before families arrive. Families will then be contacted on Family if a decision has been made to relocate the session elsewhere.

Thunderstorms

Unfortunately the risk posed by thunderstorms does mean that our sessions cannot continue outdoors and in these instances we will relocate to an indoor venue where possible.



Further to storms occurring, our site may be deemed unsafe due to any damage of the trees. This may see our site remain out of action until work can be carried out to make the area safe. Safety sweeps/dynamic risk assessments of the site are conducted prior to all sessions taking place and any trees/branches that are uprooted, or dead wood, hanging precariously will be dealt with before our sessions can continue. Bee in the Woods work with Brighton and Hove Council and the local Ranger in such instances. The Manager is responsible for informing them if they notice damage to trees which may need to be felled to make the site safe.

Flood

In the case of a flood we will follow our Incident procedure to enable all children and staff to be safe and continuity of care to be planned for.

Snow or extreme cold

Snow and ice can be very exciting for the children & we like to be able to make these times fun and incorporate learning opportunities. As always, we ask that children attending when snow is forecast are sent in appropriate clothing with suitable outerwear & footwear and that all items are name-labelled.

If high snowfall, or another severe weather condition such as extreme cold (temperatures below -1*) are threatened during a kindergarten day then the manager will take the decision as to whether to close. This decision will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team. Access to the site and the availability of public transport will also be assessed. In the event of a planned closure during the kindergarten day, we will contact all parents to arrange for collection of their child.

If we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements due to access to the site, we will take the decision to close the kindergartens.

During regular colder spells, our provision continues as normal with additional attention to children's wellbeing and safety. We ask families to revisit our Sickness Policy and Healthy Lunchbox Policy, particularly in relation to adverse weather. It is not appropriate for children who are unwell, or still recovering from illness, to attend on very cold or wet days. Being outdoors in low temperatures places extra demand on the body; children need to be fully recovered before returning.

To help children stay warm and comfortable, it is essential that they have enough nutritious food throughout the day. Please provide a range of healthy, energy-rich foods and snacks,



ideally including something warm. A warm sugary drink, such as hot chocolate, can also help maintain energy levels. We will offer warm apple juice during the day.

Heatwaves and Extreme Heat

As an outdoor kindergarten, we recognise that prolonged periods of extreme heat can present significant risks to children and staff, including dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. While outdoor learning can continue safely in warm weather with appropriate adaptations, there may be occasions when temperatures reach levels that make it unsafe to remain outdoors for extended periods.

During periods of hot weather, we will take additional precautions including:

- Providing regular access to drinking water and encouraging children to drink frequently.
- Scheduling quieter activities and avoiding strenuous physical exertion during the hottest parts of the day.
- Making maximum use of shaded areas, shelters, water play and cooling activities.
- Encouraging children and staff to wear loose, lightweight clothing and sun hats.
- Applying sunscreen in accordance with our Sun Safety Policy.
- Closely monitoring children and staff for signs of heat-related illness, including headaches, dizziness, lethargy, irritability, nausea, confusion or unusually quiet behaviour.

Where temperatures are forecast to exceed 30°C, the Management Team will undertake enhanced dynamic risk assessments throughout the day, considering factors such as air temperature, humidity, shade availability, children's ages and needs and the ability to maintain safe and comfortable conditions.

Where the Met Office issues an Amber or Red Extreme Heat Warning, or where site temperatures consistently exceed levels considered safe for young children, we may take additional measures including closing earlier or closing the setting entirely if safe operation cannot be maintained.

As with all adverse weather conditions, decisions will be made with the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff as the primary consideration. Families will be informed of any changes to opening arrangements via Family as soon as possible.



Adverse Weather Plan and Procedures

If the Kindergarten remains open during adverse conditions, we will aim to operate as normal for as long as possible. However, we may make the decision to open later or close earlier, depending on: how many staff members are able to work/safely travel to and from work, the woodland being accessible & safe, and the temperature being suitable for the children to play in for the duration of the day.

Staff are trained to be vigilant to the signs of hyperthermia and extreme discomfort through yearly outdoor specific First Aid training. If a child becomes disengaged in the day's activities, becomes quiet, lethargic, withdrawn or expresses distress, we will support the child to warm up with movement, hot drinks, hand warmers and extra layers. If symptoms, discomfort and distress persist after support has been given, we will call parents to collect early.

Alternative Venues - Portslade, Stanmer Park & our Beach site make the most of local community spaces during times of adverse weather, including trips to the local libraries, museums, community centres and scout huts. Availability of these venues is variable and although we do our utmost to secure an alternative venue during inclement weather, if a suitable venue is not available we may have to make the difficult decision to close.

Our Venues;

Stanmer Park:

[The Earthship](#) - This is a beautiful, yet small space, that we are occasionally lucky enough to use. We would head to the Earthship (if available) on days when we have a smaller group.
[St Mary Magdalen's Church Hall](#) - Our local church hall. Able to accommodate the whole group (if available)

Portslade:

[Vale Park Scout Hut](#) - The Scout Hut has kindly accommodated us for years. Being positioned in Vale Park, allows us to take children outside to the park for some of the day (if the weather allows).

Rottingdean Beach:

[Saltdean Lido](#) - The Lido has a number of rooms available as an alternative if the weather deems it unsafe to head to the beach.

Hove Beach:

[King Alfred Leisure Centre](#) - Positioned close to where our beach group meet, the leisure centre has a variety of spaces available for our little Bee's on wild weather days.



January First Week of Term

During January, alternative venues have been booked for the first week of term to allow a gentle re-introduction to the elements. Individual settings will be in touch to communicate the January Indoor plans.

Weather changes during the day

When weather is forecast to change during the day, we will often make parents aware of our plan a day ahead and will dynamically risk assess during the day. We will keep staff & parents updated via Famly throughout the day. It should be noted that we cannot remain open unless the minimum correct adult:child ratios can be met. Therefore, if only a certain number of staff members are able to work on the day, we will only be able to accept children on a first come, first serve basis that day. We will aim to contact other staff members from our wider team, but we are not able to go over the required ratio number.

If the Kindergarten is open as normal and we experience adverse conditions during the day, the Manager & Director will have the final judgement on whether the setting can open for the day & for how long. We will take into consideration any local school closures, along with the local area forecast, as well as following any relevant Local Authority and/or government instruction/guidelines. We will also monitor the public transport services closely. The safety of everyone accessing our sites is the most important thing and if we feel parents need to start collecting their children earlier than usual in order to get home safely, phone calls will be made to all parents to inform them of our decision.

Staff members will be sent home in order of distance or personal circumstances, but only as and when ratios within the group allow it. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the Management team.

For most incidences of weather, we aim to operate as normal - enjoying the seasons and the different learning opportunities the weather can bring. However, we ask that all parents understand the need for safety when faced with extreme inclement weather. We suggest that when these situations are forecast, staff & parents pay close attention to the local travel advice and give themselves ample time to make their way to and from the setting, and that they travel as safely as possible. We will do our best to ensure that our approaches/pathways are cleared & gritted to assist accessibility.

Please note that there will be no refunds offered for any closures or alterations to opening hours for the reasons detailed above. We do not take the decision to close any of our settings lightly & would only ever do so under extreme unavoidable conditions and unavailability of our alternative venues.