

**Policy in the case of Extreme Weather Conditions**

**Or Emergency Closure**

**This policy was up-dated and adopted:** April 2025

Little Acorns Kindergarten is committed to provide uninterrupted care, during term time, throughout the academic year. We aim to provide this service in all weather conditions including periods when there may be snow and ice if the safety of the children, parents and staff are not compromised.

The safety of staff and children is the priority of the kindergarten and as snow and ice presents health and safety risks the following advice is given: -

* Walk, do not run
* Wear footwear with a non-slip sole, for example, wellington boots
* Try where possible to leave hands free to aid balance and or to minimise the effects of a fall.
* Do not drive to the Kindergarten.
* Have a contract in place to have pathways salted in collaboration with the other schools on campus.

In the case of extreme weather conditions or other situations forcing closure the Manager will consider the following before closing the kindergarten: -

* Safety of the children, families and staff travelling to the Kindergarten and during the session.
* Accessibility and ability for staff to travel to work.
* School closure can mean shortage of staff as many have children in either the John Hampden or Wendover CofE Junior School.
* Accessibility to the building.
* If we have a minimum of 3 members of staff, we will open and accept children on the basis for funded children initially:-
	+ 1 staff member – 5 under 3
	+ 1 staff member – 8 over 3
	+ 1 staff member – first come first served, numbers in accordance with ratio

If we do close it will be advertised on the Kindergarten website, [www.littleacornswendover.org](http://www.littleacornswendover.org). Buckinghamshire County Council Schools web site and calls will be made to individual families giving as much warning as possible.

During closure we will still have many outgoings to be paid ie. Rent for premises, staffing. We therefore specify that NO refunds will be given.

**Other Unforeseen Circumstances**

If the Kindergarten is forced to close due to any other circumstances a claim will be made to our insurance company. Once and if reimbursement is received payments over and above funding will then be passed onto the families affected.

**Pandemic Closure & Procedure**

Little Acorns will continue to run as normal, dependent on availability of staff and in coordination with government and Buckinghamshire County Council advice, if a pandemic is confirmed.

We will decide to have additional helpers to cover staff absence if necessary and parents will be invited to be on a ‘Parental Emergency List’ that we can call on at short notice.

* WE will remain open as long as The Manager or Deputy is present and at least 1 other level 3 equivalent member of staff and 3 helpers.
* The Manager and Deputy will decide whether the Kindergarten closes, unless prior direction is received from the Government or Buckinghamshire County Council.
* Dependent on circumstances and as a starting point, if the government or Buckinghamshire County Council close us for longer than 3 days we will reimburse half the fees paid. If LAK make the decision to close half of all fees paid will be refunded. Unfortunately, we still have to pay rent and other overheads even if closed.
* If we do need to close we will announce closure on the Kindergarten website, [www.littleacornswendover.org](http://www.littleacornswendover.org), Buckinghamshire Schools Closure website, announce it on Mix 96.
* If a family chooses to withhold their child from any sessions and we are open full payment will still be expected.
* Hygiene will be increased as follows: -
	+ Tissues will be immediately disposed after being used once and boxes of tissues placed around the room.
	+ Surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned prior to food preparation and end of the day.
	+ Hands will be washed prior to contact with food, eating utensils, drinking cups will only be used once and then washed (we may have to withdraw free access to water and provide it by requested from the children).
	+ Children and adults will be encouraged to put their hands or a tissue over their mouths when sneezing or coughing and then to wash their hands or use a sanitising gel.
* Any child falling ill during a session will be kept apart from the other children and parent/carers contacted to collect immediately. If that is not possible the parent must arrange for an alternative to collect and advise us who that would be and confirm the password.
* If a member of staff falls ill during a session they will be sent home immediately. If this causes problems in relation to staff ratios we will try to contact an alternative member of staff or helper. If all else fails we may have to contact parents to collect their children earlier.
* WE WILL REQUEST THAT PARENTS DO NOT BRING THEIR CHILD IF THEY ARE SHOWING ANY RELEVANT SYMPTOMS. THESE WILL BE ADVERTISED WITHIN THE PRESCHOOL AND INFORMATION SENT HOME.