35. Exceptional Closure Policy

Policy Statement

Links Childcare is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of children and staff attending our crèche at all times. This policy addresses the situation where employees are unable to work, or the service has to close due to circumstances outside of our control. At all times safety considerations will be paramount.

Measures to be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of children:

- We will adhere to government advice and any weather warnings.
- We will undertake a detailed risk assessment to identify whether there are any hazards for children in relation to travel, building, and compliance with Regulations.
- Depending on the outcome of our Risk Assessment we will consider whether it is necessary to close the crèche.
- We will implement a Communications Plan to ensure that all staff and parents are kept informed as events unfold and to ensure there is no unnecessary travel or risks taken.
- We have a procedure in place to contact parents at short notice.

Communication to Parents

Once a decision has been taken to close the crèche parents will be informed as soon as possible so they can make alternative arrangements. Parents and staff will be kept informed as events unfold to ensure there is no unnecessary travel when possible. Parents and staff will be informed if this is a matter of consideration and will be informed of how we will contact them in the event that the crèche has to close i.e. by phone text message.

Review and Evaluation - After each event:

The Management and staff of the centre will review and evaluate each event after it has taken place to ensure that all safety measures and procedures were conducted and contributed to the safety, health and welfare of the children, staff and parents attending. Outcomes of these reviews will be recorded and policies and procedures will be updated as appropriate.

Billing policy for exceptional closure

The Crèche will close if it is deemed for any reason unsafe / impossible to open, i.e. adverse weather or extreme staff shortages – full fees will be payable.

Emergency closure after a session has started

1. In the event of an emergency closure after the session has started, parents and carers will be informed by telephone that they are required to collect their child as soon as possible.
2. If the closure is due to sickness, the children and all staff who are unaffected will remain on the premises until all children can be collected.
3. If the closure is due to an emergency which requires the building to be evacuated, the children will be safely evacuated according to the current Fire Drill procedures. Contact information for all the children will be taken out of the building alongside the daily register.
4. The children will then be taken to a place of safety until such time as they can all be collected by parents/designated person. Parents will be contacted by the Manager. All staff will remain with the children during this time.

**Review**

Management, in consultation with staff, monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy yearly, or after each event or as required.