



# ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS POLICY

## Record of updates

Adverse Weather Conditions Policy	
Date created:	January 2012
Adopted by Trustees:	
Revision Due:	January 2013
Revision Due:	January 2014
Revision Due:	January 2016
Revision Due:	January 2017
Revision Due:	January 2019
Revision Due:	January 2020
Revision Due:	January 2021
Revision Due	December 2021
Revision Due:	December 2022
Revision Due:	December 2023

DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL		
Issue No.	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1	January 2012	Original draft policy
2	January 2013	Additional wording
3	January 2014	No amendment
4	January 2016	Reference made to individual centres and Deputy CEO in decision making
5	February 2018	Staff guidance updated
6	January 2019	Reference made to CSLs in decision making
7	February 2020	Centre list amended
8	December 2020	Youth service added
9	February 2022	School effectiveness added
10	June 2022	Added sun safety section
11	December 2023	Added UKHSA information re: cold weather and flooding

# **The RISE Children's Centres**

## **Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions**

RISE will endeavour to remain open unless deemed unsafe to do so. The decision to close a centre will be made by the Chief Executive Officer. A Centre will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. Insufficient staff can access and remain at a Centre.
2. Conditions on site are dangerous.
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.
4. The RISE Trust is advised by the Wiltshire School Effectiveness team/ our commissioner re: closures.

Next steps if a centre is to close:

1. In the event of extreme weather, the centres will be closed if the adjacent school is closed:

The Oaks and RISE Preschool – St. Paul's Primary School

Spring Rise – Frogwell Primary School

Calne CC – Priestley Primary School

RWB CC – Longleaze Primary School

2. The closures will be recorded on the Centre's website and via Heart FM radio station (report online at <https://tinyurl.com/WiltsSchools>), including their website detailing closed settings. Password is required - CEO and Alison Wiltshire have access. Facebook and Instagram will be used where appropriate.

3. The Centre will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the Centre during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However, parents are expected to check the website and/or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is clear that a closure is a possibility. We will also endeavour to contact preschool parents via text/ phone.

The preschool appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the Centre to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed. The Centre recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where the clear majority of children can get into the Centre.

If a Centre must close *during* the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents will be contacted by phone either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.

In the event of snow, some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children, and visitors will be made aware that pathways (even where cleared) do remain dangerous. Signs will be displayed indicating which paths to use and highlight areas of danger.

Before and after Centre opening hours, parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the Centre playground and pathways.

In icy conditions, staff will salt all designated pathways. Where necessary, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

It must be understood by staff, that the car park will not be cleared of ice and snow and that due care must be taken at all times.

In the event that there is localised flooding managers will assess the situation in their locality and liaise with the CEO re: closure or working from home.

In severe winds, centres' external areas will be checked for debris, trees, fences and walls risk assessed. During adverse weather conditions parents are kindly requested not to bring their children to the Centre until the start of the school day at 8.40am. In the Chief Executive's absence, the Children's Service Lead on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.

Detached youth outreach sessions will be only happen if safe to do so. In the event of schools closures the Youth Service Lead will make a decision based on location and staff availability. Youth workers may change session times to avoid weather that is predicted. During heatwaves, detached youth teams will be encouraged to carry water, wear sunscreen and take regular breaks within shade.

### **Staff Arrangements:**

Once the decision has been made to close one or more of the Children's Centres, Line Managers will be responsible for relaying this information to their relevant teams, ensuring all the team know to check the website and local radio. All managers should ensure they have appropriate staff personal contact details and will text/ use WhatsApp if there is additional information to share. Staff will be required to reply to their Line Managers by text/ WhatsApp as proof of receipt.

All preschool parents should be notified as far in advance as possible when the CEO has taken the decision to close any provision. This will be done using the website, Heart FM, and phone calls/ texts (if staff are on site or the preschool manager uses a RISE Trust mobile). All other staff are personally responsible for cancelling appointments with clients and professionals. The RISE Trust will endeavour, to keep centres open at all normal opening times at least for information purposes and if this is not possible then emergency contact numbers for services will be on the website (eg. Health Visitors, Foodbanks, Emergency Duty Social Care). The Oaks phone will whenever possible be kept open to answer redirected phone calls.

Youth workers will not be asked to work if conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel. The Youth Service Lead will ensure social media highlights cancellation of session.

Staff will be asked to work from home on closure days, if possible. Staff must ensure they are contactable during the closure day/s including OR workers being available on their RISE mobile. They must also contact their line manager daily to be updated on the situation. The CEO will use her discretion in relation to how centres will function and for how long they are open each day, being mindful of staff safety.

### **Sun safety**

Children cannot control their body temperature as efficiently as adults during hot weather because they do not sweat as much and so can be at risk of ill-health from heat.

[Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-during-heatwaves-for-teachers-and-professionals)  
- GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

### **Protecting children outdoors**

During periods of high temperature, the following steps should be taken:

- children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are in excess of 30°C
- encourage children playing outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible
- children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sunhats with wide brims to avoid sunburn
- use sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection) to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes
- provide children with plenty of water (such as water from a cold tap) and encourage them to drink more than usual when conditions are hot
- avoid going outside during the hottest part of the day, 11am-3pm.

### **Protecting children indoors**

During periods of high temperature, the following steps should be taken:

- open windows as early as possible in the morning before children arrive, or preferably overnight to allow stored heat to escape from the building – it is important to check insurance conditions and the need for security if windows are to be left open overnight
- almost close windows when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep the heat out while allowing adequate ventilation
- use outdoor sun awnings if available, or close indoor blinds or curtains, but do not let them block window ventilation
- keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum
- switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers when not in use – equipment should not be left in 'standby mode' as this generates heat
- if possible, use those classrooms or other spaces which are less likely to overheat, and adjust the layout of teaching spaces to avoid direct sunlight on children
- oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C – at temperatures above 35°C fans may not prevent heat-related illness and may worsen dehydration
- if necessary, consider rearranging school start, finish, and play times to avoid teaching during very hot conditions
- encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of cool water

Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. The main risk from heat is dehydration (not having enough water in the

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body). If sensible precautions are taken children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions, however, teachers, assistants, school nurses and all child carers should look out for signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

### **Heat stress**

Children suffering from heat stress may seem out of character or show signs of discomfort and irritability (including those listed below for heat exhaustion). These signs will worsen with physical activity and if left untreated can lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

### **Heat exhaustion**

Symptoms of heat exhaustion vary but include one or more of the following:

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- hot, red, and dry skin
- confusion

### **Heatstroke**

When the body is exposed to very high temperatures, the mechanism that controls body temperature may stop working. Heatstroke can develop if heat stress or heat exhaustion is left untreated, but it can also occur suddenly and without warning.

Symptoms of heatstroke may include:

- high body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F) is a major sign of heatstroke
- red, hot skin and sweating that then suddenly stops
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- confusion/lack of co-ordination
- fits
- loss of consciousness

## UKHSA Advice for Supporting vulnerable people before and during cold weather.

### Looking after Children and Early Years – For Teachers and Professionals

#### Main Messages

Among children and young people, those aged 5 years and under are at greatest risk of harm from adverse cold weather, especially if they have underlying health conditions. This guidance therefore focuses predominantly on children in this younger age group, although it also provides general advice on the care of older children. Where a child has complex health conditions or clinical vulnerability, parents or carers should seek advice from their clinical team and share with relevant staff. Further information about supporting children with medical conditions is available from the DfE.

#### Health risks from Cold

Exposure to adverse cold weather can affect children and young people in a number of ways. Among other health problems, it can increase the risks of:

- respiratory infections
- skin conditions, such as eczema
- mental health problems

Children aged 5 years and under are particularly vulnerable to the effects of adverse cold weather. However, the effects of cold, especially in combination with other environmental conditions including damp, can affect children of all ages and particularly those with underlying medical conditions.

#### Supporting Children - Prepared for Cold Weather

Reducing the risk of infections before and during cold weather spells is important for protecting children's health. Settings can support this by:

- promoting [vaccination for flu for children](#) to help reduce risks from respiratory infections during the winter and encouraging parents and carers to keep their children up to date with [routine immunisations](#)
- reinforcing public health messages around [hand and respiratory hygiene](#) and [taking other steps to prevent the spread of infections](#) during the winter

- providing advice on appropriate clothing for adverse cold weather, ice or snow
- providing parents with [information on children attending school or early years settings when ill](#)

Adverse cold weather may cause challenges for parents or carers at home. For further advice on these support measures or about how to stay warm and well during cold weather, please consult:

- UKHSA guidance on [keeping warm and well](#)
- the Met Office guidance on [how to get your home and property winter ready](#) and [keeping your home warm this winter](#)
- GOV.UK guidance on [help for households](#)
- the NHS England information on [how to stay well in winter](#)

## Supporting Children – During Cold Weather

Settings can support children and young people during adverse cold weather episodes by:

- encouraging physical activity where possible to help keep children and young people warm where appropriate, while reinforcing advice on appropriate activities and clothing to wear during adverse cold weather, ice and/or snow
- providing information to children, young people and their parents or carers on important logistical changes during severe weather episodes such as changes to key bus routes
- completing risk assessments and providing advice on reducing the risk of injury in icy and/or snowy conditions, and outdoor play in these conditions where risk assessments indicate this is possible
- ensuring sufficient supply of hot meals and snacks while children are in settings
- continuing to reinforce [public health messages around hand and respiratory hygiene](#) to reduce the risks from infections during the winter
- continuing to signpost to parents and carers of vulnerable children to key sources of support (for example heating and other energy efficiency measures) during cold weather periods, where appropriate

### Additional advice on caring for babies in cold weather

Staff in nurseries and other early years settings should be mindful that, while it is important to ensure babies are appropriately protected from cold, they should also not get too hot. Overheating can increase the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Babies can overheat because of too much bedding or clothing, or because the room is too hot. More information about [how to reduce the risk of babies overheating](#) is available from NHS England



UKHSA Advice - Early  
Year Settings.pdf