Emergency closure policy
Early Years and Childcare Service
Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service have written this document to help you write an emergency closure policy for your setting. This document is for reference only and you must adapt it to reflect the service your setting offers. To download guidance on other policies and procedures go to [www.surreycc.gov.uk/eyopractioners](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/eyopractioners) or ask your improvement advisor or childminding advisor to email you a copy.

Whenever we say parents in this document we mean parents and carers and whenever we say child we mean children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND)).

Please note that these guidance notes are not a substitute for any local arrangements for emergency closure protocols you already have in place.

**Aim**

How do you tell all staff and parents about the procedure they have to follow if there is an emergency? The welfare of all the children on your site should be your first priority.

**Points to consider**

- When do you implement the emergency closure of your setting? You may want to give examples:
  - power failure
  - fire damage
  - flooding
  - snow
  - ice
  - heatwave
  - high levels of sickness among staff or children
  - flu pandemic
  - no heating or water in your building
  - a bereavement
  - if there are contractual implications, for example a change to your terms and conditions.
  - emergency services incident

- Do staff have different responsibilities and roles in each of these situations and how do you make staff aware of these?

- Do you have an emergency bag or folder? This bag may contain contact details, water, first aid kit, details of other venues you could use or keys for another venue. Where is the bag stored, who makes sure it is always full and up to date and who collects it in the event of an emergency closure? How do you collect the bag if your building is closed?

- What are your procedures if there is an outbreak of sickness at your setting? Include which agencies you need to contact. If you have reason to believe that any child is suffering from a
notifyable disease you should tell Ofsted and act on any advice given by the Health Protection Agency (HPA). To find a list of notifiable diseases go to the HPA website [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk) and search for notifiable diseases.

- How often do you remind staff of their roles and these procedures? Do you display them?
- Do you write something about emergency closures in staff contracts and how many days they get paid?
- Do you practice these procedures? How do you review their effectiveness?
- How do you make sure you can contact parents when you are not in your building or able to access your building?
- How do you make sure that parents are made aware of this policy?
- Who is responsible for contacting relevant services, for example fire service, gas, water, electric? How do you contact relevant services? Do you clearly display their contact numbers?
- How do you tell other relevant bodies that you are closed, for example, Ofsted and Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service including your improvement advisor or childminding advisor and the early years free entitlement team? Who does this?
- Do you record the emergency closure, for example in an incident book?
- Do you have designated routes out of your building? What are they? You could include a sketch or a map in your policy.
- How do you make staff aware of these routes?
- Where are your main meeting points and group assembly points?
- How do you make sure that the children’s needs are being met and that your procedures keep the children safe?

**Think about the following:**

- Will staff still be paid when you are closed?
- If applicable, will you still pay rent?
- Who will tell your regular or non regular suppliers?
- Will you tell your cleaner and who will do this?

**Reopening after an emergency closure**

- How are parents and staff told that your building has reopened? Who will do this?
- Will you give parents refunds for missed sessions due to your emergency closure? How do you make parents aware of your policy for refunds?
Useful resources and websites

Public Health England
For information about the most common infectious diseases and the recommended periods for which children should be kept away from your setting, download ‘Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings’ by visiting the HPA website and searching for guidance on infection control.

020 7654 8000

Business Link
Use the online crisis management and business continuity planning guide to identify potential risks, prepare for emergencies and test how your business is likely to cope in a disaster. Find the guide by clicking on grow your business and then managing risk.

The Environment Agency
Weather reports – television news or online
See emergency evacuation procedure guidance.