Emergency/Temporary Closure Policy

The safety of the children and staff is the prime consideration in relation to any decision to close Little Steps Day Care during usual session times. All attempts will be made to avoid closure where possible and we will endeavour to be open for the usual session times without disruption. Where disruption is unavoidable, all involved in the nursery will be kept informed and the nursery will reopen at the earliest possible opportunity.

In the event that the nursery has to close at times other than scheduled in the normal opening hours and dates, the policy will be applied to ensure that all involved in the nursery have a clear understanding of the procedures which will take place.

An emergency/temporary closure will be implemented in the following circumstances:

- When the building is unusable through accidental or malicious damage
- When the building is unusable due to required maintenance work.
- When there is significant disruption to the utilities supplying the building, such as a power cut or water supply.
- When an outbreak of illness within the nursery community requires closure in line with Ofsted guidelines.
- When illness levels within the staff body mean it is impossible to maintain the correct ratios of suitable adults to children and all other options of Bank and Cover staff have been exhausted.
- When an emergency occurs during the nursery session which requires the nursery to close early.
- When adverse weather conditions make attendance impossible or dangerous (see Adverse/Severe Weather Policy)

In the event of any of the above incidents occurring which requires the nursery to not open on a given day, the manager/deputy manager will make contact with the families affected for that session in advance of the day where possible. A notification through Famly will be sent at the earliest possibility. Due to the number of families registered at the setting, it will not be possible to inform families via a phone call. If the decision to close the nursery has to be made on the morning of closure, the manager/deputy manager will notify all families affected as soon as is practically possible. This may mean some families are already on their way to the setting and Little Steps Day Care Ltd understands the inconvenience this may cause, however the safety of the children, families and staff is our highest priority and where these safety standards cannot be ensured, the decision to close will have to be made.

Parents will be informed when the nursery will reopen according to the circumstances of the closure. In cases such as high staff sickness levels, a predicted reopen date will be given and all families will be kept up to date.

Policy Reviewed: 12/02/2025

Emergency closure after a session has started

•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.

•If the closure is due to sickness, the staff who are unaffected will remain on the premises until all children can be collected.

•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 evacuation procedures. Contact information for all the children will be taken out of the building alongside the daily register. Once the building is evacuated, the manager/deputy manager will ensure the relevant authorities/emergency services are called. The children will then be taken to a place of safety until such time as they can all be collected by parents and carers. The manager/deputy manager will contact the parents and carers of the children present. All staff will remain with the children during this time.

If there have been significant disruption to our utilities, the setting may be forced to close due to this preventing us from providing the required level of care for the children, for example a cut in water supply will impact drinking water and the use of toilets; a power cut will impact our ability to heat the building and provide adequate lighting. If our supply is interrupted, we will contact the suppliers for an estimated time to be reconnected. We will wait for two hours and monitor the reconnection time. If, after the two hours there is still no sign of reconnection, we will be forced to close. If there is a cut to our power supply for longer than 2 hours, this will mean our emergency lighting system, that is linked to our fire alarms, will not hold enough power in the case of an emergency and the building will be deemed unsafe by law

Please be advised, Nursery fees will not be refunded if the decision to close is due to a situations outside of Little Steps Day Care Ltd's control.