

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Nursery Emergency Closure Policy

Mission Statement

"You are precious in my eyes" - Isaiah 43

- *Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Nursery is committed to the widest and fullest education of all pupils in a partnership between home, nursery, parish and community.*
- *Our nursery aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure, valued and respect each other.*
- *Our nursery aims to be a positive force within the Catholic Church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospels*

Our Lady Star of the Sea nursery will endeavour to be open as stated in our admissions policy without disruption. Where disruption is unavoidable, all service users will be informed and the setting will reopen at the earliest possible opportunity.

Aim

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

Methods

The emergency 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. Where possible we will endeavour to negotiate scheduled work to be carried out during times of closure.
- When an outbreak of illness within the setting requires closure in line with Health Protection Agency (HPA) and Ofsted guidelines.
- When illness levels within the staff body mean it is impossible to maintain the correct ratios of suitable adults to children.
- Bomb alert/ terror attack.
- Due to fire damage/flooding.
- Extreme weather conditions e.g. snow/ice.

In the event of any of the above incidents occurring which requires the setting not to open on a given session, the nursery manager will make contact with the families affected in advance of the day where practicable. Where this is not possible, a member of the senior management will remain in the building until such time as it can be determined that all the affected families have been made aware of the situation.

The manager will be responsible for informing the relevant authorities of the unexpected closure. Other parties who may need to be informed are Ofsted, Health Protection Agency, Local Health Authority, Health and Safety Executive and RIDDOR, depending on the circumstances of the closure. Parents will be informed about how they can find out when the setting will reopen and other relevant information

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according to the circumstances of the closure. This may include asking parents and carers to nominate a preferred contact number/email address, or, holding a special meeting to keep parents informed.

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/group text that they are required to collect their child as soon as possible. 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.

If the closure requires the building to be evacuated the children will be evacuated according to the current fire drill procedures. Contact information of all the children will be taken out of the building along with a copy of the daily registers. Once the building has been evacuated, the manager/deputy will ensure the relevant authorities/emergency services are called.

The children will be taken to a place of safety - **Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Social Centre on St Albans Road. St. Annes** until such time they can be collected by parents and carers. The nursery manager/deputy will contact the parents of children present. All staff will remain with the children during this time.

Funding / Fees

Where the setting has to close in an emergency, the management committee/manager will arrange for any funding from the local authority to be repaid if required and for any refunds to be made to any families who pay fees. This will usually be made by way of a reduction from the next terms fees, but may be in the form of a direct payment if circumstances require.

Staff

There are times when the weather is so severe, e.g. very heavy snowfall, that it is considered that the health and safety of staff are best served by closing the nursery.

Heavy overnight snow

Staff must contact the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager as soon as is practicable if they foresee difficulties in getting to nursery before the start of the day. In the event of insufficient staff, (child/staff ratio's as stipulated in the EYFS (2023) the Supervisor must contact the Chair of Committee to advise, and to inform them of the intention to close the nursery because of insufficient staff.

Parents will be asked to wait in nursery until a decision has been reached regarding closure. All nursery staff will be expected to make reasonable efforts to get to nursery where they will be able to perform other duties. Staff remaining at home are instructed to report their situation to the Nursery Manager and then carry out nursery related work at home.

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Continuing severe weather

When exceptionally severe weather conditions are forecast for the whole authority and the Police are recommending that only essential journeys should be made, the Chief Education Officer may make a decision to close all Schools for pupils for the following day. On such advice nursery will also close. Local radio will be contacted and staff and parents are asked to adhere to any announcements.

- Radio Lancashire
(103.9, 95.5 & 104.5 FM)
- Greatest Hits Radio (96.5 FM)

Designated person responsible: B. Draper **Date:** 5th February 2024

Date of policy review: Spring 2025