



Adverse Weather Policy

The Preschool will make every effort to remain open whenever possible, provided it is safe to do so.

The decision to close the Preschool will be made by Preschool Management in consultation with the Preschool Committee. The Preschool will aim to give parents as much notice as possible. Parents will be notified by 7:30am on the day of closure, at the latest, via Learning Journals or a message from the Preschool mobile phone in the first instance, and then via the Preschool's social media pages and Devon County Council (DCC) updates.

Where possible, updates may also be provided through email or other communication channels used by the Preschool.

If the Preschool is open but road conditions are difficult, parents should notify the Preschool if they are likely to be late or absent. The Preschool fully appreciates that, during adverse weather conditions, children may arrive later than usual or may be unable to attend.

Decisions regarding closure, delayed opening, restricted opening, or early collection will be based on dynamic risk assessments that consider the safety of children, staff, families, visitors, and the Preschool premises.

The Preschool will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Insufficient staff are able to safely travel to the Preschool to maintain statutory staff-to-child ratios. Every effort will be made to contact bank staff or suitably qualified committee members to maintain ratios where possible and avoid closure. In these circumstances, the Preschool will also inform Ofsted and the Early Years Team where required.
- Conditions on the Preschool site are dangerous.
- Conditions are considered, or are anticipated to become, too hazardous for safe travel.
- There is no hot water available.
- Essential services are unavailable, including electricity, water supply, heating, or cooling, and the premises cannot be operated safely.

Delayed Opening

The Preschool may decide to delay opening if adverse weather conditions are expected to improve later in the day. Parents will be informed of any delayed opening arrangements as soon as possible using the Preschool's usual communication methods.

Snow and Icy Conditions

In the event of anticipated heavy snowfall or dangerous icy conditions, Lymestone Preschool will carefully monitor weather forecasts. If it is deemed unsafe for staff and children to travel, or if the Preschool grounds are considered unsafe, a decision may be made to partially close or fully close the Preschool for the day.

In the event of heavy snowfall during the Preschool day:

- Management will decide whether it is necessary to close the Preschool and will notify parents via Learning Journals or a message from the Preschool mobile phone, requesting that they collect their child as soon as possible.
- Staff who live furthest from the Preschool may be permitted to leave early, provided statutory staff-to-child ratios can be maintained.
- The Preschool will maintain statutory staff-to-child ratios until all children have been collected.
- If a parent requests to collect their child early due to adverse weather conditions, and a decision to close has not yet been made, these requests will be accommodated wherever possible.

Heatwave

In the event of a heatwave, the Preschool will continuously assess the conditions and determine how much time children can safely spend outdoors.

All children will be required to wear appropriate clothing and have suitable sun protection (please refer to the Preschool's Sun Care Policy). Additional shaded areas will be provided where possible, and staff will encourage children and adults to drink water regularly to remain hydrated.

Children will be offered opportunities to cool down indoors, and the Preschool will utilise its air conditioning unit where available.

The Preschool may close if indoor temperatures become unsafe, essential cooling measures are unavailable, or there is insufficient access to drinking water.

Strong Winds

In the event of strong winds, the Preschool will endeavour to remain open where it is safe to do so.

Risk assessments will be carried out to ensure that outdoor equipment, structures, and trees do not pose a danger to children, staff, or visitors. Any movable equipment will be secured or stored indoors where possible.

If wind conditions are considered severe enough to make access to the building unsafe, or if official weather warnings advise against being outdoors, the Preschool may close.

Flooding

In the event of flooding, the Preschool will not remain open if doing so would compromise the safety of children, staff, or families.

If heavy rainfall and a significant risk of flooding are forecast, the Preschool will assess the risks and determine whether it is safe to open.

In the unlikely event that flooding occurs while the Preschool is operating, parents and carers will be contacted immediately and asked to collect their child as soon as possible.

Staff Shortages

Certain weather conditions may prevent members of the Preschool team from travelling safely to work.

In these circumstances, the Preschool will contact other suitably qualified staff members to determine whether cover can be provided.

If sufficient staff cannot attend to maintain statutory staff-to-child ratios, the Preschool may be required to close for the day or operate with a reduced number of places.

Where attendance must be restricted, priority places may be offered to vulnerable children and families with exceptional circumstances.

This policy was approved by Lympstone Preschool Committee, and will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance or operational requirements change.

Reviewed: 08/06/2026