



Adverse Weather Policy

Acorns2Oaks Ltd (A2O) have an adverse weather policy in place to ensure we are prepared for adverse weather such as snow or heatwaves. We will make every effort to keep the Centres open in adverse weather and to cause as little disruption as possible. All our staff are expected to attempt to get to work, regardless of how they normally travel to the nursery. However, in cases of very extreme weather conditions the Centre's may not be able to operate to the usual opening times.

All decisions will be made by the Chief Executive (CE) in-line with government guidance, in conjunction with the Executive Committee and whilst taking into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team.

Procedures - Snow

- We will keep to OFSTED requirements for ratios, we would work on the number of children who have arrived at the nursery and who are due in on that particular day.
- In the event of staff shortages all Bank Staff and off duty staff will be contacted to come into work.
- If ratios cannot be maintained or if we feel the safety health or welfare of the children is compromised, then we will take the decision to close the nursery. If this is the case, the nursery manager or deputy will telephone parents as soon as possible.
- If high snow fall is forecast during the day, then the CE will speak to the Executive Committee and a decision will be made as to whether to close the nursery early and parents will be contacted to arrange early collection of their children.

Procedures - Heatwave

- In the event of a heatwave, we shall follow government guidance (latest in Appendix)
- It is our policy that children will only be allowed to play outdoors should there be sufficient shade. Outdoor equipment will be moved to facilitate this, however if this is not feasible, we will ensure children remain indoors throughout the day.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to apply sunscreen to their child on the morning prior to bringing them to the setting.
- In hot weather, we encourage all children to bring and wear, when outdoors, a wide-brimmed hat. Children are allowed to wear UV protective sunglasses if parents so wish.

Absence Policy - When staff have been sent home because the centre has closed early, this will be treated as a normal working day, as would the centre being unexpectedly closed for the day due to severe weather conditions. When the centres have been open as usual, and most of the staff have come in as usual, this counts as a regular working day. Therefore, any member of staff who do not come in must take the day(s) off as either: Time off in Lieu, Annual Leave or Unpaid Leave (staff will be given written notice of when this is to be deducted from their salary).

A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Nursery Offices or downloaded via the intranet.

Reviewed by: Beverley Noble	Signed: 	Date: Sept 2022 Review: Sept 2023
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Government guidance for looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals

Updated 28 July 2022. Applies to England - GOV.UK

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

Heatwave Plan for England

Children's susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those under 4 years of age, who are overweight, or who are taking certain medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible to high temperatures. The school nurse, community health practitioner, family health visitor or the child's specialist health professional may be able to advise on the particular needs of the individual child. Support staff should be made aware of the risks and how to manage them. Further information about supporting children with medical condition can be found at the Department for Education website.

Health risks from heat

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. 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 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 excessive sweating and pale, clammy 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

Actions to protect children suffering from heat illness

The following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

1. Move the child to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
2. Cool the child as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods you can. For example, sponge or spray the child with cool (25 to 30°C) water – if available, place cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrap the child in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan.
3. Dial 999 to request an ambulance if the person doesn't respond to the above treatment within 30 minutes.

If a child loses consciousness, or has a fit, place the child in the recovery position, call 999 immediately and follow the steps above until medical assistance arrives.

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
- apply sunblock, or broad-band sunscreens with high sun protection factors (at least SPF15) to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes – apply generously and reapply frequently, especially after activities that remove them, such as swimming or towelling
- 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

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