# Managing Extreme Weather Policy

At **Hampstead Baby Care** we have an extreme weather policy in place to ensure our nursery is prepared for all weather conditions that might affect the running of the nursery such as floods, snow and heat waves.

If any of these impact on the ability of the nursery to open or operate, we will contact parents via phone or email.

We will not take children outdoors where we judge that weather conditions make it unsafe to do so.

**Flood**
In the case of a flood, we will follow our Critical incident policy to enable all children and staff to be safe and plan for continuity of care.

**Snow or other severe weather**
If high snowfall, or another severe weather condition such as dense fog, is threatened during a nursery day then the manager will decide whether to close the nursery. This decision will take into account the safety of the children, their parents and the staff team. In the event of a planned closure during the nursery day, we will contact all parents to arrange for collection of their child.

In the event of staff shortages due to snow or other severe weather, we will contact all available off duty staff and/or agency staff and group the children differently until they are able to arrive. If we are unable to maintain statutory ratio requirements after all options have been explored, we will contact Ofsted to inform them of this issue, recording all details in our incident file. If we feel the safety, health or welfare of the children is compromised then we will take the decision to close the nursery.

**Sun and high temperature safety**
We are committed to ensuring that all children are fully protected from the risks associated with hot weather and exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays. We recognise that high temperatures and sun exposure can cause sun burn, dehydration or heat exhaustion. Severe sunburn during childhood can also increase the risk of developing malignant melanoma (the most dangerous type of skin cancer) in later life.

Fresh, cool drinking water is freely available both indoors and outdoors throughout the day. All children are encouraged to drink water more frequently during warm weather to stay well hydrated and staff regularly remind and support children to take drinks, particularly during and after outdoor play.

**Outdoor environment**

We promote a balanced approach by enabling children to enjoy outdoor learning safely while following UK Health Security Agency guidance[1].

Staff complete ongoing risk assessments throughout the day, considering the temperature, UV index, humidity, availability of shade and the individual needs of children. We follow clear procedures to keep children safe and healthy in the sun:

- We ensure all children wear a clearly labelled sun hat while outdoors. Legionnaires style hats are recommended as they provide additional protection, i.e. with an extended back and side to shield children's neck and ears
- All children must have their own labelled high factor sun cream with prior written consent for staff to apply. This enables children to have sun cream suitable for their own individual needs. Staff must be aware of the expiry date and discard sunscreen after this date.
- Parents are requested to supply lightweight, loose fitting cotton clothing for their children suitable for the sun, with long sleeves and long legs
- Children's safety and welfare in hot weather is the nursery's prime objective so staff will work closely with parents to ensure all appropriate cream and clothing is provided
- Staff will make day-to-day decisions about the length of time spent outside depending on the strength of the sun (UV levels); children will not be allowed in direct sunlight between 11.00am – 3.00pm on hot days from March to October, following NHS sun safety advice
- Shaded areas are provided to ensure children are able to go out in hot weather, cool down or avoid the sun should they wish to or need to
- Children will always have sun cream applied before going outside in the hot weather and at frequent intervals during the day
- Children are made aware of the need for sun hats, sun cream and the need to drink more fluids during their time in the sun
- Key persons also work with the parents of their key children to decide and agree on suitable precautions to protect children from sunburn, taking into account individual skin types and tolerance to sun exposure. This includes children with sensitive skin and those with darker skin tones, who may still be at risk of sun damage.

**Vitamin D -** Sunlight is important for the body to receive vitamin D. We need vitamin D to help the body absorb calcium and phosphate from our diet. These minerals are important for healthy bones, teeth and muscles.
We also promote the NHS recommendation to parents that all young children should still have vitamin D drops, even if they get out in the sun.

**Indoor environment**
The nursery manager and/or deputy manager will carry out a daily risk assessment of the internal premises to determine if additional actions are required to achieve suitable conditions for children and staff. For example, if a room is naturally shaded throughout the day, no additional action may need to be taken. If there are children or staff with complex

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-before-and-during-hot-weather-teachers-and-other-educational-professionals

health conditions or clinical vulnerability, appropriate medical advice may need to be sought to reduce health risks from heat.

In our setting we will:

- Open windows early in the morning to allow stored heat to escape from the building
- Close windows during the day when it is hotter outside than inside whilst considering the need to maintain adequate ventilation and air quality
- Rearrange/adjust our indoor spaces to maximise the use of spaces which are less likely to overheat, or to avoid direct sunlight into the room
- Use oscillating mechanical fans to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C. Separate risk assessments for safe use of electrical equipment will be carried out to ensure that there are no hazards such as tripping over or pulling wires, proximity to water, etc. Fans will be pointed away from children/staff, so that they reduce the risk of dehydration and maximise the amount of air circulated.

| **This policy was reviewed on** | **Signed on behalf of the nursery** | **Date for next review** |
|---|---|---|
| *01.09.2026* | *Sofia Palma Carlos Duckett, Nursery Manager* | *01.09.2027* |