

6.2 Contingency plans

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6.2 Contingency plans

Policy Statement

Miss B's Nursery recognises the importance of preparing for unexpected events that may disrupt the setting's normal operation. Effective contingency planning helps ensure the safety and well-being of children and staff while minimising disruption to families.

When developing these plans, the nursery refers to the Department for Education's guidance, **"Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings."** This guidance recommends that early years providers prepare for emergencies such as severe weather, flooding, loss of utilities, or other unexpected events that may affect the running of the provision.

Miss B's Nursery understands that the temporary closure of the nursery can be extremely challenging for families, particularly working parents who may need to arrange alternative childcare at short notice. For this reason, the nursery will always make every reasonable effort to remain open during normal operating hours where it is safe and practical to do so.

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's policies on **Risk Assessment (section 3.4)** and **Fire Evacuation and Emergency Lockdown (section 3.5.3)**. These policies outline how the nursery manages risks and responds to emergencies, including intruders and other unexpected incidents.

This policy also supports children's rights under the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, including:

- **Article 3** – The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all decisions affecting them.
- **Article 6** – Children have the right to life, survival and development.
- **Article 19** – Children have the right to protection from harm.
- **Article 24** – Children have the right to a safe and healthy environment.

By maintaining clear contingency arrangements, Miss B's Nursery aims to ensure children remain safe and supported even in unexpected circumstances.

6.2.1 Severe Weather

Miss B's Nursery has experience operating during periods of extreme weather, including heavy snowfall and icy conditions.

6: Complaints, contingencies and other matters

Several members of staff live within reasonable walking distance of the nursery. In situations where driving conditions are unsafe due to ice or snow, staff may still be able to reach the nursery on foot in order to open the setting as planned.

The nursery premises are located on relatively elevated ground and are **not situated within a flood risk area**, meaning the likelihood of closure due to flooding is low.

During periods of adverse weather, the nursery will provide updates to families using communication methods such as:

- the nursery website
- the nursery Facebook page
- direct messages or telephone contact where necessary.

These updates will inform parents whether **Miss B's Nursery is open as usual or, in the unlikely event, unable to open due to severe conditions.**

6.2.2 Electricity Power Cuts

Loss of electricity may occur due to planned maintenance by electricity providers or unexpected outages at a local or regional level. Such events could potentially affect the nursery's ability to operate safely.

Miss B's Nursery relies on electricity for:

- lighting
- heating
- IT systems
- telephone systems
- kitchen facilities.

However, the nursery may still be able to operate safely for a limited period without electricity, depending on the circumstances.

Lighting

The main playroom benefits from large windows and roof lights that provide substantial natural daylight. This means the nursery may continue operating during daylight hours without artificial lighting.

6: Complaints, contingencies and other matters

The staff kitchen also has windows providing natural light.

However, the children's toilet area has opaque windows, meaning that if overhead lighting is unavailable, **battery-powered torches or emergency lighting** would be used temporarily.

Door Access

Electricity is normally used to operate the electronic shutters or mechanisms on patio doors. If electricity is lost, these may be operated manually for a short time where safe to do so.

Communication

If the landline telephone system is affected by a power outage, staff will use **mobile phones** as an alternative means of communication.

Mobile devices can be recharged using portable power banks or car chargers if necessary.

Heating

The nursery premises do not have a gas supply and rely entirely on **electric heating systems**.

If electricity is unavailable for an extended period during colder months, the internal temperature of the building may drop to an unsafe level. In this situation, it may be necessary to close the nursery.

If a closure becomes necessary due to loss of heating or power, the nursery will contact parents as soon as possible to:

- inform them of the situation;
- request early collection of children already attending; or
- Advise parents not to bring children to the nursery until it reopens.

Where possible, communication will be made through phone calls, messaging systems or online updates.
