DEAN CLOSE
LITTLE TREES
NURSERIES

DEAN CLOSE NURSERIES LIMITED

Independent Day Nursery

Nursery Contingency Plan
(NL035)

Little Trees, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd is wholly owned by The Dean Close Foundation, registered Charity No: 1086829

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Owner: Group Operations Manager

LITTLE TREES DAY NURSERY

NURSERY CONTINGENCY PLAN

Little Trees is committed to safeguarding children and to providing high quality settings that are welcoming, safe, and stimulating. This plan ensures continuity of care during unforeseen circumstances and compliance with all Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Staffing & Ratios

- Ratios will always meet statutory requirements:
  - 1:3 for children under 2 years
  - 1:4 for children aged 2–3 years (Wales) / 1:5 (England)
  - 1:8 for children aged 3–4 years (or 1:13 with a qualified teacher in England)
- The nursery will not operate below statutory EYFS/CIW ratios.
- Where necessary, children and staff may be moved between rooms to maintain ratios.
- We aim to always have a supernumerary Manager on site, however on occasion, they may also be counted in ratios.
- There will always be a Designated Safeguarding Lead contactable.
- There will always be a minimum of two members of staff on duty at any time, working directly with the children.
- All agency/bank staff will receive an induction briefing on safeguarding, health & safety, and emergency procedures before starting.
- In order of priority, staffing shortages will be covered by:
  1. Redeployment of staff and or children across the nursery
  2. Deputy Managers
  3. Bank staff
  4. Support from sister nurseries
  5. Part-time staff or those on annual leave (if available)
  6. Volunteers (suitably recruited and cleared)
  7. Trusted childcare agencies (with written DBS and safer recruitment confirmation)
  8. Nursery Manager
  9. Parents will be asked to wait and support the nursery if we are awaiting extra help arriving from one of the above, to ensure ratios are adhered to.
- If staffing remains insufficient:
  - Extra sessions will be cancelled first.
  - Priority will be given to contracted children, children with safeguarding needs, and essential workers.
  - Sessions may be reduced on a first-come-first-served basis, with alternative sessions offered.

Communication

- Parents will be notified of closures or changes via Famly.
- If digital systems fail, updates will be shared via phone or email.
- Parents will be given estimated reopening times where possible.

- Staff will be updated through the same channels.

Emergency Closures

Closures may occur due to:

- Extreme weather (snow, storms, flooding)
- Fire, flood, or structural issues
- Loss of utilities (water, electricity, heating)
- Pandemic or epidemic
- Acts of war/terrorism
- Shortage of available staff

Procedures:

- If a room/area becomes unusable, children may be temporarily relocated to other safe areas.
- Minimum safe temperatures will be observed (16°C in playrooms, 18°C in sleep rooms).
- For longer-term closures, relocation options (sister nurseries, school facilities) will be explored.
- Local inspectorates will be notified of any closure.
- Parents will be kept updated regularly and as early as possible.

Fees:

- If the Nursery that your child attends has to close or we take the decision to close due to events or circumstances which are outside our control, we shall be under no obligation to provide alternative childcare facilities to you. If the closure exceeds 10 days in duration (excluding any days when the Nursery would otherwise be closed), we will credit you with an amount that represents the number of days the Nursery is closed in excess of 10 days.

Safeguarding

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be contactable at all times, including during closures.

Infectious Disease & Pandemic/Epidemic

- This plan applies to outbreaks of Covid-19, flu, norovirus, or other infectious diseases.
- The nursery will follow UKHSA/Public Health advice for isolation, testing, and control measures.
- Priority care will be offered to children of essential workers where possible.