



Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

Emergency Plan Policy

The Chairperson or Playgroup Leader will make the decision that Playgroup will close due one or more of the following reasons.

- Government/local authority advice
- Staff sickness causing inadequate child-staff ratio or staff unavailability for work.
- Playgroup setting unacceptable for a session to take place, e.g. heating failure

Procedures for Playgroup Closure

- If the Playgroup Leader feels a closure may be necessary the Committee Chairperson should be contacted immediately. In the event of being unable to contact the Chairperson, the Deputy Chair or Secretary should be contacted.
- In the event of the Playgroup closing, it will be the responsibility of the Playgroup Leaders to inform the parents/guardians and staff. This will be done via phone or text.
- Playgroup Leader/Deputy will ensure up to date contact details for the children can be found easily and staff are aware of the location of this information. Playgroup Leader and Chairperson will ensure that staff and Committee members (responsible for personnel) contact details are up to date and accurate.
- In the event of Playgroup closure during a session, staff will be asked to stay with children, until parents/guardians can collect children. At no time will staff remain on their own with a child, nor will they leave them home.
- Parents and staff will be kept informed in the event of long term closure using the phone and text. The Playgroup mobile phone will be kept at Playgroup Leader's home to allow contact with parents/guardians, the answer phone message will be updated with latest news.

Staff Shortage

- Playgroup will only open if at least one qualified member of staff is present.
- An up to date emergency list of Playgroup volunteers is kept with Leaders to help with any staff shortage. Playgroup Volunteers must all have completed a police check before they will be accepted into the setting.
- If Playgroup can open with a reduced staff team, priority will be given to children whose parents are key workers- doctors and nurses, police, teachers etc.
- Staff who are off sick will not be paid and should not return to work until they are in full health. Staff who cannot work because a family member is ill will not be paid.
- Staff will be required to keep in contact with a supervisor on a weekly basis regarding their ability to return to work. If Playgroup closes due to other unforeseen circumstances, staff will be paid as normal.



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- Staff who may have existing medical conditions will be expected to report to their supervisor if they feel that they should not be in contact with the public, however it is at the Leader's discretion whether to allow sick leave in this case.
- If Playgroup does close for a period of a week or more, due to sickness or local authority guidelines, unaffected staff will be paid for the hours they should be working. Staff will however be expected to come in to complete admin and clean up jobs still to be finished.

Sickness Epidemic

- If a child falls ill during the session, he/she will be kept apart from the other children until a parent/carer comes and collects them. A first aid trained member of staff will stay with that child, while they wait for collection. For further information please see our Sickness Exclusion Policy.
- If both supervisors and the Chair are ill, Deputies will take the supervisory role. Playgroup will close if appropriate staff are not available.
- In the event of a epidemic or pandemic Playgroup will; tighten hygiene measures to reduce risk of infection, ensure that staff showing any signs of infection go home and ensure that children showing signs of infection are collected as soon as possible. For further information please see Sickness Exclusion Policy.
- If a sickness epidemic has occurred staff will provide any information requested by the local authority (e.g. absence rates). If a local authority deems a closure is necessary then Playgroup will close.

Unacceptable Environment

- In the event of serious damage occurring to the setting through burglary, water, wind or fire damage, the Playgroup will close and the Leader will follow the closure procedures.
- If the setting's heat, water or electricity supplies are affected, due to failure or emergency works required, the setting will close and Leader will follow closure procedures.
- If a large ratio of toilet facilities are not in use again setting will close until it can be rectified.
- If it is deemed the setting is not secure and cannot be secured, then the setting will close, in order to ensure the children in our care are safeguarded at all times.
- A local authority has advised or ordered a closure; the setting will close automatically and will only reopen when the local authority has agreed the Playgroup can.



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This policy was adapted at a meeting of our playgroup held on the 1st September 2026.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the management team to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

This policy was reviewed by the Ballygawley Early Years Management Committee on:

Date: 01/09/2026

Signed:
(on behalf of the Management Committee)

Name and Position: Iona Devine, Chairperson

Reviewed on:

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

This policy links with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy
- Sickness Exclusion policy
- First Aid policy
- Child Welfare and Development policy
- Mobile Phone policy
- Data Protection policy
- Confidentiality policy