



SENSES Learning Hub

Inclement Weather & Emergency Closure Policy

Created: 26.08.26

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Dawn Oughtibridge (Director)

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John Fox (Director)

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INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

1. Purpose

SENSES Learning Hub is committed to providing a safe and consistent learning environment for all students. We recognise that, due to the nature and location of our provision, weather conditions and other unforeseen circumstances may occasionally affect our ability to operate safely.

We will always make every reasonable effort to remain open. However, **the safety and wellbeing of our students, families, staff and visitors will always take priority over keeping the provision open.**

This policy outlines the arrangements for adverse weather and other emergency closures.

2. Circumstances That May Lead to Closure

A decision to close, delay opening, alter the timetable or end the provision early may be made in circumstances including:

- Snow, ice or other severe weather;
- Extreme temperatures within the studio;
- Flooding or unsafe access to the site;
- High winds or other weather conditions creating a risk to people or property;
- Heating, electricity, water or other essential service failures;
- Unsafe conditions within or around the studio;
- Significant transport disruption affecting the safe operation of the provision;
- A critical incident or other emergency;
- Any other exceptional circumstance that prevents SENSES from providing a safe and appropriately supervised learning environment.

3. Decision Making

The decision to close SENSES Learning Hub, delay opening or make changes to the normal timetable will be made by the Directors.

When making a decision, we will consider:

- Whether the studio and surrounding environment can be accessed safely;

- Whether paths, entrances and outdoor areas present risks from snow, ice, flooding or other hazards;
- Whether the building is safe and suitable for occupation;
- Whether heating, ventilation and other essential facilities are functioning appropriately;
- Whether sufficient staff are able to travel safely to provide appropriate supervision and support;
- The individual needs and vulnerabilities of the students expected to attend;
- Weather forecasts and any relevant travel or emergency advice;
- Whether it is safe for students and staff to travel to and from the provision.

As a small, specialist provision, SENSES operates with carefully planned staffing and personalised student provision. We will therefore also consider whether we can maintain safe and appropriate staffing ratios and meet students' individual needs effectively.

4. Adverse Weather

We recognise that weather conditions can be unpredictable, particularly during periods of snow, ice, high winds, extreme heat or heavy rainfall.

Where adverse weather is forecast, we will monitor conditions and make a decision as early as reasonably possible.

Where possible, a decision will be communicated:

- **The evening before**, where conditions and forecasts provide sufficient certainty; or
- **Early in the morning**, before students are due to travel to SENSES.

We ask parents and carers to check their usual communication channels before travelling during periods of significant adverse weather.

We appreciate that closing or altering provision can cause disruption to families. However, decisions will not be taken lightly and will always be based on an assessment of **health, safety and the ability to provide appropriate supervision and support**.

5. Extreme Temperatures

The wellbeing of students and staff is particularly important during periods of extreme heat or cold.

Due to the nature of our studio environment, internal temperatures may occasionally become unsuitable for safe and effective learning.

Where temperatures become excessively high or low, we may:

- Adapt activities and reduce physical demands;
- Increase access to drinking water and rest breaks;

- Adjust the use of particular areas of the studio;
- Alter session times where reasonably possible;
- Shorten the provision day; or
- Close the provision where conditions cannot be managed safely.

Any decision will take account of the individual needs of our students, including sensory sensitivities and medical or additional needs that may make extreme temperatures particularly difficult to manage.

6. Emergency Closure During the Day

Occasionally, circumstances may arise that require SENSES to close or alter provision during the school day.

Examples may include:

- Sudden severe weather;
- Unsafe temperatures;
- Loss of heating or electricity;
- Flooding or damage to the building;
- A critical incident; or
- Any other situation that presents an immediate or developing health and safety concern.

Where an early closure is necessary, we will contact parents/carers using our normal communication channels.

Students will **not be sent home without appropriate arrangements being made**. We will ensure that students remain safely supervised until they are collected or other agreed arrangements are in place.

Where appropriate, we will also liaise with the relevant school, Local Authority, transport provider or other professionals.

7. Communication With Parents and Carers

If SENSES is closed, opening is delayed or the provision is significantly altered, we will communicate this as quickly as possible through our usual channels, which may include:

- Direct text message, whatsapp or telephone contact;
- Email

As students attend SENSES on individualised provision and sessions, direct communication with affected families will remain our priority.



Parents and carers are asked to ensure that SENSES has up to date contact information and that they are contactable in the event of an emergency.

8. Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers should make their own assessment of whether it is safe for them and their child to travel.

If SENSES remains open but weather conditions in a family's local area make travel unsafe, we fully support parents/carers in making the safest decision for their individual circumstances.

Parents and carers should inform SENSES as soon as possible if their child will be unable to attend.

9. Maintaining a Safe Environment

SENSES will take reasonable steps to prepare for foreseeable adverse conditions. This may include:

- Monitoring weather forecasts;
- Assessing access routes and outdoor areas;
- Taking reasonable measures to reduce slip and trip hazards;
- Ensuring appropriate maintenance of the studio and essential services;
- Monitoring internal temperatures;
- Reviewing risks associated with the specific location and environment in which SENSES operates.

However, it may not always be possible to eliminate all risks created by severe or rapidly changing weather conditions.

10. Exceptional Circumstances

There may be circumstances where a full closure is not necessary but the normal operation of SENSES needs to be adapted.

This may include:

- Delayed opening;
- Earlier collection;
- Changes to planned activities;
- Temporary use of alternative arrangements where appropriate; or
- Individual decisions regarding particular students whose needs or travel arrangements require additional consideration.



We will communicate any changes clearly with affected families.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and following any significant emergency closure or weather related incident to ensure that arrangements remain appropriate and effective.

Our Commitment

At SENSES, we understand that consistency and routine are particularly important for many of our students. For this reason, we will always aim to minimise unnecessary disruption and communicate changes as clearly and promptly as possible.

However, **SENSES Learning Hub will never compromise the health, safety or wellbeing of students, staff or families in order to remain open.** Any decision to close or alter provision will be made carefully, proportionately and with the best interests of our students at the centre of the decision.

Review Log

Review date	Completed by who
26.08.27	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge