

**Wee Wild Sparks Outdoor Nursery**

**Inclement Weather policy**

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|  | **Date** | **Name & Position** |
| **Created** | Jan 2017 | Jo Andrews, Manager/director |
| **Reviewed / updated** | April 2018 | Jo Andrews, Manager/director |
| **Reviewed / updated** | June 2019 | Alice Warren, Manager/director |
| **Reviewed / updated** | June 2020 | Alice Warren, Manager/director |
| **Reviewed / updated** |  |  |
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**This policy should be reviewed annually or light of any incident which requires a review.**

**Wee Wild Sparks Inclement weather policy**Wee Wild Sparks sessions take place entirely outdoors except in instances of high winds, lightening or any other weather deemed unsafe, in these instances we will relocate to suitable outdoor or indoor premises (See below).

Parents and staff are advised on how to dress to suit the weather to take account for seasonal variations including extreme hot/cold/wet weather.

We will only cancel sessions in exceptional circumstances. For this reason:

**The nursery manager will:**

* Check the forecast, be prepared for the expected weather ahead and brief the staff team at the start of the day.
* Make provision and adapt activities to suit the weather, as follows:

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| **Cold/wet/windy weather** | **Hot sunny weather** |
| * Rig up tarps in advance of rain
* Rig up wind break tarps to create sheltered spaces for lunch/tools/crafts
* Ensure a good provision of extra layers and spare waterproofs are available. All children are also requested to carry spares.
* Relocate the group to sheltered areas, such as near the tent.
* Ensure children’s coats/bags are fully covered, using tarps/storage boxes if required.
* Bring the group together regularly for active ‘warm up’ games and make sure everybody takes part.
* Manage water and mud play carefully and ensure children have warm and dry spares ready if they do get wet.
* Be vigilant for early signs of hypothermia and take preventative action.
* On wet days, conduct thorough checks of children’s feet and inner layers at snack, lunch and fire circle. Physically check children, don’t just ask if they are dry.
 | * Advise families to apply sunscreen(minimum SPF 15)
* Provide shade, cool water and spare sunscreen (minimum SPF 15) on sunny days
* Be vigilant for early signs of heat fatigue, heat stroke and take preventative action
* Discourage very active play and sustained running around
* Encourage water play, low pace games and use of shaded areas.
* Make sure all children drink plenty of water, observe each child having a good drink at least at snack (am & pm) and lunch.
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| * Be ready to send home any child who is inappropriately dressed or not coping with conditions
* Help parents understand the need to protect their children from inclement weather
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**Wild Sparks Staff should:**

* Support the leader with all above responsibilities and follow delegated instructions carefully
* Take extra care to check on children’s pastoral needs during cold/wet/hot weather to keep everybody safe and comfortable.
* Be alert to early signs of weather related illness in children (e.g. cold, dehydration, heat stroke), take action and report concerns immediately to the leader
* Be prepared for extreme weather & bring suitable clothing, food and drink for themselves
* Help children understand how to keep themselves protected in a range of different weathers, support them to be involved in their own care and welfare.

**Parental responsibilities**

Parents and carers are advised of appropriate clothing for each season. Children are required to come suitably dressed, in accordance with the following clothing requirements that parents and carers are notified of at enrolment.

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| **Autumn / Winter** Vest or T-shirt Long sleeved top Hooded top/fleece or thick jumper Waterproof jacket Thick socks (thermal or two pairs of thin ones) Trousers Waterproof trousers Wellington boots or waterproof hiking boots.Hat, gloves and scarf Apply insect repellent  | **Spring / Summer** Long sleeved T-shirt, blouse or shirt\*Light trousers\* Socks Trainers, shoes or Wellington boots. (Sandals and flip-flops are not suitable) Sunhat & sunglasses (if required)\* Exposed arms and legs (shorts or short sleeved tops) may lead to exclusion from certain activities so long sleeves are advised.Sunscreen on exposed areas, minimum SPF 15Apply insect repellent |

**When a child is presented in unsuitable clothing Wee Wild Sparks will:**

* Discuss this sensitively with the parent, explaining the importance of children’s welfare and the need to be protected in all weathers
* Provide a loan of spare clothing. If no well fitting spare clothing is available, as a last resort, we may have to send the child home.
* Explore arrangements to support the family where they are unable to provide their own suitable clothing due to socio-economic barriers

**When the woods are deemed unsafe…**

The Wee Wild Sparks Manager will follow the protocol below when the forecast indicated it may not be safe to be in our usual woodland site.

In case of extreme weather conditions, such as lightening, high winds that pose a risk of falling trees, or sustained heavy rain/snow, we will relocate the nursery day to a safe location. We use two sites:

* Largan Victory Park in Coupar Angus – Forfar Road, Coupar Angus, PH13 9ER

A public park that is safe in high winds but too exposed for lightening or sustained rain/snow.

* Meikleour Village Hall – Old Military Road, Meikleour, Perthshire, PH2 6DZ

A heated, indoor space, used as a last resort when neither the woods or the park are deemed suitable.

In the event of a relocation parents will be notified at the earliest convenience, and no later than 6pm the day before, when we have a clear picture of the predicted weather.

Parents will be notified via WhatsApp/text with a request to reply as confirmation of receipt.