



SEVERE WEATHER – POLICY AND PROCEDURE

In the event of bad weather, usually snow, it is the Academy's Policy to remain open unless we are forced to close because there is a risk to the health and safety of staff and students.

If there is severe weather overnight

The Executive Principal is responsible for making the decision to close the Academy. This will usually be early morning before travel to the Academy is necessary. The Executive Principal consults with:

- Premises staff
- Selected staff living close to the Academy
- Selected staff travelling distances to Academy
- The chair of the Local Advisory Board

The Head of School will ensure the following:

- information regarding closure is posted online on the Academy web site
- the Local Authority is informed of the decision to close the Academy – this is a statutory requirement
- the central Trust team (CEO) is advised of the decision to close the school.

Staff will be notified of a closure via an All Staff e mail, which will be sent out by the Head of School. Staff can also check the Academy web site. Where possible, the decision to close the school will be made and published on by 7.00 a.m.

In taking the decision to close the Academy, the Executive Principal will take into account the availability of public transport, including buses and the London Underground.

A text message will also be sent to parents; parents can also check the Academy web site.

Unless posted on the Academy website, the Academy is open.

If the weather deteriorates during the day

Should the weather turn worse during the Academy day, students will only be sent home where we can ensure that they are able to get home, or have a friend's/relatives house to go to. We aim to ensure all families are contacted by Academy staff.

No student will be allowed to leave the Academy early without permission from their parent/guardian. If we believe that any student is at risk of being unable to travel home safely, the Academy will make every effort to contact their parent/carer, for further instruction.

Sixth Form students will be dismissed without the need to contact parents.

If it is not possible for a student to get home, or be received at home, it is good and safe practice for parents to have an alternative arrangement which is known to the student.

Really bad weather is disruptive and can cause anxiety and stress. Understandably, many parents ring the Academy if there is an increasing risk of snow falling heavily during the day. It

can be frustrating trying to get through when all of the outside lines are engaged by other parents calling for the same reason. Jammed lines and answering queries can in turn delay office staff who are trying to get through to the parents to arrange for early collection of students.

We will ensure that our website is updated throughout the day with any developments.

The Academy remains open but staff are unable to attend

All employees are expected to make every effort to attend their normal place of work at the scheduled time to carry out their duties. Employees should not take undue risk, and if they are not able to attend, employees must call the absence line and inform their line manager in accordance with current procedure. On return to work, an absence form should be completed. Special paid leave may be awarded at the discretion of the Executive Principal where difficulties exist beyond those of travel, e.g. employees facing caring problems due to school closures, or restrictions due to disability. This will be in line with the school special leave policy.

Preparing for snow and ice

The school will consider a number of actions prior to the winter months to ensure it is prepared to manage the implications of bad weather.

- Communicate via the website and through newsletters, the school's policy for extreme snow and icy conditions
- Ensure stocks of salt/grit/sand are adequate for the time of year and foreseeable weather.
- Pre-identify the outdoor areas used by students/staff most likely to be affected by ice, for example: - building entrances, pathways, walkways, shortcuts, sloped areas and areas constantly in the shade or wet.
- Ensure water, boiler and heating systems are regularly maintained.
- Check that pipes are appropriately lagged.
- Ensure we have an arrangement with a contractor to clear the school site
- Consider putting plans in place to restrict the movement of students and staff around the school grounds.

Actions that will be taken in the days before forecasted snow and ice:

- Regular checking of weather forecasts via news / websites / weather apps
- Take action whenever freezing temperatures are forecast e.g
 - o leaving heating on a low setting overnight,
 - o closing curtains and blinds
 - o closing doors all internal doors
 - o Use grit or similar on areas prone to being slippery in frosty/icy conditions.

Risk Assessment/Management

Risk management and assessment helps identify potential risks in advance of severe snow and ice and ensure appropriate control measures are implemented. It also assists the Principal in making the right decision on the day by adopting an approach that is grounded in common sense and being proportionate.

Implicit in the risk assessment/management are the following:

- Is the school building accessible?
- Are pedestrian routes on the school grounds passable?
- Is there means to clear these routes e.g. salt/grit?
- Can priority be made in respect to slopes, steps or ramps or can these areas be restricted from use?

- Can the Principal gain enough teaching and/or supervisory staff to operate safely?
- Can the school be partially open e.g. for lessons of specific year groups?
- Is the school appropriately heated?
- Is there enough fuel for the day?
- Are water systems working appropriately?
- Is it possible to restrict outside play to limit the snow/ice becoming compacted and therefore more dangerous.

During each day of bad weather affecting the decision to stay open or to close, the Principal will review the risk assessment.

Car Park

Every effort to clear the car park will be made so that it is safe for the arrival of staff cars and deliveries. If staff or public enter the car park before the schools altered opening times or before the car park is clear, they do so at your own risk.

During periods of snow the car park will be made as reasonably clear as possible by the end of teaching hours to enable the safe exit of staff and deliveries.

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