



Adverse Weather Policy

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Owner	Headteacher
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Review Date and Summary of Changes

Date of review	Summary of changes
November 2024	Initial New Adverse Weather Policy
November 2024	Review Date Attached gritting/clearing plan

Signed by:

S. Jones

Headteacher

Date:

22/11/2024

C. I. Wright

Chair of Governors

Date:

22/11/2024

Contents:

Statement of Intent

1. [Legal Framework](#)
2. [Roles and Responsibilities](#)
3. [Decision to Close](#)
4. [Remaining Open in Adverse Weather Conditions](#)
5. [Procedures for Gritting](#)
6. [Health and Safety](#)
7. [Limited Staff Numbers](#)
8. [Attendance Statistics](#)
9. [Exam Disruption](#)
10. [Emergency Plan](#)
11. [Monitoring and Review](#)
12. [Appendix](#)

Statement of Intent

It is the aim of Burtonwood Community Primary School to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practicably possible during flooding, high wind, ice and snow, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

Burtonwood Community Primary School intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the school during adverse weather conditions
- Make clear the grounds for a school closure due to adverse weather conditions
- Advise and inform staff and parents of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999
- UKHSA (2023) 'Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals'
- UKHSA (2023) 'Looking after children and those in early years settings before and during cold weather: teachers and other educational professionals'
- UKHSA (2023) 'Adverse Weather and Health Plan'
- DfE (2023) 'Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following trust/school policies:

- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- Exam Contingency Policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- deciding whether the school will close due to adverse weather
- informing parents and staff of any closure
- deciding whether pupils should be kept indoors during break times and reporting this decision to staff at the earliest opportunity
- deciding which and how many entrances will be used in and out of school. If there are any closed paths/gates the signage will be clearly shown to direct the parents, pupils and visitors.
- ensuring the site manager has checked the snow clearing equipment and rock salt supply levels
- reviewing this policy on an annual basis

The site manager is responsible for:

- Adhering to the risk assessment that covers adverse weather and gritting/clearing
- ensuring gritting/clearing is carried out in line with the procedures outlined in this policy
- ensuring all equipment is maintained and stored properly, notifying the headteacher of any damages
- ensuring the school has an adequate supply of rock salt

Staff members are responsible for:

- adhering to the requirements of this policy
- reporting any concerns relevant to this policy to the headteacher/ sit manager
- the safety of pupils, colleagues and themselves
- wearing appropriate footwear and clothing during periods of adverse weather
- liaising with one another before the end of the day to discuss an exit plan for pupils, this includes escorting younger pupils to the entrance to be collected by their parents

Parents are responsible for:

- only using the designated and cleared areas whilst on the school premise
- collecting their children when the school needs to close
- keeping all their contact information up-to-date
- ensuring they and their children wear the appropriate footwear and clothing for adverse weather

3. Decision to Close

The decision to close the school will be made by the headteacher.

The site manager and the chair of governors will be consulted when making a decision about school closure.

In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher will assume the responsibility of the headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.

The school will be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
- staff numbers are insufficient for the school to operate safely.

In the event of school closure:

- the headteacher will inform staff via email/ phone when appropriate and parents via Seesaw
- the headteacher or office manager will post an update on the school website/ social media
- the site manager will display 'closure' signs on the school's entrance gates
- In the event that parents ring school directly, there will be a temporary outgoing recorded message explaining that the school is closed

In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents will be contacted via Seesaw or telephone, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the school.

A closure of the school during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

4. Remaining Open In Adverse Weather Conditions

When deciding whether the school will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment.

If the school remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only.

The site manager will place signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

All pathways, wherever practicable, will have been cleared and gritted before pupils arrive on the premises, following the procedures in section 5.

At the headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents.

All persons entering the school buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

5. Procedures for Gritting/Clearing

The first phase of gritting/clearing will prioritise those areas which are most used by pupils and staff. This includes the main entrance of the school, as well as the following areas:

- footpaths leading to the front entrance and the entrances to the rear of school and side
- These will be marked on the Gritting/Clearing Plan in Red.

The second phase of gritting/clearing will include areas that are not covered by phase one but are likely to be used. These include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Pathways around the rear of school
- Playground
- These will be marked on the Gritting/Clearing Plan in Green.

The headteacher decides which areas of the school are designated 'first phase' and 'second phase' for gritting/clearing. These will be clearly shown on the site plan.

The maintenance officer ensures that the correct areas have been gritted/cleared and are safe for pupils, staff and visitors.

People are to stick to the clearly visible paths that have been gritted/cleared. See gritting/clearing plan.

The maintenance officer ensures that the relevant equipment is used during gritting/clearing. Any damaged equipment is reported to the headteacher so that it can be replaced.

The supply of rock salt is monitored – if supplies are low, the office manager is notified.

6. Health and Safety

The school has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.

The school will be responsible for taking all reasonably practicable measures given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents entering the school site.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Staff, visitors and parents have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds. For example, to wear appropriate footwear.

Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.

If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter the school grounds and inform either the headteacher or site manager so the safety can be reassessed.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the site manager will assess the school site and inform the headteacher for any potential hazards due to the adverse weather conditions.

Closing the school is a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.

When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

7. Limited Staff Numbers

During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.

It is at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions. However, every effort should be made for staff to come into work.

Staff members are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport and fitness to walk when making their decision.

Staff members are required to liaise with the headteacher to discuss if having difficulties attending work due to adverse weather.

In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different age groups may be brought together to be taught under the supervision of the available teachers and support staff:

No maximum class size limits are set out for Key Stage 2. However, for Early Years and Key Stage 1 children, a limit of 30 pupils per class will apply if the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven in that school year.

The school will continue to strive to provide high-quality education in the given circumstances.

8. Attendance Statistics

Where the school is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.

When a pupil cannot attend the school due to adverse weather conditions, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will, therefore, not affect the school's attendance statistics.

If the headteacher believes the pupil could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.

Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

9. Exam Disruption

If the school has to close, or if a child misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body as per the Exam Contingency Policy.

The school takes full responsibility for informing parents and pupils of any agreed changes concerning exams in adverse weather conditions. This includes:

- using alternative venues
- exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject
- the opportunity for the pupil to sit any missed exam later in the year

10. Emergency Plan

In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure.

Burtonwood Community Primary School's emergency plan will contain:

- information on where to find parent contact details
- staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies
- details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency

All nominated staff will be trained to:

- contact and liaise with emergency services
- provide first aid
- move pupils to a safe place
- calm and comfort children
- contact parents
- deal with any media interest

Each member of staff will have access to a copy of the emergency plan through Sharepoint.

All parents will be sent a Seesaw message/receive a phone call home informing them of their responsibilities, e.g. their duty to collect children.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher annually. The next review of this policy is shown on the first page of this policy document.

12. Appendix

Phase 1 gritting/clearing

