



ADVERSE WEATHER PLAN FOR SCHOOLS IN THE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP



**Egerton
Primary School**

Plan lead:	Director of Estates and Marketing Headteacher
Last review date:	February 2025
Next review date:	February 2027

Adverse Weather Plan

Introduction

1. It is recognised that severe weather conditions, particularly snow and ice or exceptional hot weather can make it difficult for people to travel or for schools to operate. However, even during severe weather conditions, the Trust and its schools aim to remain operational wherever possible and that all colleagues are expected to make their best endeavours to be available for work.
2. The Trust and therefore each School has a duty of care for the wellbeing of all users of its sites including Pupils/Students, Staff, Parents/Carers, volunteers and visitors. This requires us to communicate to all our stakeholders and undertake reasonable endeavours to maintain the access roads and path network in a safe and passable condition.
3. This plan also provides the framework that will be used to communicate with staff and families in the event that a school or premises is or needs to be closed due to adverse weather conditions. It also outlines the actions that will be taken to manage and co-ordinate the maintenance off the road and path network during periods of severe cold weather, primarily Snow and Ice.

Scope

4. This plan applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors, students and their family/carers. It seeks to promote fairness and consistency in the treatment of people when considering attendance at work and study during adverse weather conditions.
5. The wording of this plan is primarily focussed toward staff. Therefore, communication of its contents beyond TLP staff may need to be adjusted accordingly to meet the requirements of the recipient. This plan is an internal document and should not be published on the school website.

Context

6. Schools should remain open wherever possible. This is to ensure that learning can take place in an appropriate and safe environment. It also means that disruption to learning is minimised. However, Schools may be unable to open for a variety of reasons at times of adverse cold weather, including:
 - i. breakdown in the heating;
 - ii. frozen or burst pipes;
 - iii. inaccessibility of roads and/or the site due to very heavy snowfall/ice or other adverse conditions;
 - iv. severe storms and / or flooding.
 - v. Ice/snow in external areas, including car parks, entrances, pathways and play areas

At times of adverse hot weather the DFE and HSE guidelines state, that *there is no law for a maximum working temperature or when its too hot to work because every workplace or school is different*. The attached link provides DFE guidance to follow in times of adverse hot weather <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-before-and-during-hot-weather-teachers-and-other-educational-professionals> . This includes the following;

- i. Monitoring pupils and staff in terms of signs of heat stress, exhaustion or heat stroke

- II. Relaxing uniform rules
 - III. Applying sunblock if pupils go outdoors
 - IV. Use classrooms which are less likely to overheat
7. In such cases it is important that decisions are taken based on risk and that appropriate communication is undertaken so that all relevant parties can make appropriate arrangements.

Responsibility for Taking a Decision to Close the School

8. The **decision** whether to close a school rests with the **Headteacher**. In the event that the Headteacher is unavailable, then the decision is delegated to the Deputy Headteacher.
9. Headteachers should take advice from phase directors in the Trust prior to making a decision to close the school. They will consider input from specific colleagues such as site-staff and security, as well as formal information published by public authorities, such as the Local Authority, Police, Highways England and the Met Office. They may also seek input from staff living at different locations, since the impact of weather conditions and accessibility may vary.
10. If the decision is that adverse weather conditions are such that it is not appropriate to open the school for pupils, then the Headteacher will consider whether it remains appropriate for staff to be present at the school.
11. The Headteacher will consider whether it remains safe to travel, especially for those living at a distance, as well as access to and from the site. They will give due regard to the risks such that conditions are unacceptable or dangerous for pupils, then similar considerations may need to apply to staff.
12. Red warnings are issued by the Met Office where exceptionally severe weather is forecast and a danger to life exists. When a red warning is issued, it will normally result in the closure of the school. However, an exception to this might be in the case of high seasonal temperature, whereby the provision of ventilation and temperature control arrangements, plus other environmental support (e.g. water and hydration), will enable learning to continue. In cases where closure would affect students sitting public examinations then the school will prioritise these pupils and make best endeavours to remain open.
13. Headteachers will need to assess the staff-to-pupil ratio to ensure that they are able to operate safely. It may be appropriate for some groups of pupils to be prioritised and others asked to remain at home. The sitting of public examinations is an example where high prioritisation may be applied.
14. Headteachers will seek to treat staff with equity, and as such there will not be an expectation that staff who would normally drive or take public transport would be expected to walk extended distances to school. However, where events are foreseeable, then Headteachers may ask teachers to discuss possible alternatives that may enable learning to continue.
15. In circumstances where a school is closed, then it is considered reasonable for staff to undertake appropriate work-related activities at home. For teachers this may include setting learning and undertaking teaching activities on-line. The school's remote learning policy may be considered to guide staff and pupils.

Timing

16. Headteachers will seek to provide *reasonable notice* of any closure. The definition of "*reasonable notice*" is not prescribed, as it will take into account the range of factors that

underpin the risk assessment. However, in the case of adverse wintery conditions, a decision would normally be taken no later than **a time agreed by the Headteacher**, although typically this will be **7:00am** on the day. This is to ensure that sufficient time is available to initiate communications, and where appropriate consider pupil transport arrangements (busses, etc).

Enforced closure during the school day

17. Closing the school during the school day creates numerous issues. Any decision to close the school during school day will be minimised. Headteachers should monitor weather forecasts and other factors, such as planned cessation of public transport, if they need to initiate closure during the school day.
18. If severe weather disruption is likely to occur during the day, then Headteacher will consider closing the school before the normal start time even if the current conditions are acceptable.
19. If, during the course of the day, weather conditions deteriorate significantly to the point that a closure is required, then the school should use existing arrangements to inform parents of the decision.
20. Clearly, the safety of pupils is important. Those who cannot be sent home will require supervision until such time as they can be collected. However, the health, safety and welfare of staff is recognised as being equally important.
21. Whilst some staff will be required to remain on site to supervise pupils, the Headteacher may allow other staff to leave the premises as soon as safety and reducing pupil numbers allows.
22. The Headteacher's decision to allow staff to leave the site will be done on an assessment of relative risk, e.g. to determine who is at greatest risk to safety, such as those with the longest or most disrupted journeys, disabled staff, staff with caring responsibilities. Staff who continue remain to ensure the safety of pupils should normally have been identified before any adverse weather event as part of the planning for adverse weather.

Responsibility of Staff

23. It is the responsibility of staff to attend school when it is open.
24. Where adverse weather conditions are more severe, or where there is significant disruption to usual travel arrangements, then staff are expected to contact line managers as early as possible to inform them of the constraints.
25. Where staff have specific health/medial conditions (e.g. mobility) the member of staff should agree in advance with their line managers appropriate contingency working arrangements. Any contingency arrangements must be approved by the Headteacher.
26. Before setting off to travel to the site a member of staff should check that the site is open. Staff should, when safe to do so, check periodically that the decision for the school to remain open has not changed. This is especially relevant for staff commencing their journeys before 7:00am.

Communication

27. Teachers need to ensure that they are aware of how the school will communicate with them if a decision is made to close the school.
28. Headteachers should ensure that school staff and parents are aware of the school closure procedure and how they will communicate with them if the school is closed. Arrangements

for communicating with parents and carers will normally consider including some or all of the following:

- i. use of local radio stations [School will identify and publish the stations used]
 - ii. issuing of texts to parents
 - iii. an answerphone message on main telephone number
 - iv. website message on homepage
 - v. other social media outlets that are from “official” and managed school accounts (e.g. Facebook and X).
29. The Headteacher will determine the communication plan and approach to be used by the school. They will designate responsibility to an individual(s) to make these announcements. This process should be added to the adverse weather plan.
30. The Headteacher will need to inform the Phase Director, Trust CEO and Deputy CEO’s once the decision has been made to close the school
31. The Headteacher will also need to contact their local authority to inform them of the school closure and also once the decision has been taken to re-open.
32. To provide confidence in authenticity, any announcement should be issued under the signature/name of the Headteacher.

Essential Services

33. Essential services are those services and facilities that the Trust/School will seek to maintain regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. During adverse weather conditions, or indeed due to the type and duration of the inclement weather conditions, these services’ pattern of delivery/access may differ from the normal published patterns of delivery/access times. Essential services include, but are not limited to, the following:
- i. Site and maintenance
 - ii. Security
 - iii. IT
34. Each School will have snow Clearing and a Gritting Plan to accompany this adverse weather plan

Gritting Plan

In the event of frosty or snowy mornings, the site maintenance officer of school staff in his absence will decide whether to grit the routes in to school indicated by the plan posted on the doors of the KS1 and KS2 entrances

- From the rear school entrance to the key stage 2 doors
- From the KS1 entrances to the KS1 doors
- From the main pedestrian entrance to the reception class doors and the KS2 doors
- The front part of the school by the main entrance
- From the nursery entrance to the nursery door

School communication Plan at times of adverse weather and likely closure

If the school is unable to open due to adverse weather conditions a message will be sent out to all parents on school spider, along with messages on our social media platforms. Once the decision has been made, the head teacher will endeavour to do this by 7.00am so that parents and carers have enough time to make suitable arrangements.

Parents and carers will be updated throughout the course of the day once a decision has been made to reopen or to continue to close the school.

Any decision made by the school will take into consideration the distance that school staff have to travel to get in to school, and if this places them at risk as well as is the school site safe to be accessed by children and parents.