



St. John's C. of E.

Blackpool's First Free School 1817

Adverse Weather Policy

'In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.'

Matthew 7:12

Be Kind

Be Forgiving

Be a Good Friend

Be Honest

Love One Another

Be part of our St John's family!

Statement of intent

It is the aim of St John's CE Primary School to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

St John's CE 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.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and 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 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
- Remote Education Policy
- Business Continuity Policy & Procedures

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.

- Ensuring the school is fully stocked with snow clearing equipment.
- Ensuring the school has an adequate supply of rock salt.
- Reviewing this policy on an two-yearly basis.
- Ensuring classroom temperatures are maintained at an appropriate level.
- Ensuring that staff model good practice in terms of sun safety.
- Ensuring that staff understand the precautions for pupils in terms of sun safety.
- Ensuring staff have received appropriate training and guidance on the stipulations in this policy, and ensuring staff act in accordance with this policy.

The site manager is responsible for:

- Completing a risk assessment that covers adverse weather and gritting.
- Ensuring gritting 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.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the requirements of this policy.
- Reporting any concerns relevant to this policy to the headteacher.
- 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.
- Modelling good practice in terms of sun safety.
- Encouraging pupils to stay appropriate hydrated.

Parents are responsible for:

- Only using the designated and cleared areas whilst on the school premises.
- 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.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Following the School Uniform Policy.
- Following the instructions and guidance of staff during adverse weather.
- Attending school prepared for adverse weather conditions.
- Following the Behaviour Policy at all times.

Decision to close

The school is registered to receive [Weather-Health Alerts](#) from the UKHSA and Met Office and school will make a local assessment and initiate all appropriate procedures in response to an alert. Alerts will be reviewed to ensure the school fully understands the potential impacts and how likely they are to occur.

The decision to close the school will be made by the headteacher. The chair of governors and the Site Supervisor will also 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 and parents via text message or telephone.
- The SBM or ICT leader will post an update on the school website.
- The site supervisor will display 'closure' signs on the school's entrance gates.
- The Office Manager will advise the local radio station, BBC Radio Lancashire on 01254 262411 / 01254 841011 (out of hours) or email: lancsnews@bbc.co.uk. Parents will have previously been made aware that announcements concerning the school will be broadcasted via BBC Radio Lancashire.

In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents will be contacted via text message or telephone, using the numbers provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the school as soon as possible.

Where the school is temporarily closed due to adverse weather, the headteacher will aim to ensure the school can provide remote education in line with the Remote Education Policy.

Staff who are likely to face particular difficulties in getting home may have to leave work early, taking into account their personal safety. This decision will be taken in collaboration with the headteacher. Minimum cover arrangements in school will be provided by employees who do not have a particularly long or difficult journey home to ensure staffing ratios are maintained for the safety of pupils.

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

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 main pedestrian gate and all pathways, wherever practical, will have been cleared and gritted before pupils arrive on the premises.

The site supervisor will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.

A notice will be erected to inform that vehicles and pedestrians entering the school grounds do so at their own risk.

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

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

Health and safety

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

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 supervisor so the safety can be reassessed.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the site supervisor will assess the school site and inform the headteacher at **7.00am** of the state of site.

A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the 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.

The school is committed to ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of pupils. To minimise the risk of ill health during adverse temperatures, the school will:

- Encourage staff and pupils to keep as much of their skin as possible covered up during the Summer months and wearing appropriate clothing during the Winter months.
- Encourage staff and pupils to use sunscreen of at least sun protection factor (SPF)15 with UVA protection on any part of the body that they cannot cover up during the Summer months.
- Encourage staff and pupils to take their breaks in the shade, if possible, rather than staying out in the sun.
- Reschedule work/outdoor lessons according to the outdoor temperature.
- Encourage staff and pupils to carry an inhaler at all times if needed.
- Encourage staff and pupils to maintain good hand hygiene.
- Encourage staff and pupils to stay hydrated.

To help protect staff, pupils and visitors during adverse cold weather, the school will:

- Ensure heating systems are maintained and in good working order, prioritising rooms being used where appropriate.
- Close rooms or buildings that are too cold to be used i.e. the Hub.
- Ventilate indoor spaces, especially where people gather, to help reduce the risk of infections spreading.
- Promote the flu vaccine for eligible staff and pupils, and encourage parents to keep their children up to date with routine immunisations.
- Reinforce messaging around the importance of hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Encourage physical activity where appropriate to help keep pupils warm.

Relevant staff members will be made aware of how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be suffering from ill health due to adverse weather conditions.

Where a pupil is suffering from heat illness, the following steps will be taken immediately:

- Moving the pupil to as cool a room as possible and encouraging them to drink cold water
- Cooling the pupil as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods possible, e.g. sponging or spraying the pupil with cool water, placing cold packs around the neck and armpits, wrapping the pupil in a cool, wet sheet, and assisting cooling using a fan.
- Where the pupil does not respond to treatment within 30 minutes, an ambulance will be called.
- If the pupil loses consciousness or has a fit, they will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called immediately; treatment to cool the pupil will continue until the ambulance arrives.
- Where a pupil is suspected to be suffering from heatstroke, 999 will be called immediately and the pupil will be cooled down in line with the procedures for managing heat exhaustion outlined above whilst awaiting medical assistance.
- Where a pupil loses consciousness or experiences a fit or seizure, they will be placed in the recovery position, 999 will be called immediately and staff will follow the operator's instructions.

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. Staff are encouraged to liaise with the headteacher or deputy headteacher to discuss difficulties attending work due to adverse weather.

Staff members are expected to assess the availability of all public transport and consider the feasibility of walking to work, if they live relatively close and are fit and able to do so, in order to attend work.

The school understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk. It is therefore at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.

In line with this policy, it is therefore at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.

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 options of attending work.

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.
- 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.

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.

SATs / Test disruption

If the school has to close, or if a child miss SATs or similar test due to adverse weather conditions, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.

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

Clothing

During the Summer months, when temperatures reach above 25 degrees Celsius (°C), everyone working at or attending the school will be encouraged to protect their face, neck and ears using a sun-safe hat with a wide brim. Baseball caps or visors are not considered sun-safe hats.

During the Winter months, pupils are advised to attend school with suitable clothing and footwear. Appropriate clothing should be worn that is suited to the weather conditions, e.g. wearing waterproof clothing in the rain and wearing gloves in the snow.

Emergency plan

In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the First Aid Policy and Business Continuity Plan & Procedures.

St John's CE 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 has access to the Business Continuity Plan and Procedures.