



Snow and Adverse Weather Principles to inform school policy

Policy Details:

Reviewed: 8 Feb 2023

Next review: 8 Feb 2024

Principles history:

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| February 2023 | Principles written | Cathy Lord (Director of Pupils) |
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This policy was reviewed at the Local Advisory Board Meeting in Spring 2 2023



ADVERSE WEATHER PRINCIPLES

During the winter months there are occasions when we can experience adverse weather conditions. Following these principles will support the schools in creating individual plans and policies.

Guiding Principles

At TLFLP

- The safety of pupils and staff is our most important consideration.
- The children continuing their learning is a priority.
- School would always aim to be open and staff will always aim to be here as normal.
- Local considerations will need to take place as road conditions and local circumstances will vary from school to school.
- Some schools may have more issues if staff have issues traveling to and from their home.
- Children need to be taught how to dress, walk and play safely in snowy and icy conditions.

However, on occasion, and always as a last resort, the school may need to close. This may be as a result of some or all of the following situations:

- (1) Staff are unable to get to school during the day due to adverse road conditions which will cause unsafe staff: pupil ratios.
- (2) The heating systems in one of the buildings fails and cannot be repaired before 10.00a.m.
- (3) The school site and surrounding approaches are deemed too hazardous by the Principal and Senior Leadership team

Some adjustments may be made to the organisation of the school day in order to keep children safe.

Precautions in the event of ice/snow extremely cold weather

- The school will publish a gritting route online.
- Playgrounds will not be routinely gritted, so that children can explore, however part of the playground should be cleared for those who are not able to access the snowy areas.
- The gritting plan will take into consideration places where people need to accumulate or practice will ensure that people are kept moving and so the area gritted can be kept at a minimum,
- The gritting route will be displayed at key points on entry to the site.
- Snow will be cleared as much as possible from the gritting routes by the Site Management Team.
- The Site Management Team will grit the routes published in the morning.
- The Site Management Team will grit the routes towards the end of the school day before collection time.
- Staff members will check the safety of the playgrounds and the Site Management Team will grit the playgrounds, if possible, if they are icy before the children use them.
- Parents will be reminded of the need for children to wrap up warm and to stay to gritted paths for entry and exit.
- Vulnerable children will receive a welfare phone call if the school has made the decision to close.

Procedures for closing school during adverse weather conditions:



The decision of whether to close will be made by the Principal or Senior Leadership Team and Site Management Team, in consultation with the CEO of the Trust by 7am at the very latest.

Each day during adverse weather, the school website and Facebook and Twitter pages will be updated to give information – whether the school is open or closed. We will aim to do this as close to the time that the decision to open or close has been made.

In cold weather, parents, carers, children and staff are reminded to follow the gritted pathways which are marked on the gritting plan which is displayed on the school fence and on the school website.

In the case of a school closure, learning will be provided online for all children.

At the start of the school day:

- Parents will be informed of whether the school is closed by school systems (Social media)
- The Principal or Senior Leadership Team will contact the local radio station (Signal One) using the agreed process. Note that that announcements will only list schools that are closed – not schools that are open.
- Parents are asked to note that it may not be possible for staff to answer the telephone and we would ask that you do not phone school but, instead check the described methods of communication. Listening to the local radio for details of any closure is the preferred method of communication for parents without mobile phones.
- The Principal or Senior Leadership team will contact Cheshire East Council, informing them of any closure and ensuring the closure is added to the county web site.

During the school day

- Once a decision has been made to open the school, it will only close during the day if the heating breaks down or if running water becomes unavailable, and children and staff members' health is put at risk-
- If the weather becomes severe during the day, parents may contact the school if they feel that they would like to collect their child early for safety reasons (ie travelling/walking long distances or collecting other children from local schools). Parents will then be advised that children can be collected from 1.15pm onwards (i.e. after lunch).
- The school will remain open until the end of the school day 3.15pm (KS1) and 3.20pm (KS2). If parents are delayed due to adverse weather conditions, they should contact the school if possible to give an anticipated arrival time
- Children will be supervised until a parent/carer is able to collect them
- Parents must consider their own safety, traffic congestion and the safety of others in these circumstances and understand that will be cared for until it is possible for them to be collected.

Attendance

If the school is closed, there will not be any absence recorded in the registers. On occasions when the school is open but the weather makes travelling to school difficult, pupils' attendance will be recorded as L (late before registers close). However, if the school is satisfied that the reason for the absence is that the child could not get in because of the adverse weather that absence will be authorised using the code C (other authorised absence).

Adjustments during the school day

In order to keep children safe, it may be necessary to adjust the organisation of the school day or restrict outdoor access during winter weather.



- Parents/carers will be asked to ensure that their children are dressed appropriately for the weather. In colder weather this should include a change of footwear, gloves, a hat, a scarf and a warm waterproof coat (all named). A spare pair of socks is also helpful.
- Children who have appropriate clothing will be able to go and play in the snow if the Senior Leadership Team allow.
- Dynamic risk assessments will be used to ensure that children can play out in the snow and icy weather - changes that may be made- children taught to walk only on the ice with hands out, reduced numbers of children on a space if needed. Where local circumstances deem necessary a playground may be closed.
- If the temperature drops below zero or if there is a wind chill factor below zero, staff may take the decision to keep children inside or may shorten a playtime. Wherever possible it is preferred that children enjoy fresh air and exercise and so play outside.
- During snowy weather we will encourage children to build snowmen on the field rather than the playgrounds.
- We encourage exploration and building safely with the snow.