



Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions

November 2019

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
- Conditions on site are dangerous
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.

If the school is to close:

1. The closure will be announced on the school website and our phone message system.
2. The school will endeavour to contact parents via phone, text message or email where possible.
3. Decisions will be made in consultation with the Head Teacher of Whitehall Junior School.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However parents are expected to check the website, or contact the school themselves when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed. The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence to the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents the child coming into school risks their child being registered as an un-authorised absence. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.

In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents will be contacted by text and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.

In the event of snow some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children and visitors will be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this in assembly. Before and after school opening hours parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground.

In icy conditions the premises manager will salt wide pathways as follows:

- A) from the front gate to the hall door
- B) from the door to the rear of the main building, under the covered walkway to the Nest
- C) from the Nursery gate to the Nursery entrance

Where possible, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

On school days where the school is closed to pupils, the pathway will still be maintained during snow and ice weather on a daily basis by the premises manager, so as to keep the pathways clear and prevent build up of ice and snow.

During significant adverse weather conditions there will be no access to the school site from the Whitehall Road entrance.

- Pupils in Nursery will access the nursery using the Nursery path as usual.
- Pupils in Reception, Year One and Year Two should use the main entrance, and should be taken directly to the school hall.

The School Hall will be open from 8.30am for parents to bring their children inside. Staff will be in the hall to meet the children. Parents will be asked to stay outside and should leave the site quickly after dropping off their child so as to ease congestion of pathways and entrances.

Parents must park outside the school and must not drive into the school car park under any circumstances.

During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to parents and children at the beginning and end of school, and if the Head Teacher decides it necessary, at break times as well.

In the Head Teacher's absence the Senior staff on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.

There are a number of stages of action that the school will take in case of adverse weather:

Stage 1 Winter preparedness and action	Stage 2 Severe weather forecast - alert and readiness	Stage 3 Severe weather action	Stage 4 Major incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate equipment needed for cold weather conditions e.g. shovels, salt • Information to go on website stating what will happen in the event of severe weather (e.g. snow inc poss of restricting normal entrances to school) • Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions to be shared with staff • Procedure for sharing information to be decided – phone numbers sought • Pupils to be pre-warned about what may happen in adverse weather conditions, and how to stay safe, dress appropriately etc. through assembly and circle time. • Classroom temperatures to be monitored regularly. 	<p>Continue all Stage 1 actions, and additionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to be given to parents and families to remind of procedures and pre-warn. • Staff to be given advice on driving in snow and ice • Emergency staffing plan to be considered. • Salt spread in advance of adverse weather, where possible • Assess weather at regular intervals throughout the day. Alert parents at earliest convenience if school is to close early and of plans for following day. • Prepare signs to warn pupils, parents, visitors of risks and to identify pathway / entrance / exits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess site. Clear path into school. • Update school website. • Member of staff allocated to answer phones • Assess staffing and make arrangements for cover if necessary. Cancel any cover. • Mats to be put to doors in hall to minimise slip risk. • Hall doors to open early for parents to drop off children. All staff to be in hall by 8.30 . • Assess weather at regular intervals throughout the day. Alert parents at earliest convenience if school is to close early and of plans for following day. • Assess whether pupils are allowed outside – possibly in small groups. Any areas deemed unsafe are to be cordoned off. Pupils will be alerted to safety issues and staff will do a risk assessment before going outside. 	<p>Monitor local and national news and websites.</p> <p>Seek advice from borough and government agencies.</p>