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ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

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**ADVERSE  
WEATHER  
PLANNING FOR  
TRUST SCHOOLS  
AND SETTINGS**

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QUEENS ROAD ACADEMY

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## Introduction

St. Mary's Academy Trust has identified procedures to ensure the business continuity of schools and education settings when facing difficulties in doing so due to adverse weather.

Our priority is to support schools and education settings to remain open and maintain the provision of education and services to pupils in order to;

- Maximise attainment and achievement
- Ensure the health and safety of pupils
- Release parents / carers to maintain critical services across Barnsley

Schools will remain open unless

- The health & safety of pupils and staff are compromised
- There are insufficient staff in attendance to manage the school safely
- There is significant damage to premises, or failure of essential utilities

A control team made up of representatives from the Head teachers and key support services for schools and education settings has been identified within the Trust. The team's core duties will be to;

- Meet/contact daily or as required in response to an occurrence of adverse weather.
- Manage information flow between schools and settings, parents / carers, contractors, support services and the media
- Make risk assessments and provide advice on these to schools
- Provide general guidance and support as required

## **For parents**

If the school is to close;

The closure will be recorded in a variety of ways. Should the conditions around the school be a concern in the morning or there is the likelihood of insufficient staff being able to reach the school safely, (including the caretaker), the Headteacher / St.Mary's Academy Trust Executive Principle will contact the Local Authority and school closures reporting, as soon as possible to state the school will be closed. This information will then be passed directly onto the local radio stations and appear on the Barnsley County Council Website. Information will also be posted on the school's website;

[www.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk](http://www.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk)

In addition to this we will use the school to parent text service.

Parents who have ensured we have the most up to date contact numbers and are registered with school will receive a text message and / or email directly to their mobile phones or computers. This will be activated by the school secretary/Headteacher once the closure has been agreed.

The school will make all practical efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during periods of adverse weather as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty of the situation places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However parents are expected to check the website / and or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is clear that a closure is a possibility. This helps to keep the phone lines as clear as possible for any outgoing calls which need to be made by the school.

The school also appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive to school later than normal. If the school is closed or closes through the day due to anticipated adverse weather, all children's absence will be officially authorised. However, if parents do not bring children into school due to not being able to travel in because of snow or ice, we request that you telephone the school and inform us of the situation as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each individual case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence with the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school will be closed without gaining confirmation or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents their child coming to school, risk the child being registered as having an unauthorised absence.

## **SNOW PLAN**

Even when cleared and gritted, parents, children and visitors must remain aware that pathways do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this in assemblies. Whilst the Headteacher has overall responsibility for Health and Safety, personal responsibility by staff, parents, children and visitors to exercise caution when entering / exiting the site is requested.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

In the event of adverse weather, all staff - run clubs after school will be cancelled unless stated by the teacher in-charge specifically. On occasions whereby the weather is turning, or is anticipated to turn treacherous, the

after school club may also be cancelled to allow the caretaker to secure the site at 3.30pm and prepare the pathways.

### **PARTIAL CLOSURE**

If the school is able to partially open, details of which classes will be operating as usual will be posted in the ways as previously mentioned. However, if less than 50% of the classes can open, then the whole school will be closed. This is based upon the number of qualified teachers or HLTAs able to get into school and planning on a ratio of 1:30 in Key Stage 1 and 1:30 class size for KS2. This also includes all PPA time / Management time being void in events of adverse weather to ensure as many staff as possible are available to teach. This in itself can be difficult for parents who may then have children in several classes which may include some which are open and some which are closed. In this incidence, the school cannot take in the additional children whose classes maybe closed but do expect children in those classes open to be in school, unless it is too treacherous for children and parents to travel into school. Ratios of key first-aid at work and pediatric first aid ratios will be factored into this decision.

### **LATE OPENING**

In some situations, it maybe that school can open later during the morning when the caretaker has been able to secure the clearing and gritting of the pathways and sufficient staff can make it safely into school. In incidences such as these, information to this effect will be posted as previously via Parent mail, the school website and local radio stations. If this option is available, then school will open no later than 10.00am due to catering arrangements and preparation.

### **DAYTIME SNOW CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE AREA**

Should children need to leave school early due to worsening conditions, a message will be sent out via the local radio stations, Parent text service and where necessary, a phone call to the individual parents. Such an early release would only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. For staff living some considerable distance away from the school, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to allow these staff members to leave before the end of the day, ensuring that the classes can be covered until 3.30pm by another member of the school staff.

In the absence of the Headteacher, the Assistant Headteachers or other members of the School's Leadership team will be responsible for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.

**For School**

## Early Planning

Adverse weather can strike at any time. It is important that you are as prepared as possible and ready to respond in order to reduce the impact on the safety, well being and comfort of pupils, staff and the school community.

## Reducing Risk for Flood, Wind, Snow and Ice - What we do now.

### Heating

Ensure heating systems are working correctly, with particular attention to time switches and frost protection. Ensure adequate fuel supplies are available for oil and solid fuel fired boilers.

Heating system service engineer Tel: **Carillion**

### Catering

Contingency for catering (contact School Food Services :**Carillion**)

### Utilities – Gas, Water, Electricity

Please enter non emergency contact details from your latest statement/invoice

Gas                    Tel        Carillion

Water                Tel:       Carillion

Electricity:        Tel:       Carillion

(Electrical emergency) **0800 375675** (YEDL) <http://www.northernpowergrid.com/>

### Site Management & Access

Ensure adequate supplies of grit salt are available and that pedestrian routes within the school site are clear at the start and finish of the school day. Contact **Carillion** for **grit salt** supplies -

Ensure that any tiled areas near entrance doors are kept as dry as possible

Inform **Carillion** of leaking guttering or overflows to prevent ice forming on pathways etc.

In windy conditions – regular visual checks of the exterior building for any loose material such as roof coverings, gutters, masonry etc and check trees for any fallen or damaged branches, particularly close to paths, play areas or any part of the buildings.

Adverse weather advice is available through Teachernet

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/educationoverview/severeweather/>

**School and settings are expected to maintain up to date contact details for parents and carers and to have identified a communications plan which has been shared with key stakeholders.**

## Appendix 1 Risk Assessments

<p><b>ACCESS &amp; DEPARTURE RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CLEAR PATHS AROUND SCHOOL</li><li>• ABILITY TO GRIT &amp; SALT</li><li>• PHYSICAL LAY OUT OF SCHOOL</li><li>• DISABILITY ACCESS – STAFF &amp; PUPILS</li></ul>	<p><b>TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PUBLIC TRANSPORT</li><li>• DEDICATED SCHOOL BUSES</li><li>• SEN TRANSPORT</li><li>• ROAD NETWORKS</li></ul>	<p><b>RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FLOOD AND WIND DAMAGE - EXTENT OF DAMAGE (areas affected)</li><li>• KITCHEN / CATERING ARRANGEMENTS CONTINGENCY FOR CATERING</li><li>• INADEQUATE SUPERVISION - STAFF TO PUPIL RATIO (use of supply staff)</li></ul>
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<p><b>ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vary 'Open' and 'Close' times</li><li>• Open to specific age groups<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vary activities</li></ul></li><li>• Alternative Provision<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partial Open</li></ul></li></ul>
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<p><b>OTHER ISSUES RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety of children going home early</li><li>• First aid provision / medical needs</li><li>• Communication with parents / transporters</li><li>• Weather forecast (improvement / deterioration)</li><li>• Communications – contact details</li></ul>
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## Appendix 2 Actions to take in the event of Adverse Weather

Check BBC Weather <http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/2656284> for messages regarding anticipated adverse weather.



