

Severe Weather Policy

Last Review: June 2025
Next Review: By end of Summer Term 2026
Committee: Premises

Rationale

Our primary duty is to educate students in a safe environment. Extreme weather conditions may lead to a conflict between our duty to educate and our concern for safety. This document sets out the procedure for such conditions.

School Closure Procedures

- Parents and students should assume the school is open unless there is first-hand information from the school to the contrary.
- Only the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher may make a decision about school closure
- Recognising our duty to educate and care for students, and to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to parents, this decision will be taken only in extreme circumstances
- It will be informed by the following considerations:
 - * Is there a Met Office Severe Weather Warning in place for the local area including for extreme heat? **This is the key question to consider in the event of a school closure.**
 - * Are there sufficient staff for legally adequate supervision?
 - * Can education, lunch, welfare etc be adequately covered?
 - * Is public transport operating adequately and are approach roads safe?
 - * Is there guidance or advice from the LA?
 - * Is the forecast for better or worse weather during the day?
 - * Can the site be made and kept safe for students and staff, inside and out?
 - * Can the temperature inside be maintained at required levels (18°C in standard classrooms)?

In the event of extreme heat

- Are there areas of the building that would exceed reasonable temperature levels?
 - * Can activities and their locations be amended for safe delivery?
 - * Is there advice on travel including public transport?
 - * Can hours be amended to avoid the hottest part of the day?
 - * What amendments need to be made for staff who need to remain on site?
- In the event of closure, the Local Authority will be informed.
- The chart in Appendix 1 sets out individual responsibilities and arrangements in the event of closure

Closure for a whole day

- Where bad weather sets in overnight, any decision to close will be taken no later than 6.30 a.m. on the morning of the closure. Earlier notice may be possible where the forecast indicates a high risk of very bad weather
- Notice will be placed on the school's website and sent to parents via SMS/email. If possible, the school's answerphone will reflect the status of the school.

Closure during the day

- Where bad weather sets in during the day, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher may take the decision to close early. Notice of this will be posted on the website and sent to parents via SMS/email by 1.00 p.m. on the day of any closure (12.15 p.m. on Fridays). When the office closes, the answerphone will reflect the status of the school.
- Where this presents home supervision difficulties, students may remain at school until 3.30pm under the supervision of a senior member of staff. **Teaching and Learning Provision**
- Curriculum Leaders should ensure that virtual learning continues throughout the closure in line with the usual timetable.

When the school remains open, but transport difficulties result in high numbers of late arrivals

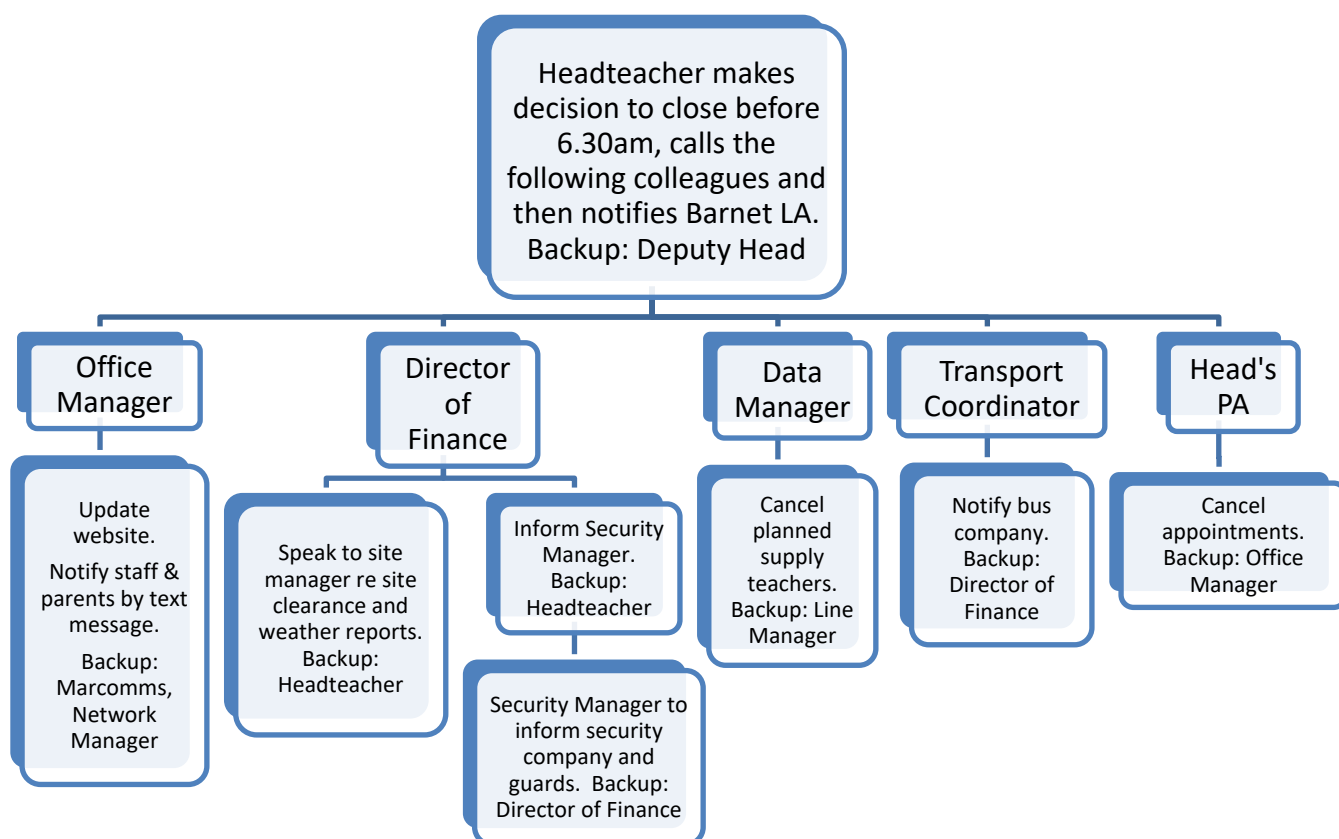
- The first member of staff to arrive must take charge should students arrive as well.
- The first staff to arrive should put a staff list on the reception desk – all staff should sign in on arrival.
- Students should be directed to the Hall where they can be supervised.
- As other members of staff arrive, and as practicable, year groups will be sent to different rooms, each supervised, until there are enough people present for all to be in tutor rooms.
- A tutor period will commence until a decision can be made to move to timetabled lessons.
- A notice should be posted on the Display Screens, telling students where to go.
- **Students must be registered** via paper registers if it has not been possible to activate e-registers. Registers should be kept open and no student should be signed in 'late' until timetabled lessons begin and a member of the support staff is available to receive late students and direct them to timetabled lessons.
- Telephone calls from parents: the school is open until a decision has been made by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to close. If parents ring to ask if they should send their children, they must be told to make their own decision about the practicality of travelling.

The school site in bad weather

- Where the school remains open in snow, the safety of staff and pupils on the site is the top priority. All staff should be aware of the risk assessment covering the hazards associated with snow and ice on the premises.
- Resources should be allocated to clearing the most used areas as a priority over those less used.
- Gritting of main access routes should be carried out twice a day, early in the morning and in the early evening.
- Appropriate checks should be made to ensure continued safety, especially in particularly dangerous areas.
- Outdoor areas may need to be taken out of use: these will be marked clearly.
- Care needs to be taken at points of entry to the building to avoid slip hazards from water and slush on shoes
- Particular care should be taken for anyone with special requirements.
- Snow clearance should not go beyond the site boundaries: if an area of the public highway is cleared there may be a common-law duty of care to ensure that it is cleared and remains clear.

Appendix 1.

Closure Procedure



- On an exam day the site must be accessible. Access will be through Westbrook Crescent. The text message will be adapted to include this information
- If we are closed, Site Manager will clear the site during the day (unless further heavy snow forecast) so that access will be as normal when we return
- If there has been snow overnight but we are opening, Site Manager will clear the Westbrook Crescent pedestrian route. Staff will park in Lawton Road and buses will drop off in Baring Road or Lawton Road being mindful to cause the least amount of disruption to the roads and local community. Office Manager will advise staff and parents by text message. Transport Co-ordinator will advise bus company.
- In the event of extreme heat, public exams will take place unless the DfE advise otherwise. All reasonable efforts will be made to hold examinations in the coolest spaces and to make students and supervising staff as comfortable as possible.