



## Adverse Weather Policy

Closing our School/Children's Centre is always a very difficult decision for the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. The decision to close is taken when the school judges that children or staff would face significant risks of serious injury both in school or travelling to school; remembering that many of our staff have to travel considerable distances.

Of course every day of learning matters so we always do our best where reasonably practicable to keep the School/Children's Centre open and safe.

During the winter months there are occasions when we can experience adverse weather conditions. It is always very difficult when we have snow and ice to determine how this will affect travel etc., and I would ask that you follow the policy below.

If at all possible the school will remain open and staff will be here as normal. However, due to road conditions some staff may be late arriving and the start of the School/Children's Centre day could be affected.

We always hope to be open as normal; however, if weather conditions mean that travel for staff or children will put them at risk of injury, or if we feel the site is unsafe, the School/Children's Centre will close.

In cases of closure, the following procedures are followed:

- The Chair of Governors and Head Teacher (in the case of school holiday the Children's Centre Manager in consultation with the Chair and Head Teacher if available) will make a decision based on local conditions as to whether it is safe to open the School/Children's Centre.
- Any communication will be made via our text service, the school website [www.fairway.barnet.sch.uk](http://www.fairway.barnet.sch.uk), the Barnet website [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)
- To enable us to open it may be necessary to delay the start time and again these details would be given to parents/carers.

### During the day

- If the weather becomes severe during the day then parents may contact the School/Children's Centre if they feel that they need to collect their child early for safety reasons (ie travelling/walking long distances or collecting other children from local schools).

- If the School/Children's Centre is forced to close early due to deteriorating weather, children will be supervised until a parent/carer is able to collect them. If parents are delayed due to adverse weather conditions then they should contact the School/Children's Centre if possible to give an anticipated arrival time. Parent/carers should also try to make arrangements for some other person to collect their child if they cannot get to the School/Children's Centre in a reasonable amount of time.
- Parents must consider their own safety, traffic congestion and safety of others in these circumstances and understand that children will be cared for until it is possible for them to be collected.
- No other students will be allowed to leave the School/Children's Centre early without permission from their parent/carer. If we believe that any child is at risk of being unable to travel home safely, we will contact their parent/carer

### **Further safety points during the day.**

- Paths will be cleared and gritted for safe entrance and exit to the site.
- Staircases and halls will be mopped as necessary to reduce the risk of slipping on wet surfaces.
- During snowy weather children should travel to school in boots and bring another pair of shoes to change into once they are inside the building.
- During snowy weather additional staff will supervise the play areas at the beginning and end of the day
- Staff will explain designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist.
- Parents/carers and children will be expected to follow these paths.

### **Children for whom transport is provided**

Transport provided for SEN children is facilitated by the Local Authority. Any decisions regarding transport are taken centrally by Barnet. If the school is open, it becomes the parents' decision and responsibility to bring their children to school.

### **Information for Staff**

- In the event of poor weather, it is expected that employees will make every reasonable effort to reach their normal place of employment. However, employees are not expected to, and should not, put themselves at risk.
- Employees who live in remote areas are aware of the potential difficulties they may face during periods of adverse weather and should be prepared to make appropriate arrangements in relation to attendance at work e.g. park in a main road.
- It is recognised that there will inevitably be occasions when weather conditions are so severe that some employees in outlying areas will either be prevented from getting to their normal place of work or will be late and/or need to leave early.
- It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that they have emergency care arrangements in place for their children in case of a school closure due to adverse weather.
- If for any of the above reasons it is not possible for the employee to be in work the employee should discuss the matter with the Head Teacher/Children's Centre Co-ordinator and will be entitled to take **unpaid annual leave (if available which is at the discretion of the Head Teacher or Children's Centre Co-ordinator)**
- The normal requirement for advance notice of the intention to take leave will be suspended in these circumstances.

- If an employee's normal place of work is open but it is deemed unsafe for him/her to travel, or if his/ her normal workplace is closed, he/she would be expected to work from home and be contactable by School/Children's Centre and check emails as directed by Head Teacher/Children's Centre Co-ordinator.

Any alleged abuse of this guidance will be subject to investigation and, if necessary, action, under the Disciplinary Policy of the Council.

Whilst it is appreciated that there may be operational and service delivery considerations in working during periods of adverse weather, the leadership team will ensure that employees are treated in an equitable and consistent manner and that the safety of employees is not compromised in any way.

### **Health and Safety Information**

The following guidance listed below is available on [BGFL](#).

- Health & Safety Bulletin 130 - Guidance on Temperature in Schools
- Health & Safety Bulletin 184 - Workplace Temperatures

Resources, including staff, should be allocated to clearing the most used areas in priority to those less used.

Gritting access paths early in the morning and in the early evening is likely to be most practicable, but individual circumstances may vary.

Appropriate checks should be made to ensure continued safety. Concerns over the safety of certain external pathways, circulation routes, play areas etc. It may be appropriate for affected areas to be taken out of use. If this is the case, this must be marked clearly using signs/cones/tape to ensure staff, children, parents, visitors etc. are made aware.

Consider anyone with special requirements.

If the play areas remain in use, supervision levels may need to be increased. Any particularly dangerous areas which require extra care should be checked / treated more frequently e.g. steps, slopes, hidden gullies etc.

Staff should take responsibility for following the designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist.

Employees should be reminded of their duty under Section 7 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 to take care of their own safety, particularly when moving about in slippery conditions. One frequent hazard is the slippery floors caused by people bringing in water and slush on their shoes. Extra care with doormats and floor cleaning will help reduce this hazard.

Staff should be aware that when cleaning snow and ice, local council advice states, "It is probably worth stopping at the boundaries of the property under your control. If an area of the public highway is cleared there is a common-law duty of care to ensure that it is cleared and remains clear."

If the School/Children's Centre is open, and some pupils whose homes are not within walking distance get to School/Children's Centre by transport provided by us or a Local Authority, and that transport is not available because of adverse weather conditions, those children should be marked using code Y (Forced and Partial Closure). Code Y does not count as absence in the statistics.

Date : 13<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body by: I Dustagheer