



Bleak Hill Primary School

ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

AUTUMN 2025

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Education (school Premises) Regulations 1999
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Managing for Health and Safety (HSE)
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- Race Disparity Audit - Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website (Cabinet Office)

We have a duty to have in place clear procedures when some pupils may have to be sent home early or when a whole school may be forced to close because of adverse weather in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils and school personnel.

We have a responsibility to make every effort for the school to remain open whenever possible and the decision to close the school will be made after careful consideration of a number of factors.

We are aware that pupils are entitled to 190 days of schooling and some have an entitlement to free school meals, therefore, we will make every effort to ensure the school remains open. However, the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and school personnel remains our main priority.

The Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors has the responsibility for deciding to close the school either before the beginning of the day or during the school day after considering factors specific to the school.

We base our decision to close the school on whether:

- the transport and travel conditions allow pupils to get to and from school safely;
- the transport and travel conditions allow school personnel to get to and from school safely;
- there are enough school personnel to supervise the pupils;
- the school site is safe and not hazardous under foot;
- there is sufficient heating;
- there are sufficient catering personnel;
- there is sufficient food in place to feed pupils and school personnel;
- the weather forecast is likely to get worse during the school day.

We are aware that in exceptional circumstances, a local authority can order a blanket closure of all community and voluntary-controlled schools, but this does not cover foundation or voluntary-aided schools or academies, which are more autonomous.

We have a duty and responsibility to ensure the safety of all pupils and therefore no child will go home unescorted or without the prior knowledge of the parent / carer.

We believe that when the school is shut because of snow or extreme weather then children should be able to combine learning at home (e-learning) by downloading material from the school's website but also to enjoy the opportunity of snowman-building and snowball throwing. Teachers will be on hand to take and answer pupils questions online.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To make every effort for the school to remain open whenever possible.
- To consider factors specific to the school before making a decision to close the school during adverse weather conditions.
- To share good practice within the school.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to take the decision to close the school in adverse weather conditions;
- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for Health and Safety;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- the responsibility of involving the School Council in:
 - ☐ determining this policy with the Governing Body;
 - ☐ discussing improvements to this policy during the school year;
 - ☐ organising surveys to gauge the thoughts of all pupils;
 - ☐ reviewing the effectiveness of this policy with the Governing Body

- nominated a link governor to:
 - ☐ visit the school regularly;
 - ☐ work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
 - ☐ ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ☐ ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - ☐ attend training related to this policy;
 - ☐ report to the Governing Body every term;
 - ☐ annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- ensure risk assessments are:
 - ☐ in place and cover all aspects of this policy;
 - ☐ accurate and suitable;
 - ☐ reviewed annually;
 - ☐ easily available for all school personnel.

- work with the site manager during the autumn term to:
 - ☐ check resources such as:
 - rock salt
 - grit
 - shovels and other snow clearing tools
 - warning signs
 - ☐ ensure the boiler and heating system has been maintained and is in good working order;
 - ☐ ensure the 3 pedestrian entrances and pathways are kept clear of snow in the event of a heavy snowfall;
 - ☐ ensure relevant risk assessments are current and in place;
 - ☐ remind parents of school procedures in regard to adverse weather conditions.

- make the decision to close the school in conjunction with the Chair of Governors **before** the school day begins if:
 - ☐ weather conditions are too severe and hazardous for people to travel
 - ☐ the weather reports forecast severe weather throughout the day
 - ☐ insufficient school personnel are unable to come in to keep the school running smoothly and safely
 - ☐ we are unable to provide school meals for pupils
 - ☐ conditions on the school site are too dangerous to ensure the safety of pupils, parents and school personnel
 - ☐ the school heating system cannot produce and maintain sufficient heat

- make the decision to close the school in conjunction with the Chair of Governors **during** the school day if:
 - ☐ weather conditions are becoming hazardous for people to travel
 - ☐ there is a power failure due to the severe weather conditions
 - ☐ conditions on the school site are too dangerous to ensure the safety of pupils, parents and school personnel
- consider a temporary change to the school uniform in order to keep pupils warm;
- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor and coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

When the decision has been made to close the school the Headteacher will inform:

- parents via:
 - ☐ School Spider
 - ☐ the school website
 - ☐ school answer phone
 - ☐ the Local Authority website
 - ☐ local radio
 - ☐ local television
- school personnel
- the school transport contractor
- the Local Authority:
 - ☐ schools division
 - ☐ transport team
 - ☐ catering
 - ☐ cleaning

Role of the Health and Safety Coordinator

The coordinator will:

- carry out regular inspections of premises and school activities;
- assist in carrying risk assessments;
- investigate potential hazards, employee complaints, accidents and dangerous occurrences;
- make representation to employers and others on health and safety matters arising;
- provide information and guidance to school personnel;
- lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
- work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises regarding;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Site Manager

The Site Manager will:

- comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy, safety procedures and risk assessments;
- conduct health and safety adverse weather survey with the Headteacher and Safety Representative;
- report immediately any defects or hazards;
- during a heavy fall of snow ensure:
 - ☐ the main entrance is cleared and treated;
 - ☐ an access path to the main door is cleared and treated;
 - ☐ designated final exit doors from the school building are kept clear as far as is practicable;
 - ☐ that snow does not pile up over gullies;
 - ☐ that disabled parking bays are kept clear;
 - ☐ fire exits are kept clear;
 - ☐ that icicles do not hang over entrances and exits;
 - ☐ the heating is kept on low during the night;
 - ☐ all blinds and curtains remain closed during the night and day, if possible, in order to retain the heat.
- when the snow begins to melt ensure:
 - ☐ there is no evidence of water leaks in ceilings etc.
 - ☐ that pathways are kept clear of slush.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- keep the school informed of any changes to their contact details;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- be encouraged to work in partnership with the school by making decisions and exercising choice in relation to their educational programme;
- listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher;
- ask for further help if they do not understand;
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school;
- liaise with the school council;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- keep the school informed of any changes in their contact details;
- check the school website etc
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- School Handbook/Prospectus;
- School website;
- Staff Handbook;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- School events;
- Meetings with school personnel;
- Written communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters;
- Annual report to parents;
- Headteacher reports to the Governing Body;
- Information displays in the main school entrance;
- School Spider
- Email

Training

We:

- have in place appropriate training for this policy that is undertaken by a registered training provider that covers:
 - ☐ All aspects of this policy
 - ☐ Health and Safety
 - ☐ Emergency Plan
 - ☐ Medical and First Aid
 - ☐ Equal opportunities
 - ☐ Inclusion
- ensure the content of all training is correct, delivered well and engages staff as we believe that the more engaging training is, the better the outcomes that we need to measure;
- can provide data that evidences staff understanding by using a simple short multiple-choice test through national online Safety/College
- have in place evidence for all staff to confirm training undertaken.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Race Disparity Audit

We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment and the criminal justice system.

The educational section of the audit that covers differences by region; attainment and economic disadvantage; exclusions and abuse; and destinations, has a significant importance for the strategic planning of this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed every 3 years or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

- Emergency Plan
- Health and Safety
- First Aid

We believe this school policy:

- is an essential part of the school;
- supports staff in managing certain situations;
- forms an important framework that will ensure consistency in applying values and principles throughout the establishment;
- provides guidance, consistency, accountability, efficiency, and clarity on how the school operates;
- provides a roadmap for day-to-day operations;
- ensures compliance with laws and regulations, gives guidance for decision-making, and streamlining internal processes;
- is designed to influence and determine all major decisions, actions and all activities taking place within the boundaries set by them;
- stems from the school's vision and objectives which are formed in strategic management meetings.