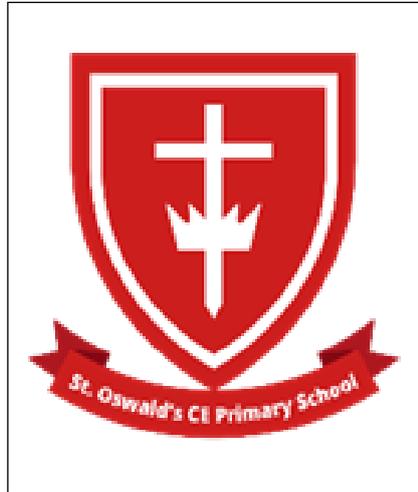


Adverse Weather Conditions Policy & Procedures



RESPECT. RESILIENCE. KINDNESS

Vision

Through valuing all individuals as children of God we believe in promoting an inclusive school community, rooted in mutual respect, understanding and kindness towards others.

As God taught us:

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life.' (Proverbs 22:6)

Ours school's vision is to nurture a resilient community where the love of learning thrives.

We foster an environment where every member feels supported in order to flourish, be empowered to overcome challenges, embrace growth and contribute positively to God's world.

'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher shall have oversight of this policy and ensure all staff follow procedures and that these are carried out.

The effectiveness of this policy shall be monitored during Governor's meetings.

Date approved	Next Review Date	Signed by
13.03.2026	September 2027	

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Purpose

This policy reflects the school procedures in relation to adverse weather conditions at St. Oswald's Church of England Primary School.

Audience

This document is intended for all staff. It is also intended for school governors, LA inspectors / advisers, and inspection teams. Copies are provided for all staff on the school's staff shared drive and on the school website.

Aims and Objectives

St Oswald's CE Primary School aims to maintain safe access, egress and routes across the school site as far as reasonably practical with the resources available.

All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the school remains open as normal, partial closure will always be considered before the decision is made to completely close the school. As a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, we whole heartedly believe in the following articles:

Article 28: (right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free ...

Article 29: (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.

As a Christian school we base every decision we make with our Christian Vision at the heart. We will endeavour to keep our school open and operating as normal, we encourage the values of perseverance and resilience. However, in the event of severe adverse weather it may be necessary to make the decision to close the school, for the safety of the children and staff.

The decision to close will be made by the Headteacher after considering the following: -

- Health and safety – will remaining open constitute a significant risk to pupils and/or staff?
- Availability of staff – has the severe weather meant that a significant number of staff have been unable to attend, making it impossible to open?

Our first priority will always be to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, parents and families. Where practical, we will consider opening later in order to enable staff and children to have additional time to travel to school safely.

We will clear paths within school to make access as safe as possible, and will keep supplies of grit to support this.

School Closure Procedure

Once the decision to close school has been taken, the Headteacher /Bursar will contact Sefton Communications Team at the earliest opportunity and complete ensuring the school closure procedure can commence.

If the school is to close:

1. The closure will be recorded on the school website www.stoswasldscatholicprimary.co.uk
2. The school will alert parents to the closure using the school app (school spider) or e-mail.
3. The school will endeavour to keep parents informed during this time, as we appreciate that uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents. Parents are however expected to check the website and school app.
4. 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 they are likely to be delayed.
5. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.
6. 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 the school app, e-mail or a phone call either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. All parents/carers are urged to ensure that mobile phones are always switched on and audible in case we are trying to contact you.
7. In the event of snow, some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children and visitors must remain cautious as pathways, even where cleared, may remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this at school.
8. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground before and after school opening hours. In icy conditions the school site supervisor will salt wide pathways around the main routes and walkways that children and parents use.
9. During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to parents and children at the beginning and end of the school day and at break times as well.

In addition, parents and staff will be informed via our app (School Spider). A headline message will also be posted on the School website www.stoswaldsnetherton.com.

Where possible, a member of SLT will be in school to advise parents and families on arrival that the school is closed, and to answer telephone calls from concerned parents.

Parents will be informed via a newsletter of the school closure procedure to be followed.

If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

If there are adverse weather conditions in the morning the Head Teacher can allow parents to bring their children into the main hall to wait for school to begin.

Following snowfall during the school day if a parent rings requesting they pick their child up early due to the weather, and the decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher.

Informing staff

It is recognised that adverse weather conditions will, at times, make travel to and from work difficult. However, employees are expected to make all reasonable efforts to reach their workplace. In the event of closure, staff will also be informed by text message. All staff have been given a copy of the action they must take in the event of adverse weather.

It should be recognised that we will endeavour to keep our school open and operating as normal. However, in the event of severe adverse weather it may be necessary to decide to close the school for the safety of the children and staff.

Responsibilities

Premises Officer

- Proactively monitor the weather forecast and initiate preventative measures to manage risks from snow and ice, e.g. gritting the evening before.
- Proactively monitor current conditions and react to changing priorities, e.g. communicating temporary closure of playgrounds/pathways, amending/ increasing working hours to deal with increased levels of snow and ice.
- Ensure sufficient supply of suitable equipment and salt grit/other materials are available in order to meet demand.
- The immediate clearance of snow and ice in designated areas.
- Ensuring equipment provided to clear snow and ice is maintained in a satisfactory condition.
- Temporary closure of designated areas until cleared. Such areas should be clearly marked, e.g. signage, tape etc.

Clearance Procedures

- During severe weather the Premises Officer will suspend their other duties and priority will be given to clearing snow and ice.
- Premises Officer will be provided with suitable equipment and Personal Protective Equipment.
- In order of priority, treat paths with salt grit/other materials to maintain safe access, egress and routes across the site.
- Identify any particularly dangerous areas which require extra care and should be checked/treated more frequently e.g. steps, slopes, gullies which may be hidden etc. The single gate at Ronald Ross Avenue leading to the KS2 playground should be locked in heavy snowy or icy conditions; in these circumstances the gate by the school office will be used.

Priority

The school site will be gritted in the following order:

1. Main car park
2. Entrance and pathway from Ronald Ross Avenue to the Hall doors
3. Entrance and pathway from Ronald Ross Avenue to School Office
4. KS2 playground
5. KS1 playground
6. Pathway from KS2 playground to KS1 playground

Other staff

- Be aware that when areas have had salt grit/other materials applied it is not a guarantee that the paths are completely safe or slip-proof; travel with caution when moving around site.
- Be aware of the risk assessment in place for snow and ice and take responsibility for following the designated routes when such conditions exist.
- Safeguarding their own, colleague's and pupil's health and safety.
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.
- Report any internal wet areas/external icy patches to the school office who will inform the Premises Officer to enable them to position wet floor signs/mop up any excess water/re-apply salt grit/other materials.
- Communicate to children the need to wear appropriate footwear in snow and ice and to exercise caution when moving around site.

Where snow has fallen, clear a path 1 metre wide in order of priority and treat cleared paths with salt grit/other materials to maintain a clear pathway especially where temperatures remain below freezing.

Routes will be regularly checked throughout the day to ensure freezing or further snow coverage has not occurred. Additional care should be taken when clearing sloping pathways and steps, it may be necessary for safety reasons to consider the temporary closure of some non-essential areas of the premises (e.g. steep pathways, playgrounds, etc.) to avoid risks to staff, pupils or visitors. An assessment of the situation will be made by the Premises Officer.

To gain the most economical and environmental solution the minimum amount of salt grit should be used. As a guide a good handful is sufficient to treat 1m². There is no advantage in applying grit salt/other materials to deep snow; this should be cleared from the path first.

When severe weather is forecast site staff will spread salt grit/other materials the night before as well as on arrival at 6.00am or earlier by arrangement.

In extreme conditions the Premises Officer will investigate the snow clearing services at the local authority.

The gritting of roads and pavements outside the site are dealt with separately by the Sefton Council.

Flooding

The school field and path around the Nursery is prone to flooding and at times makes access across the school path from the Junior playground to the infant playground impossible. In these circumstances' parents are asked to access the infant playground via the Ronald Ross entrance next to the church.

The rest of the school is usually unaffected. If there is flooding within the school all reasonable risk assessments will be undertaken to ensure the school continues to function safely. If this cannot be done the school closure procedures will be followed as explained above.

Wet Morning Breaks

A member of SLT will decide if the weather is bad enough for a 'wet' break.

If a wet break is declared no children must be left unsupervised.

One member of staff (Teacher or Teaching Assistant) should remain in the classroom to supervise break with all children remaining in their own classes.

Members of staff who stay in the classroom during the 'wet break can take a break once lessons have resumed.

Wet Lunchtimes

A member of SLT will decide if the weather is bad enough for a 'wet' lunchtime.

If a 'wet' lunchtime is declared the Lunchtime Supervisors will supervise the children in the classrooms. No children must be left unsupervised.

High Winds

When a yellow weather warning has been issued for High Winds the outdoor areas will be checked for debris by the Premises Officer and cleared away and/or blocked off for safety.

Any loose equipment outdoors must be secured.

All staff are responsible for Health and Safety – if any loose equipment that can be blown away is seen by a member of staff it must be removed and secured immediately.

It maybe deemed unsafe to have playtimes outdoors and an indoor playtime will take place.

Early Years – as the children have outdoor provision it must be risk assessed by the EYFS staff and cleared by the senior management at the time (Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher) before the children should be allowed out for continuous provision. Account must be taken into the age of the children.

KS2 children maybe allowed out to play without any play equipment if safe to do so as there is no loose equipment on the junior yard.

Equality Implications

There are none associated with this policy.