



Severe Weather and Emergency Short-Term Closure Policy

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Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out how St. George's Church of England Primary School will respond to severe weather or other emergency conditions that may result in a short-term closure or partial closure of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors
- Ensure clear, timely decision-making
- Provide consistent communication with parents and carers
- Maintain appropriate continuity of learning during short-term closures

This policy applies to temporary emergency closures only and does not replace wider critical incident or business continuity procedures.

Christian Vision and Values

In line with our Christian vision, rooted in John 10:10, decisions taken during severe weather are guided by care, responsibility and wisdom. We seek to enable our community to flourish by acting calmly, compassionately and decisively, prioritising safety while serving families and staff well.

Definition of Severe Weather and Emergency Conditions

Severe weather or emergency conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- Snow, ice or prolonged freezing conditions
- Flooding or severe rainfall
- Extreme heat
- High winds or storms
- Loss of essential services such as heating, electricity or water
- Local incidents that make the site unsafe or travel hazardous

Principles for Decision-Making

The overriding principle is safety.

Decisions will take account of:

- The safety of pupils, staff and visitors on site
- Staffing levels required to operate safely
- Site conditions, including access routes and outdoor areas
- Local travel conditions and weather forecasts
- Anticipated deterioration later in the day

The school will always aim to remain open where it is safe to do so.

Authority to Close the School

The decision to close the school, delay opening, partially close, or close early will be made by the Headteacher.

This decision will be confirmed by the Chair of the Local Academy Board.

Only in the absence of the Headteacher does decision-making authority pass to the Deputy Headteacher.

Closure Before the School Day

Where severe weather is anticipated:

- A decision will be made by the Headteacher as early as possible
- Staff will be notified by **06:30**
- Parents and carers will be notified by **07:00**

Communication will take place via:

- A dedicated school closure page on the website
- Email to all parents and carers
- An Arbor in-app message (parents are expected to enable notifications)

Closure During the School Day

If conditions deteriorate during the school day:

- Parents and carers will be asked to collect children as soon as possible
- Pupils will remain supervised at all times
- Children will only be released to named adults

If a different adult is required to collect a child, parents must email office@stgeorgesb16.bdmat.org.uk

The school will provide a specific collection time, and parents must take every reasonable step to collect their child within this timeframe.

All collection arrangements will be communicated clearly via email.

Communication with Parents and Carers

Clear and timely communication is essential during emergency situations.

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring contact details are kept up to date

- Checking email, the school website and Arbor notifications during periods of severe weather

Messages will include:

- The reason for closure
- Arrangements for collection or return to school
- Learning expectations during closure

Staff Attendance and Remote Working

Staff are expected to make reasonable efforts to attend work during severe weather, taking account of personal safety and travel conditions.

Where the school is officially closed:

- Absence will be authorised
- Staff may be asked to work remotely where appropriate, including planning, preparation or supporting learning continuity

Site Safety and Premises Arrangements

During severe weather, the school will take reasonable steps to reduce risk, including:

- Gritting and salting priority access routes
- Closing unsafe areas of the site
- Restricting outdoor play or moving to indoor breaktimes
- Adjusting entry arrangements where required

Parents and visitors are reminded that even where measures are in place, surfaces may remain hazardous.

Learning During Emergency Closure

When the school is closed due to severe weather, learning will be set for pupils.

By **09:30**, work will be published on the **school's closure page** and will include:

- A Times Tables or Numbots session
- A mathematics activity
- A spelling, punctuation and grammar task
- A reading task

Expectations will be proportionate and appropriate to the length of closure.

Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Following any significant emergency closure
- At least every two years