

Snow and Adverse Weather Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for managing snow and adverse weather conditions to ensure the safety of pupils, staff, and visitors while minimizing disruption to learning.

2. Scope

Applies to all staff, pupils, parents, and visitors at Martha H School.

3. Policy Statement

In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow or adverse weather, the prime concern of the school must always be to ensure the safety of our pupils and staff.

The decision to close the school will take into account the safety of all our pupils, staff and visitors, some of which travel a great distance to school each day. We will always endeavor to open the school in the event of bad weather, if it is safe to do so. If the school is open in snow or adverse weather the decision as to whether to send a pupil to school, however, must be at the discretion of the parent, considering factors such as local road conditions and safety. The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavor to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if they are likely to be delayed. The school recognizes there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where most children can get into school. In such instances, parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation.

It may be necessary to ask all children to bring packed lunches if the kitchen staff are unable to reach school safely.

4. Legal Framework

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

- DfE Guidance: Emergency planning and response for education settings
 - Local Authority protocols
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5. Decision to Close

The Head Teacher (or delegated senior leader) will decide based on:

- Dangerous site conditions (ice, snow, heating failure)
 - Insufficient staff to maintain safe ratios
 - Hazardous travel conditions
 - Advice from Met Office and local authority
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6. Communication Procedures

- **Before School Day:**
 - Text/email alerts
 - School website
 - Local radio and Wigan Council closure list
 - **During School Day:**
 - Pupils remain supervised until collected safely
 - Parents contacted by text/phone
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7. Attendance

- Official closure = authorized absence
 - Parents must inform school if unable to travel safely
 - Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents the child coming into school, risks their child being registered as an unauthorized absence.
 - Remote learning will be provided during closures
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8. Site Safety Measures

- Gritting and clearing main paths
- Regular checks on heating and water supply

Review date: November 2027

- Safe entry/exit routes maintained
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9. Staff Responsibilities

- Make every reasonable effort to undertake the journey to school. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff may not be able to arrive before the normal start of the school day.
 - Report travel difficulties by 7:30 a.m.
 - Follow emergency communication cascade
 - Remain on site until all pupils are safely collected
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10. Monitoring & Review

- Policy reviewed every 2 years or after major weather events
 - Linked to Health & Safety and Emergency Plans
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Appendices

Appendix A: Remote Learning Protocol

Steps for Remote Learning During Closure:

1. **Notification:** Parents and pupils informed of closure and remote learning arrangements via text/email.
 2. **Daily Schedule:** Teachers share tasks by 9:30 a.m.
 3. **Lesson Delivery:** Combination of worksheets and practical tasks.
 4. **Submission:** Pupils submit completed work by deadlines set.
 5. **Support:** Teachers available for queries during normal school hours via email.
 6. **Monitoring and Assessment:** Teachers to monitor engagement and give constructive feedback on completed work.
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Appendix B: Communication Plan Template

Purpose: Ensure timely and clear communication during adverse weather.

Channels:

Review date: November 2027

- Text/email alerts
- School website updates
- Local radio announcements
- Wigan Council closure list

Steps:

1. **Decision Made:** Head Teacher confirms closure or delayed opening with Executive Head Teacher/Managing Director.
2. **Notify Staff:** Internal cascade via phone/text by 7:45 a.m. (Head Teacher/Administrator)
3. **Notify Parents:** Send text/email and update website/social media by 8:00 a.m. (Head Teacher/Administrator)
4. **External Notification:** Inform local authority, transport and radio stations.

Sample Message: "Due to severe weather, Martha H School will be closed on 25th November 2024. Remote learning will be available via text/email. Please check the website for updates."

Appendix C: Gritting and Site Safety Plan Template

Purpose: Maintain safe access routes and prevent slips during snow and ice conditions.

Key Areas to Grit:

- Main pedestrian paths
- Car park and drop-off zones
- Entrances and emergency exits

Schedule:

- Initial gritting at 7:30 a.m. (Caretaker)
- Re-grit during breaks if conditions persist

Responsibilities:

- Caretaker oversees gritting and records completion
- Additional staff assist as directed

Checklist:

- Grit bins stocked (Caretaker)
- Paths cleared of snow before gritting
- Warning signs placed in icy areas

Review date: November 2027

Record Keeping:

- Maintain a daily log of gritting times and areas covered.