

# Severe Weather and School Closure Policy

Updated January 2026



## Purpose

The school is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all pupils, staff, and visitors. In exceptional circumstances, such as severe weather conditions, it may be necessary to close the school or alter normal arrangements. Any decision to close the school will only be taken where absolutely necessary.

## Severe Weather Conditions

Severe weather may include, but is not limited to:

- Heavy snow or ice
- Flooding (localised or widespread)
- High winds or storm conditions
- Extreme heat (heatwaves)
- Any other weather condition that presents a risk to the health and safety of pupils, staff, or visitors, or impacts safe access to the school site

This policy applies to all such conditions.

## Decision-Making and Responsibilities

The decision to close the school, delay opening, or close early rests with the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School, following a risk assessment that considers:

- Staff availability and ability to travel safely
- Safety and accessibility of the school site
- Weather forecasts and local conditions
- Advice from the Local Authority and Enhance Academy Trust

Where appropriate, the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School will consult with the Chair of Governors and Enhance Academy Trust CEO before confirming closure.

The safety of pupils and staff will always take precedence.

## Severe Weather Overnight

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff are expected to make reasonable efforts to attend school.

- Staff who anticipate difficulties travelling safely must contact the school as soon as possible and no later than 7:30am.
- Staff unable to attend must inform the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School and will be expected to undertake appropriate school-related duties from home, where possible.

#### School Closure Due to Staffing or Site Safety

- If half or fewer of the staff are able to attend, the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School will:
  - Consult with the Chair of Governors and Enhance Academy Trust CEO
  - Inform the Local Authority
- A decision will then be made regarding school closure.

#### Communication with Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers will be informed of any closure via:
  - The school communication App
  - The school website
- Notification will be issued as early as practicable.

#### On-Site Arrangements

- Where possible, the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Assistant Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Leader and Premises Manager will attend the site.
- Pupils arriving at school during a confirmed closure will be refused entry, in line with safeguarding and health and safety requirements.
- Parents/carers will be advised to make alternative childcare arrangements.

#### Updates for the Following Day

- Parents/carers will receive an update **by** 3:00pm regarding whether the school will reopen or remain closed.
- The school website will be updated accordingly.

## Severe Weather During the School Day

If severe weather develops during the school day:

#### Early Collection of Pupils

- Parents/carers will be notified via the school App and website and asked to collect children early if required.
- Pupils will only be released to authorised adults.

## Safeguarding Arrangements

- If parents/carers cannot be contacted, pupils will remain in school under appropriate supervision until suitable arrangements are made.
- No child will be allowed to leave school unless the school is satisfied that appropriate care and supervision are in place.

## Staff Arrangements

- Staff may be permitted to leave early only once all pupils have been collected or safe staffing levels are maintained.

## Extreme Heat Arrangements

During periods of extreme heat, the school will take reasonable steps to reduce risk, including:

- Adjusting outdoor activities and playtimes
- Ensuring access to drinking water
- Encouraging appropriate clothing
- Using shaded or well-ventilated areas

In exceptional circumstances, changes to the school day or partial or full closure may be considered, particularly due to the age and vulnerability of pupils in Nursery to Year 2.

## Equality, Inclusion, and Safeguarding

Given the age of pupils, the school will take particular care to:

- Communicate clearly and promptly with parents/carers
- Consider the needs of vulnerable pupils and families
- Maintain safeguarding standards at all times

No child will be put at risk due to severe weather conditions.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any incident involving severe weather.