

Winchester House School
Adverse Weather Procedures

Version 1

Responsible Governor: N/A

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Adopted by Governors: n/a

Next review due: Sep 26

Adverse Weather Procedure

Adverse Weather refers to conditions which make the site hazardous and/or may cause harm/injury eg heavy snowfall, severe winds or heavy rainfall. At all times the safety of all users of the School is paramount. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that the School will open or remain open to best provide education to day pupils and to look after any boarders in school.

The weather incident may mean that outdoor school activities have to be paused or cancelled. In the event of lightning, outside activities will cease until half an hour after the last sighting of lightning.

Where after-school co-curricular activities need to be cancelled due to adverse weather, children will be supervised until their usual pick-up time and parents will be notified of the cancellation.

If heavy rain or other weather phenomena make pick-up harder and/or more dangerous. Children will be kept inside if possible and staff will relay messages to bring individual children out to waiting cars. Patience and vigilance will be needed by all members of the community at this time.

Where access to site is restricted due to a weather-related incident, a message will be sent to all parents at the earliest opportunity. This communication will contain amended pick up/ drop off information which may include a delayed start to the day and/or an early finish. To avoid congestion, it may also be necessary to stagger the arrival/departure of pupils. In the event that it is not safe for an area of the site to remain open, children will be moved to a safe area and a communication will be sent detailing information for parents.

There may be occasions of adverse weather when it is necessary to close the School. The decision to close the School will be made by the Head or, in the Head's absence, a Deputy Head or the Director of Operations in conjunction with senior staff. The decision will be communicated to parents by email on the School Portal and by email to staff by the Head's PA/school office as early as possible.

In the event of closures, teaching staff will provide children with suggested activities although if this is due to snow, families are encouraged to enjoy this relatively rare occurrence rather than looking for their child(ren) to be working at home. If the closure is for longer than 24 hours, then learning will start to shift online.

The school will consider the following.

- Weather forecasts with particular reference to weather warnings.

- An assessment of on-site conditions

- Actions and preparations that can be taken to mitigate the adverse effects of forecast or experienced weather.

- An assessment of which Staff are, or are able to be, on site.

- Scheduled events and any actions needed with regard to postponement or cancellation.

- The timing, nature and frequency of communication to the WHS community.

INTERNAL PROCEDURES

Staff should make reasonable attempts to get into School, assessing their own local conditions.

Staff should follow the normal absence and cover procedures if they are unable to get to school.

SMT will monitor weather forecasts with particular reference to weather warnings.

Dir of Ops will coordinate the assessment of on-site conditions.

Grounds and Maintenance, under the direction of the Dir of Ops will take any such actions and preparations that can be taken to mitigate the adverse effects of forecast or experienced weather.

- Where freezing conditions are forecast, the vehicle and pedestrian routes should be gritted.
- So far as possible, fallen snow should be cleared from vehicle and pedestrian routes.
- In the event of a Met Office Yellow, Orange or Red weather warning for Wind, the netting on the southern side of the Seligman Astro should be lowered for the duration of the weather warning.

SMT will consider which Staff are on or, are able to be, on site.

SMT, and area leads will discuss scheduled events and any actions needed with regard to postponement or cancellation.

The Head and Dir of Prep School Marketing and Admissions will consider the timing, nature and frequency of communication to the WHS community.

The Head, a Deputy or Dir of Ops will co-ordinate communications via Head's PA and/or School office.

Dir of Ops will complete any additional Risk Assessments.

The Head will consider if amended working hours are required to ensure the safety of the pupils.

If there is uncertainty about whether or not the school will open, eg if the school was closed the previous day:

Draft wording to parents by 7.30am	Draft wording to staff by 7.30am
<p>Winchester House School will be open today. Please travel only if it is safe for you to do so.</p> <p>Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing: coat, hat, gloves, boots.</p> <p><i>If your journey is delayed and your child arrives after 8.40am, please ensure they sign in at the School Office on arrival.</i></p>	<p>The school site is open. Please assess your local conditions. If it is unsafe or you need to delay coming into School please email absence@ and inform your line manager.</p> <p>Please check in with your Head of Section on arrival.</p> <p>Registration will be delayed until 9am, when we hope a normal timetable can begin.</p>

On days when it is clear that there will be significant difficulty for some of the community to get to school:



As staff arrive, they should make contact with the Assistant Head for their area of the school, (or designated other if not yet on site).

If drop off is likely to be a longer period of time, then staff may expect to assist on the drive/Bradshaw car park and/or look after more children in spaces such as the Forum/School Hall or share classes until other staff arrive.

The Head, via the Head's PA, will keep staff communicated via email. Staff supervising pupils at the start of the day should expect to be with those pupils until such time as there are enough staff are in school to begin the normal timetable.

Catering Department will consider food provision eg extra hot drinks, a reduced menu if fewer children/staff on site etc.

Senior staff will review conditions before each break time to ensure the safety of students and staff and make necessary decisions about indoor breaks/supervision etc.

If conditions deteriorate during the school day and the Head and Director of Operations decide to close the School. The following will be considered.

- Arrangements for boarders
- Gate opening times.
- Assembly locations for pupils eg Y7-8 Pupils in the SPO, Y5-6 pupils in Hall and Y3-4 pupils in Forum to more easily manage the staggered arrival of parents.
- Additional Staff presence on Seligman ramp, under the arch and in Bradshaw car park.
- Use of Radios.
- Contact minibus drivers/Trusted Cars/club takers/lets/afternoon and evening staff etc
- Comms and wording to parents

Example Comms

Thank you for braving the elements this morning. I am glad to report that the School was operating normally by 9am and we are nearly fully staffed. However, due to the fact that the majority of the children and staff live a distance from Brackley, and the conditions look to be worsening into this evening, I have made the decision that the school will close at 5pm today. Bradshaw (Pre-Prep) children will finish at their normal time today or at 4.45pm if they normally stay for later clubs. As always, the safety of families and staff are the priority. Children should be collected between 5pm – 5.15pm from the normal locations. For those who use school transport we will be in touch shortly about arrangements tonight. All Upper School Clubs will be cancelled and if your child has a paid Club then there will be no charge for tonight.

If there is any family for whom a 5pm collection is unworkable, please email the School office by 2pm stating what time you will collect your child and I will look after the children in the Reading Room. They will be provided with a snack but not a full tea. (Please only email the office if you cannot collect your child between 5pm and 5.15pm)

As you will understand, this is a difficult call to make given the variety of different forecasts and different locations of our families however I feel that clarity of decision and erring on the side of caution today is prudent. I hope this early notice will allow you time to plan accordingly.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.