



DOROTHY BARLEY JUNIOR ACADEMY SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY- Inclement Weather and Other Emergencies

* Last Reviewed September 2019

1. Purpose

This document clarifies Dorothy Barley Junior Academy's policy in relation to the impact on school and the requirement for employees to attend work during severe or inclement weather. Its purpose is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and employees should the school have to deal with severe, inclement weather;
- ensure that all employees are clear about their roles and responsibilities in the event of severe weather.

Once the decision to close a school has been taken, the following interested parties must be notified.

- Parents
- Staff
- Transportation
- Catering providers
- The adjoining infants school

NB: If the decision to close the school is made after school transport has started then staff should ensure that the parents of those children are contacted before being returned to their home. If necessary the children should be kept in school until the parents are contacted.

Reference should be made to the School Transport Policy document, Severe Weather or Utilities Failure - Guidance for Schools and other relevant documentation if the decision to close a school due to inclement weather is taken.

1.2 Definition

Inclement weather can be defined as snow, ice, fog and floods, which render journeys extremely hazardous.

'Extremely hazardous' includes those conditions in which the police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise people not to make unnecessary journeys (which do not include travelling to work) or indeed travel at all.

2. General

The decision to close DBJA will only be made as a last resort.

The responsibility for deciding to close the school because of severe inclement weather lies with the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, as the Headteacher must make the decision in the light of local circumstances. The safety of individual employees who may need to travel further

than pupils should also be considered when decisions are made.

This policy aims to maintain a service to parents and pupils for as long as is reasonably practical and that a partial closure of a school should be considered before complete closure. The Headteacher will also consider how the service can be delivered to the pupils when he/she only has a percentage of his/her staff available.

The interest and safety of children and employees are paramount under these circumstances. Allowing children to walk home unsupervised in potentially difficult or dangerous conditions or to return to an empty house may not be in their best interests. The age of the child in question must be taken into consideration when a decision is made.

Employees should only be allowed to go home early if there is a genuine need on the basis of their personal safety, but decisions must be made on an individual basis.

3. Pupils

In the case of extreme weather, any decision whether or not to close the school will be taken as early as possible. The Headteacher will consult with our site staff at 6:30am and make a decision about whether school will remain open. In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow, the prime concern of the school must always be the safety of the pupils and staff. Each school closure is logged on a daily basis after reassessment of conditions of the site and the surrounding area and the supervision of pupils.

4. Emergency Closures outside the school day (e.g. snow closures)

Once a decision has been made to close the school, the following actions will take place.

A notice will be posted to the school website. We will endeavor to update the website by 7am in order in order to give parents enough time to plan. ***We urge you not to phone school because we need to keep the telephone lines clear for staff.***

As a secondary communication method a text alert will be sent to the main contact for your child. (If you are unsure whether or not we have your most current contact details this can be confirmed with the class teacher or the office). Experience suggests that this is not always reliable at times of high demand on mobile networks and demands are greater when travel arrangements are disrupted.

If parents find that the school is to be closed, it is always helpful to contact others so that the message gets through effectively.

5. Emergency Closures within the school day

If the school has to be closed during the school day, the school will begin a procedure for contacting parents as soon as possible that the school is being closed, through text alerts as well as through phonecalls, and an update to the school website.

In such occasions, our main aim is to ensure the safety of the children on the school site whilst waiting to be collected.

6. Decisions to close the school

The decision to close the school is a serious one. Our main consideration will always be the health and safety of our children and staff. Please be aware that all schools are different and can be affected by such situations in different ways, depending on whether children come to school by bus or whether staff live a long way away etc.

Hopefully, it will not be necessary to close the school this winter but it is always best to prepare for the eventuality just in case.

If you update your mobile telephone number please ensure you advise the school office who will then update our system with the new number.