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# **THE DEANES**

## **ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY**



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## Statement of intent

It is the aim of The Deanes to ensure the academy remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

The Deanes intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the academy before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the academy.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the academy during adverse weather conditions.
- To make clear the grounds for a academy closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- To advise and inform staff and parents/carers of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a academy closure due to adverse weather conditions.

The severe weather procedures can also be found on the website using the link below

[Severe Weather procedures](#)

**Signed by:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Headteacher**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chair of governors**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Decision to close

- 1.1. The final decision to close a school/academy due to adverse weather conditions must be taken by CMAT as they are accountable directly to the Secretary of State for any decision to close.
- 1.2. If the headteacher, in consultation with the Site Team, feels that a closure may be necessary then for consistency of approach it would be sensible for academies in close geographical proximity to one another to discuss the situation and endeavour to reach a consensus re recommendations for closure, partial closure or to remain open.
- 1.3. Once a recommendation has been reached the CMAT CEO should be contacted immediately. They can be contacted via mobile phone 07733 328757 at any time on the morning of the proposed closure or the previous evening if applicable.
- 1.4. **The CMAT CEO will make the final decision whether to close or not.**
- 1.5. In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher will assume the responsibility of the headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.
- 1.6. The academy will be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:
  - Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
  - Staff numbers are insufficient for the academy to be operated safely.
- 1.7. In the event of academy closure:
  - The headteacher will inform staff and parents/ carers via text message, email, the SchoolComms App and via the Twitter feed.
  - The headteacher will place details on the academy website and the local authority School Closure web page.
  - The site team will display 'closure' signs on the academy's entrance gates.
- 1.8. In the event of the academy having to close during the day, parents/carers will be contacted via text message, email and the SchoolComms App, using the emergency contacts information. Details will also be provided on the academy website.
- 1.9. Students will be allowed to go home. There will be facilities available at the school for those students who cannot return home until their parents/ carers collect them.
- 1.10. A closure of the academy during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

## **2. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions**

- 2.1. If the academy remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only.
- 2.2. The Site Team will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.
- 2.3. All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.
- 2.4. A notice will be erected to inform that vehicles and pedestrians entering the academy grounds do so at their own risk.
- 2.5. At the headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents/carers.
- 2.6. All persons entering the academy buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

## **3. Health and safety**

- 3.1. The Deanes has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.
- 3.2. The Deanes will be liable if it is found that the academy has been negligent in its responsibilities and has not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents/carers entering the academy site.
- 3.3. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the academy site, in accordance with the academy's health and safety policies and procedures.
- 3.4. Staff, visitors and parents/carers have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the academy grounds.
  - Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.
  - If anyone believes that the site is unsafe, it is advised that they do not enter the academy grounds.
- 3.5. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the site team will assess the academy site and inform the headteacher by 7.00 am of the state of the site.
- 3.6. A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.
- 3.7. Closing the academy is a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.

3.8. When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

#### **4. Limited staff numbers**

4.1. During periods of adverse weather conditions, the academy will be flexible with teaching when subject to reduced staff numbers.

4.2. In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different age groups may be brought together to be taught under the supervision of the available teachers and support staff. No maximum class size limits are set out.

4.3. The academy will continue to strive to provide high quality education in the given circumstances.

#### **5. Attendance statistics**

5.1. Where the academy is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.

5.2. When a pupil cannot attend the academy due to adverse weather conditions, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will therefore not affect the academy's attendance statistics.

5.3. If the headteacher believes the pupil could have safely made it to academy but did not attend, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.

5.4. Parents/carers acting on the assumption that the academy would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the academy of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into academy, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

#### **6. Exam disruption**

6.1. If the academy has to close, or if a child misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, the academy will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.

6.2. The academy takes full responsibility for informing parents/carers and pupils of any agreed changes concerning an examination in adverse weather conditions. This includes:

- Using alternative venues.
- Exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject.
- The opportunity for the pupil to sit any missed exam later in the year.

#### **7. Emergency plan**

7.1. In the case of an emergency, the academy will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the First Aid Policy.

7.2. The Deanes emergency plan will contain:

- Information on where to find parent contact details.
- Staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies.
- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency.

7.3. All nominated staff will be trained to:

- Contact and liaise with emergency services.
- Provide first aid.
- Move children to a safe place.
- Calm and comfort children.
- Contact parents/carers.
- Deal with any media interest.

7.4. Each member of staff will have a copy of the emergency plan.

7.5. Paper copies of the plan will be kept at nominated staff members' homes in case of out-of-hours emergencies.

7.6. All parents/carers will be sent a letter informing them of their responsibilities, e.g. their duty to collect children.

## **8. Monitoring and review**

8.1. The effectiveness of the Adverse Weather Policy will be monitored and reviewed every 3 years by the headteacher

8.2. The date of the next review is December 2020.