



Silsden Primary School

Adverse Weather Policy

Approved: November 2019

Reviewed Jan 24

Review Date: September 25

Statement of intent

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

Silsden Primary School intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the school during adverse weather conditions.
- Make clear the grounds for a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- Advise and inform staff and parents of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher or the person delegated to act in their absence.

The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
2. Conditions on site are dangerous
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.

On the morning following a snowfall the situation needs to be assessed with an aim for a decision on opening/ delay opening or closing to be made by 7:45am. For before school provision a decision will be made before 7:00am

1. Site Manager assesses the situation and liaises with Headteacher should they feel that access to site could be an issue. This should be via mobile phone contact by 7am.
2. All reasonable efforts should be made by all Staff to reach school - including other modes of transport.
3. Staff should text/phone their Line Manager (same as for sickness absence) as soon as they are aware that they may be delayed / unable to travel to school and do this by 7:30am.

If the school is to close / delay opening:

1. The closure / revised opening time will be recorded on the Bradford Metropolitan District Council Website by the Head Teacher. This information will be displayed to the public via the schools directory on the BSO website;
bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/Home.aspx#schoolclosures

The media will then broadcast details.

2. Parents (and staff) who have opted into the scheme will be alerted to the closure using the PING service activated by the SBL/ Headteacher (from home if necessary) once the closure/delayed opening has been logged on the Bradford website. Circumstances permitting, this message will be sent by 7.45am. Closure/ delayed start times for Sprouts will be communicated in the same way by 7:10am.

4. The home page of Silsden Primary School website (www.silsdenprimary.co.uk) will be updated regularly to communicate the decisions that have been made, by a member of SLT.

****Parents should await a PING message/ check the website rather than phoning the school for information****

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed.

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 risk their child being registered as an un-authorised absence. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised.

In the event of the school or our after school provision having to close early due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents will be contacted by PING and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances and based on National weather forecast and advice. This decision is made by the headteacher and their decision is final.

Where the school is temporarily closed due to adverse weather, the headteacher will aim to ensure the school can provide remote education in line with the Remote Education Policy.

In the event of ice/snow some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children and visitors will be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Internal perimeter school gates may remain closed where paths are unsafe and children and parents should access the school via the main entrance which will be cleared.

Staff who are likely to face particular difficulties in getting home may have to leave work early, taking into account their personal safety. This decision will be taken in collaboration with the headteacher. Minimum cover arrangements in school will be provided by employees who do not have a particularly long or difficult journey home to ensure staffing ratios are maintained for the safety of pupils.

A closure of the school during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

Children should come to school with appropriate footwear – eg wellies – to enable playtime in the snow if considered appropriate – with alternative shoes to wear inside. Children coming to school wearing light/ canvas shoes will not be able to play out.

At the headteachers discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to pupils and parents

Before and after school opening hours parents are responsible for ensuring their children in the playgrounds do not slide/ throw snowballs/ play on the trim trails.

Where necessary, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

1. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions

When deciding whether the school will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the appropriate risk assessment.

If the school remains open - where there has been snowfall / ice all pathways wherever practical, will have been gritted / salted before pupils arrive on the premises.

At the headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents.

All persons entering the school buildings will be asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

2. Procedures for gritting

The first phase of gritting will start at 6am and will be undertaken by re-directed cleaning staff. For staff safety, gritting must not start until at least 2 members of staff are on site. Radios to be used to ensure communication between gritting team and someone inside the premises and regular checks to be undertaken to ensure staff undertaking gritting are safe.

This will prioritise those areas which are most used by pupils and staff. This includes the main entrance of the school, as well as the following areas:

- Path from the carpark to the main staff door.
- Path from pedestrian gate to the front door and round to staff entrance
- Path along the rear of the building upto Y3/4 door
- The triangle path at the front of the school
- Path on the driveway upto the end of the drop off bays

The school driveway and carpark will be gritted by a contractor

The second phase of gritting will include areas that are not covered by phase one, but are likely to be used. These include, but are not limited to, the following areas, within the internal perimeter fence.

- Path from reception gate to Y1/2 door.
- Path from nursery gate to nursery door.
- Path from MUGA entrance to West Wing door.
- Path from side gate (near ext PE sheds) around to west wing door.

The headteacher will decide which areas of the school are designated 'first phase' and 'second phase' for gritting. Points of higher risk of injury in the event of snow and ice will be identified by the site manager, such as entrances, exits and playground areas, and prioritised for clearance or gritting.

The site manager will ensure that the identified areas have been gritted and are safe for use. Any areas that have not been cleared or gritted will be clearly marked or cordoned off to prevent staff, pupils and visitors from entering.

The internal perimeter fencing may be kept closed until 8:45am to reduce the risk of incidents.

The supply of salt/grit is monitored by the Premises Manager to ensure that there is a sufficient amount to clear ice and snow if these occur. The site manager will also ensure that there are adequate supplies of equipment, e.g. shovels and gloves, to support gritting and clearance of key routes through the premises.

3. Health and safety

The school will recognise its duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds. The school will be liable if it is found to have been negligent in its responsibilities and not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents entering the school site.

The headteacher will be responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Staff, visitors and parents have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds. Staff members must take responsibility for the health and safety of any pupils under their supervision.

If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the appropriate risk assessment has been completed, they will be advised to not enter the school grounds and inform either the headteacher or site manager so the site can be reassessed.

A risk assessment of the site will be conducted by the site manager in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions and the headteacher will be informed of the outcome at 7am

Closing the school will be a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.

To minimise the risk of ill health during adverse temperatures, the school will:

- Encourage staff and pupils to keep as much of their skin as possible covered up during the summer months and wearing appropriate clothing during the winter months.
- Encourage staff and pupils to use sunscreen of at least sun protection factor (SPF) 15 with UVA protection on any part of the body that they cannot cover up during the Summer months.
- Encourage staff and pupils to take their breaks in the shade, if possible, rather than staying out in the sun.
- Reschedule work/outdoor lessons according to the outdoor temperature.
- Situate water points and rest areas in the shade during hot temperatures.
- Encourage staff and pupils to carry an inhaler at all times if needed.
- Encourage staff and pupils to stay hydrated.

To help protect staff, pupils and visitors during adverse cold weather, the school will:

- Ensure heating systems are maintained and in good working order, prioritising rooms being used where appropriate.
- Draught-proof windows, doors and other points of energy loss.
- Close rooms or buildings that are too cold to be used.
- Ventilate indoor spaces, especially where people gather, to help reduce the risk of infections spreading.
- Promote the flu vaccine for eligible staff and pupils, and encourage parents to keep their children up to date with routine immunisations.
- Reinforce messaging around the importance of hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Encourage physical activity where appropriate to help keep pupils warm.
- Provide information to parents and pupils on important logistical changes, e.g. disrupted bus routes, during severe weather.
- Ensure pupils have a sufficient supply of hot meals and snacks.
- Signpost parents to key sources of support, e.g. heating and other energy efficiency measures, during cold weather periods.

Where a pupil is suffering from heat exhaustion, the following steps will be taken immediately:

- Moving the pupil to as cool a room as possible and encouraging them to drink cold water
- Cooling the pupil as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods possible, e.g. sponging or spraying the pupil with cool water, placing cold packs around the neck and armpits, wrapping the pupil in a cool, wet sheet, and assisting cooling using a fan.
- Where the pupil does not respond to treatment within 30 minutes, an ambulance will be called.
- If the pupil loses consciousness or has a fit, they will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called immediately; treatment to cool the pupil will continue until the ambulance arrives.

Where a pupil is suspected to be suffering from heatstroke, 999 will be called immediately and the pupil will be cooled down in line with the procedures for managing heat exhaustion outlined above whilst awaiting medical assistance.

Where a pupil loses consciousness or experiences a fit or seizure, they will be placed in the recovery position, 999 will be called immediately and staff will follow the operator's instructions.

4. Attendance

Where the school is officially closed, all absence will be registered as authorised.

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

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

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

During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members will be expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work and are encouraged to liaise with the headteacher to discuss difficulties attending work due to adverse weather.

The school will understand that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk. It will therefore be at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.

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; a limit of 30 pupils per class will apply if the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven in that school year.

In the Head Teacher's absence a member of the Senior Leadership Team on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.

Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the headteacher, and any necessary amendments will be made during review.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher.