



**CUCKOO HALL  
ACADEMIES TRUST**

# Adverse weather policy

**Primary and Secondary Academies**

January 2017

## Introduction

It is the policy of our academies to make every effort to remain open whenever possible. The decision to close an academy will only be taken as a last resort further to a risk assessment which determines an unacceptable risk.

Examples of adverse or severe weather which may affect an academy can include:-

- Snow or prolonged, extremely cold weather
- Very strong or gale force winds
- Very heavy rain leading to the potential for flooding

## Pathways in the event of snow

In the event of snow some pathways will be cleared and gritted. Parents, children and visitors will need to be aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Pupils will be reminded of this in assembly. Before and after academy opening hours, parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide or take part in potentially dangerous activities when on the school playground.

In icy conditions the facilities team will salt / grit pathways in the playground but in some circumstances only one pathway may be available and this will be clearly identified. Essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

## Closing an academy due to adverse weather and rationale

The decision to close an academy either before or during the school day rests with the Headteacher.

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

- Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the academy running safely.
- Conditions on-site are dangerous.
- Severe weather has caused problems with fuel, water or catering supplies
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.

When severe weather has passed, the Headteacher and appropriate member of the Facilities team will conduct a visual check to the premises before announcing it will re-open.

In the absence of the Headteacher a Deputy Headteacher, or on-site member of the Senior Leadership Team will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the adverse weather policy.

## Academy closure before the school day

Once the decision to officially close the academy has been made, the Headteacher will arrange for this decision to be communicated as soon as possible and in the following ways.

- Parents / carers to be notified via a text message to the mobile number we hold on record
- Notification of closure to be clearly posted on the academy's website.
- Notification of closure posted on the academy gates
- Recorded telephone message on the academy's phone line

## Academy closure during the school day

Should children need to leave during the school day due to worsening conditions; a text message will be sent to parents / carers informing them that the academy is closed and to collect their children. Wherever possible, parents will be additionally contacted by a telephone call.

Once notified of a closure, it would be preferable for those parents who are coming to collect their children do so without telephoning the academy first unless absolutely necessary so as to avoid blocking the telephone lines.

Parents of secondary academy pupils should confirm with the office that they consent for their children to make their own way home.

### **Emergency supervision of pupils**

Supervision will be available in school until such time as pupils can be collected however we would expect parents to make an effort to collect their children as soon as possible.

## Communication and responsibilities of parents / carers

The academy will make all practicable efforts to keep parents / carers informed as to the situation with the academy during adverse weather conditions, as we understand that such conditions and the possibility of closure may place considerable difficulties upon parents / carers.

Parents / carers are expected to check text messages and / or the website when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

Whilst we endeavour to ensure contact details are up to date for the purposes of text message communication, it is also the responsibility and duty of parents and carers to inform us if any contact details have changed as per the **home-school agreement**

## **Recording absence**

Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.

Where the academy is not officially closed, parents should still endeavour to contact the academy to let us know they are on their way if they are likely to be seriously delayed as we still have a duty to record attendance correctly. We appreciate that adverse or severe weather may mean that pupils arrive later than normal.

**Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be officially 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 unauthorised absence.**