Caroline Haslett Primary School & Faraday Club

Adverse Weather Policy

Date of issue: November 2026

Date of review: November 2029

Adverse Weather Policy

1. CONTEXT

1.1. Caroline Haslett school will make every effort to remain open whenever possible during periods of adverse weather.

1.2. If the school is anticipating closure either at the beginning of the school day or during the school day, the Headteacher will consult, wherever possible, with the Chair of Governors before any decision to close the school is made. The decision to close is a local one and will be made by leaders on site at the time who are best placed to evaluate the risks to pupils, staff, and visitors. The decision should be based on access to essential services (heating, water etc.), staffing levels, transport safety, and site safety.

1.3. The school may be closed if:

- insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
- weather conditions mean that travel to school is too hazardous.
- conditions on site are dangerous.
- where weather conditions are advised to be, or are anticipated to later become, too hazardous for travel.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1. The Health and Safety of children, parents and staff are paramount when taking any decision.

2.2. If the school is to consider closure, School Governors would expect:

- Consideration had been given to closing the school to just some year groups and/or changing the opening and closing time to avoid complete closure
- Restricting access to the site/buildings as an alternative to complete closure
- Offering a reduced curriculum provision as an alternative to closure.

2.3. If the decision is made to close, School will communicate in as timely way as possible to limit staff and parent risks in attempting to travel to the school site:

- families to be informed via push notification/e-mail/text message or other methods of communicating across parent groups
- the closure to be made clear on the school's website
- a message indicating closure is placed on the school phone system for parents who ring in
- staff to be informed by MIS messaging or other school system
- any before school/Breakfast Club staff and School meal providers to be included in the above
- schools to inform their local authority through the individual LA reporting arrangements and through local media outlets as set out in LA guidance
- schools to inform senior leaders using mobile phone numbers listed in the Notification Tree
- School phone systems should have a message to make clear the status of the school.
- Headteachers to ensure that governors are kept informed of school closures so that they can support the decision
- where possible, closure signs to be displayed at the entrance to the school.

2.4. The messaging service should be accessible through the internet so that, if school leaders are unable to get to their place of work, messages can be sent from alternative locations, e.g. from home.

2.5. The Headteacher and Office Manager/School Business Manager will plan for any office cover required to manage increased volumes of parental contact either in person, by phone or email so that timely responses can be given to enquiries about school closures or other adverse weather conditions. Any additional training for extra staff will take place to ensure they are clear about the school's policies and procedures, so they provide accurate and safe information.

3. **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY AND ABSENCE REPORTING.**

3.1. There is an expectation for parents to contact the school, before setting off from home, if they have a reasonable expectation that the adverse weather conditions might cause the school to be closed.

3.2. Parents must let school know if pupils are on their way, and likely to be delayed due to the adverse weather, so that individual pupils are safeguarded on their journey.

3.3. School recognises there will be isolated instances where families may be cut off, even where the majority of children can get into school. In such instances, school notes that parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case to be able to formally authorise the absence. Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risk their child being registered as an unauthorised absence.

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

4. **CLOSURE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

4.1. In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances the school will contact the parent via push notification/email or text message, noting the deteriorating conditions and ask for the early collection of their child/ren.

4.2. Parents who are delayed due to the adverse weather conditions, should contact the school as soon as possible to give an anticipated arrival time or alternative collection arrangement for their children/ren.

5. SNOW CLEARING AND SALTING

5.1. In the event of snow, school plans and procedures should make clear how pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children, and visitors should be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, may remain dangerous. Children should also be reminded of this in assembly and by school staff.

5.2. Where necessary, procedures should also note that essential pathways should be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

6. HOT AND OTHER EXTREME WEATHER

6.1. In the event of the weather being hotter than usual, school will:

- ask parents to ensure their child has a sunhat and sunscreen applied before school. For older children they may be allowed to bring sunscreen into school if able to apply themselves. Parents ask permission from school if this is required for their child and provide suitable cream.
- encourage pupils to drink regularly including having access to sources of drinking water to fill bottles throughout the day.
- where necessary, keep pupils indoors in extreme heat
- School may decide to cancel or postpone outdoor events during extreme hot weather. If this occurs, parents will be notified of this decision.

6.2 In the event of extreme storms the school will take appropriate actions to ensure pupil safety through:

- Keeping pupils inside at break and lunchtime
- Secure or store safely outdoor equipment
- Close school if levels of danger identified by the local or national news are identified as critical

Appendix 1

PREPARING FOR AND MANAGING STORMS, SNOW, AND ICE CLEARANCE PLAN

Introduction

This appendix is to ensure the safety of staff, visitors and pupils at school premises, and to satisfy legal requirements for the provision of a safe working environment. It takes a common-sense approach to the clearance of snow and ice during periods of bad weather.

Headteacher

Is responsible for:

- Monitoring the work of the Business Manager and Site Manager in relation to adverse weather preparation and delivery of requirements.

School Business Manager

Is responsible for:

- delivery of this policy
- ensuring (before the winter period) that the school site is fully equipped with appropriate snow clearing and protective equipment, and adequate stocks of rock salt and sand/grit etc.
- rearranging where required Caretaker/Site Manager duties to ensure snow and ice clearance is continued if those usually responsible for the task are absent from work.
- decide and agree with the SMT the exact routes and areas of the school to be cleared in adverse weather
- all preventative work required to reduce storm damage is identified and carried out by the relevant staff
- writing /editing a formal snow clearance/gritting risk assessment in advance of bad weather identifying how the school will communicate with staff, parents & visitors the appropriate access routes to use during bad weather. The risk assessment should determine the paths that should be cleared immediately and the ones that may be left until later.

Site Manages/Caretakers

Are responsible for:

- the immediate clearance of snow and ice in designated areas, in line with this appendix and gritting plan.
- organising and delivering any storm damage.
- ensuring that equipment provided to clear snow and ice is adequate for the purpose and maintained in a satisfactory condition
- monitoring supplies of rock salt and sand/grit mix throughout the winter period and replenished promptly.
- delivering the Adverse Weather and Appendix 1 Winter Clearance Plan
- temporarily closing access areas around the school in line with school policy/gritting plan that are not to be cleared or are lower down the gritting schedule, or unsafe in storms
- clearly marking (e.g. signage, tape etc) areas not to be accessed in adverse weather
- keep records of clearance and access route closures. Sign and date these

School Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Are responsible for:

- reviewing the schools Adverse Weather Policy to ensure its adequacy and suitability.
- Deciding with the SBM which paths should be made as clear as possible. It may be necessary for some entrances/areas to be temporarily closed; this could be achieved by taping off areas that continue to be a slip hazard as long as consideration has been given to emergency escape routes. This information should be

communicated to staff and parents as soon as possible.
- Deciding which other areas, in addition to pathways/agreed access areas, should be cleared. This includes parking spaces provided for the disabled, adjacent to premises entrances.

Please Note: It is not appropriate for school staff to clear or grit areas falling outside the school site boundary, e.g. pavements/public footpaths, roads forming part of the public highway.

All Staff

Are responsible for:

- reporting to the Site Manager/ Head Teacher any situation where the recommended action contained within the school Adverse Weather Policy has not been carried out
- safeguarding their own and colleagues' health and safety in bad weather.
- wearing footwear/clothing appropriate to the weather.

Method of Clearance:

A pathway of at least one metre wide should be cleared; this will allow suitable access for pedestrians and pushchairs/ wheelchairs. Snow and ice should be completely removed using a snow scraper or shovel, snow and ice should NOT be brushed, or melted using hot water, as this will make surfaces more hazardous. Once the path has been cleared, rock salt should be used to assist in providing extra grip. Paths should be regularly checked throughout the day to ensure re-freezing, or further snow coverage, has not occurred.

Additional care should be taken when clearing sloping pathways and steps. It may be necessary for safety reasons to consider the temporary closure of some non-essential areas of the school (e.g. steep pathways, car parks, etc)

Staff, pupils or visitors:

- An assessment of the situation should be made by site staff in conjunction with the Site Manager/Head Teacher/School Business Manager.
- Pathways across car parks may be cleared if resources permit, but generally it is suggested that attempts are not made to clear car parking areas/spaces themselves, unless snow is so heavy that essential vehicles (e.g. emergency vehicles, delivery lorries etc) are unable to gain access to the site.
- All persons clearing snow should be provided with suitable snow scrapers, shovels, rock salt, protective gloves, footwear and clothing (i.e. high visibility vests), and staff should take regular breaks from the task.