



## **SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

### **ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF, PARENTS, CARERS AND TRANSPORT OPERATORS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This advice and guidance is to make clear and consistent the expectations of school to staff, parents, carers and transport operators in the event of severe and adverse weather conditions. The intention is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all concerned.

The school will make every effort to make decisions about school closure based upon the best information available at the time. Risk assessments will need to be carried out and decisions made following these assessments.

Woodsetton School receives pupils from across Dudley Borough and obviously weather conditions may well be different in other parts of the area. It follows that parents, carers and transport staff will need to make their own risk assessment in their local area, based upon the best information available to them.

#### **PARENTS AND CARERS**

If your child is at home and the weather conditions locally to you are severe, then you must decide first of all if you wish your child to leave the home. It is your right to keep your child at home even if the school is open and the taxis are available. If you consider it unsafe for your child to be travelling, we would ask that you communicate this decision to the taxi driver and the school as soon as you are able.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

The school will make every effort to communicate its decision to close as soon as possible. This information will be shared on the school website, telephone answer machine and sent to parents via parent hub. It will also be shared with the local authority and radio stations.

#### **TRANSPORT STAFF, DRIVERS AND ESCORTS**

Firstly, your commitment to meet your obligation to transport the children safely to and from school is acknowledged, appreciated and unquestioned.

If, however the weather conditions locally to you and /or where you know you have to travel, are severe, then you will naturally make your own risk assessment of the situation and make a professional decision as to whether it is safe to travel or not.

It is important to consider the likelihood of getting the children home safely in the afternoon if you are able to bring them into school in the morning.



Every effort will be made to keep parents and the school informed of decisions and changes as they arise. In addition any decision to close the school will be communicated with transport as soon as is reasonably practicable.

### **THE HEADTEACHER – SENIOR STAFF**

If before the start of school in the morning, weather conditions in Sedgley are severe, the Headteacher and/or a member of senior staff will make a risk assessment of the situation and determine if the school is to be open.

This decision will be made as early as possible and will firstly communicate this decision via the schools answer machine and website.

If pupils are in school and the weather becomes severe during the school day, then the Headteacher, or in their absence, a senior member of staff, will again make a risk assessment of the situation based on local information and the weather forecasts, and make a decision as to getting pupils home safely while it remains safe to do so. This may well mean closing the school early. Taxi operators and parents will be contacted as soon as possible, following the decision to close the school.

### **SCHOOL STAFF**

In the event of severe conditions, school staff should consider the school open unless a specific communication of closure has been received. This will be via the school's adverse weather 'pyramid' system. Staff will need to make their own risk assessment of the situation based upon local information and determine if it is safe to travel. It is expected that staff make every effort to attend school. It is also expected that staff make every effort to come to school later if conditions have improved.

The school will take into account the need for staff to get home, particularly those with young families, if the weather becomes severe during the school day. Any after school meetings may need to be cancelled/rescheduled.

### **CAR PARKING**

A priority will be placed on ensuring that the main top car park and main pathways are cleared. During periods of snow and icy conditions, it will not be possible for all the individual car parking bays to be cleared or treated, anyone who wishes to park their vehicle on the school site during periods of adverse weather do so at their own risk.

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