

Grand Avenue Primary and Nursery School

Extreme Weather Policy

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Statement of intent

During extreme weather conditions the staff at Grand Avenue aim to keep school open for as long as is safely possible. Extreme weather conditions may include snow, wind, storm, or high temperatures. The ratio of staff to pupils and ensuring the safety of all on the school site are the priorities when making the decision whether or not to close the school. The school expects staff to support our endeavours to stay open.

Aims/Objectives

The aims of this policy are to set out a plan of action should extreme weather conditions mean that staff/pupil ratios are inappropriate or the school site is unsafe.

The policy will set out the roles and responsibilities of members of staff and procedures to be followed.

We aim to make a decision on school closure as soon as is possible, ensuring clear communication between school and staff, and school and parents.

The caretaker and business manager will be contacted and asked to survey the school site in terms of health and safety. If practicable the Governor with responsibility for Health and safety will be involved in the decision making process.

Procedures - Teachers

All teachers are expected to make every effort to make their way into school, despite the weather conditions. Should a decision have been reached by the headteacher to close the school, all teaching staff will be notified by 7.30am. This would usually be done through texting and phone calls.

Staff are asked to ensure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.

If travel is difficult, teachers are asked to persevere and keep the Deputyhead informed of their progress by mobile phone.

Should the need arise, teaching staff may be asked to teach classes containing children other than those in their class. Numbers of children in each teaching group will be kept to 30 where possible.

Should a teacher be booked on a course, they will be asked to cancel the course and be available to teach.

PPA time will be honoured as far as it practicably possible.

Procedures – Teaching Assistants

All teaching assistants are expected to make every effort to make their way into school, despite the weather conditions. Should a decision be made to close the school the Deputy Head will contact them to inform them of this decision as soon as possible after 7.30am.

The school will not expect a teaching assistant to teach a whole class for a day. Although they may be asked to supervise a group of children for a short period of time.

Should a teaching assistant be available to support the school by working longer hours then they will be paid for this time.

Support staff - Office staff/SMSA's/Supply

Office staff are expected to make their way into school, despite the weather conditions. The headteacher will contact them if a decision to close the school is made. Office staff are asked to inform the headteacher should they be unable for work.

SMSA's are asked to make their way into school for duty at the normal time. Should a decision be made to close the school then they will be contacted by their line manager. SMSA's are asked to contact their line manager should they not be available for work.

The Deputyhead will contact any supply teachers booked for the day.

Communication with Parents/carers

The Headteacher and Office staff will ensure that the website is kept up to date with information for parents regarding the school's status.

An answerphone message will be recorded onto the school phone line informing parents of the school's status.

The school may also decide to contact local radio station 'Radio Jackie' asking for the school closure to be announced. (A password is required)

Allocation of staff

The Headteacher and Deputyhead will take responsibility for organising staffing throughout the school.

The Nursery will remain open if there is one teacher and one Nursery nurse available to teach. If this is not possible then parents will be informed as soon as possible that the Nursery is closed.

Senior staff will be vigilant in keeping in contact with teaching staff attempting to get to school. Decisions on closure will be made if the Headteacher is aware that ratios of teacher to pupil would put children at risk. Decisions on closure will be based on –

- Reception classes remaining open if there is one teacher and one teaching assistant available to teach the class.
- All other classes remaining open if there is one teacher per 30 children.

During extreme weather conditions a decision will be made to regarding the whole school. There would not be one year group open and another one closed.

Should the decision to remain open be made and staff are late in arriving to school then children will be escorted to the main hall where an assembly will be held. A dvd will be shown should the need arise.

Outdoor break

Should the site be safe for children to play out during breaktime then school routines will be followed as far as possible. The decision for children to be allowed outside will be taken by the Headteacher. Extra break (eg Snow time) may be allocated to classes throughout the day.

Children will only be allowed to play outside should they be wearing the correct outdoor wear. (waterproof shoes/sunhats) Children with unsuitable clothing will be supervised during an indoor breaktime.

Lunchtime

If a hot dinner has been ordered and no delivery is made to school then parents will be informed and asked to provide a packed lunch. Should this be impractical for parents the school will endeavour to provide a snack for the child. (eg fruit)

Should the weather be extremely hot the children will be asked to administer sun cream, wear a sun hat and drink plenty of water. Children will be asked to play in the shaded areas of the playground. During the last ten minutes of the lunch break all children will be asked to sit in the shade as a cooling off period before returning to class. (see also Sun safety policy)

Should the weather be extremely cold all children will be required to wear suitable outdoor clothing which may include, coats, gloves ,hats and scarves.

Concluding Statement

As extreme weather conditions may vary (eg snow/heatwave) this policy may not be followed to the letter but used as guidance.

We believe that school should remain open as far is practicably possible during extreme weather conditions. It is accepted that some disruption will be unavoidable, but we aim for minimum disruption to the teaching and learning within the school.