



## Severe Weather Policy

### Document Control

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## Statement of Intent

The Arthur Terry learning Partnership (ATLP) aims to ensure that schools remain open during severe weather conditions, giving appropriate consideration to the safety of all pupils, staff and visitors.

The ATLP Executive Team, in consultation with headteachers, will aim to make decisions to close schools before the teaching day commences.

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

## **1. School Policies and Procedures**

1.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the ATLP Health and Safety Policy and the Critical Incident Policy.

## **2. Decision to Close**

2.1. In the event of severe weather, headteachers will liaise with the school site staff and undertake a risk assessment in consultation with the ATLP Director of Education. This decision will be reviewed on a daily basis.

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

- Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
- Staff numbers are insufficient for the school to be operated safely.

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

2.4 In the event of school closure:

- The headteacher will inform staff and parents via text message, or the equivalent communication system in school. Parents will be asked to make arrangements to collect their child/ren from school.
- The school website will be updated with a closure message.
- The headteacher will contact the local radio station and request announcements concerning the school closure are broadcast.

It is noted that parents will have previously been made aware of the arrangements for announcing schools' closures, including their duty to collect children.

## **3. Health and Safety**

3.1 The headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the ATLP Health and Safety Policy.

3.2 A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.

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

## **4 Limited Staff Numbers**

4.1 During periods of severe weather conditions, staff members will make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.

4.2 Staff members will assess the availability of all public transport and consider the feasibility of walking to work, if they live relatively close and are fit and able to do so, in order to attend work.

4.3 The school understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk. Staff members will liaise with their line manager to discuss options of attending work. Consideration to local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport, and fitness to walk will be taken into account when making their decision.

4.4 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:

- A limit of 30 pupils per class will apply for Reception to KS1.
- No maximum class size limits are set for KS2 and above.

## **5 Attendance Records**

5.1 Where school remains open but severe weather conditions prevent student attendance, parents will notify school of the reason for non-attendance.

5.2 If the headteacher believes the pupil could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the absence will be unauthorised.

5.3 If the school is officially closed, all absence will be authorised.

## **6 Exam Disruption**

6.1 If the school has to close, or if a child misses an exam due to severe weather conditions, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.

6.2 The school will take full responsibility for informing parents and pupils of any agreed changes concerning exams in severe weather conditions. This includes:

- Using alternative venues.
- Exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject.
- The opportunity for the pupil to sit any missed exam later in the year.

## **7 Critical Incident Policy**

7.1 In the case of an emergency relating to severe weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the Critical Incident Policy including details such as:

- Information on where to find parent contact details.
- Staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies.
- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency.

7.2 All nominated staff will be trained to:

- Contact and liaise with emergency services.
- Provide first aid.
- Move pupils to a safe place.
- Calm and comfort children.
- Contact parents.
- Deal with any media interest.

7.3 Each member of staff will have a copy of the critical incident policy

7.4 Paper copies of the policy will be kept at nominated off site locations.

## **8 Monitoring and Review**

8.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the headteacher, and any necessary amendments will be made following consultation with the ATLP Operations and Estates and Executive Team.

8.2 This policy will be reviewed annually.