



# **Archbishop Holgate's School**

A Church of England Academy

## **Adverse weather Policy**

*This policy explains how the school will react in the event of adverse weather.*

Approval Date: May 2019

Next Review Date: May 2022

Member of staff responsible: Fn – Deputy Head Pastoral Care

Governing sub-committee: Pastoral

Archbishop Holgate's School is committed to developing to the full, the potential of each member of the school community, within the context set by its mission, its strategic aims, and its Christian values as a Church of England Academy.

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## Vision and Values of Archbishop Holgate's School

As a Church of England school we strive to ensure that all of our young people are cared for, given every opportunity to develop through academic study, to grow personally and spiritually and to live into being those Values we hold dear in our community and in wider society. Our role as a Church school is to help nurture both academic excellence and to help shape young people who can make a significant contribution to the community they serve. Key to this is a clear recognition that all students have individual gifts and talents and with support every young person can flourish.

Archbishop Holgate's School is distinctive and effective as a Church of England school because our Christian vision and values are very explicit and drive all areas of school life. Our Vision is one which combines Values, Care and Achievement.

### **"A threefold cord is not easily broken." Ecclesiastes 4:12**

Through this vision we seek to be a Church of England School which is deeply Christian. As such, the three themes of our vision, Values, Care and Achievement are deliberately expressed in that order, our distinct Christian Values help ensure that every child is cared for as an individual and this in turn will help them to succeed academically.

Our school values of **Justice**, **Compassion**, **Forgiveness** and **Trust** have been embedded across our school community and permeate all areas of school life.



This policy is to complement our vision and values and to enable the school to allow all members of Archbishop Holgate's community to live them into being every day.

## **Statement of intent**

It is the aim of Archbishop Holgate's School to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

Archbishop Holgate's School intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

## **1. School policies and procedures**

1.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following school policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Snow and Ice Risk Assessment
- First Aid Policy

## **2. Decision to close**

2.1. The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher.

2.2. The site manager and the chair of governors will be consulted when making a decision about school closure.

2.3. In the absence of the Headteacher, a deputy Headteacher will assume the responsibility of the Headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.

2.4. 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.

2.5. In the event of school closure:

- The Headteacher will inform staff and parents by text message, social media and the schools website.
- The site manager will display 'closure' signs on the school's entrance gates.
- The Headteacher will call the local radio station. It is noted that parents will have previously been made aware that announcements concerning the school will be broadcasted via the local radio station.

2.6. In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents will be contacted via text message using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and informed their child will be leaving school at a set time and if they wanted them to stay they had to inform the school. Parents are responsible for ensuring their emergency contact information is kept up to date.

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

## **3. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions**

3.1. When deciding whether the school will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment.

3.2. If the school remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only.

3.3. The site manager will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

- 3.4. All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.
- 3.5. A notice will be erected to inform that vehicles and pedestrians entering the school grounds do so at their own risk.
- 3.6. At the Headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents.
- 3.7. All persons entering the school buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

#### **4. Health and safety**

- 4.1. The school has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.
- 4.2. The school will be liable if it is found that the school has been negligent in its responsibilities and has not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents entering the school site.
- 4.3. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- 4.4. Staff, visitors and parents have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds.
- 4.5. Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.
- 4.6. If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter the school grounds and inform either the Headteacher or site manager so the safety can be reassessed.
- 4.7. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the SLT and the site team will assess the school site, as early as possible.
- 4.8. A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.
- 4.9. Closing the school is a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.
- 4.10. When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

#### **5. Limited staff numbers**

- 5.1. During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.

- 5.2. Staff members are expected to 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.
- 5.3. The school understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk.
- 5.4. In line with 4.3, it is therefore at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.
- 5.5. Staff members are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport, and fitness to walk when making their decision.
- 5.6. Staff members are required to liaise with the Headteacher to discuss options of attending work.
- 5.7. 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:
- 5.8. The school will continue to strive to provide high-quality education in the given circumstances.

## **6. Attendance statistics**

- 6.1. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.
- 6.2. When a pupil cannot attend the school due to adverse weather conditions, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will, therefore, not affect the school's attendance statistics.
- 6.3. If the Headteacher believes the pupil could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.
- 6.4. 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's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

## **7. Exam disruption**

- 7.1. If the school has to close, or if a child misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, where possible, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body:
- Where the child is sitting units as part of their final examination series, an application for special consideration will be made. The awarding body, based on other units within the same subject, will generate the results.
  - Where the child is entered for an examination, but this is not their final series, they may be entered again in the next available series.

It is important to note that the rescheduling of the majority of examinations is not an option, due to regulations.

7.2. The school takes full responsibility for informing parents and pupils of any agreed changes concerning exams in adverse 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, where possible, later in the year.

## **8. Emergency plan**

8.1. In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure.

8.2. Archbishop Holgate's School emergency plan will contain:

- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency and appropriate contact details.

8.3. All nominated staff will be trained to:

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