



Hart Hill Nursery School

Adverse Weather Policy

Updated Summer Term 2022

Ratified by Governors 

Signed 19/5/22

To be updated Summer Term 2025



Introduction

Hart Hill Nursery School is committed to providing children, staff and all stakeholders with a safe place to be. We will take the necessary measures to adhere to our statutory duty to protect people from harm. We also value children's learning and want to ensure any severe weather causes minimal disruption to children's routines.

This policy outlines to members of the school community how the school is prepared in the event of adverse weather to ensure everyone remains safe, and the measures we will implement to ensure the continuity of children's education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for tracking weather forecasts and weather warnings. If the Met Office releases a weather warning, the Headteacher will assess the severity of it and initiate this plan where necessary. The Headteacher will take all reasonable steps to ensure children's learning is not affected by adverse weather, unless absolutely necessary.

The site agent is responsible for checking classroom temperatures on a daily basis, particularly during extremely cold or hot spells and reporting any concerns to the Headteacher or most senior member of staff available on the day. During cold spells, the site agent will be responsible for gritting access routes, as described by the senior leadership team. They will also need to carry out an inspection of the school play equipment, in partnership with class teams.

The admin team will be responsible for ensuring all notices regarding adverse weather are communicated with parents as soon as possible to any decision being made.

Types of Adverse Weather

Low Temperatures, Snow and Ice

The indoor temperature of the school will be reasonable. Reasonable is any temperature between 16°C-22°C. There are thermometers located throughout the school and readings are taken from a number of thermometers to gauge the overall temperature of the school and any areas of risk.

If the temperature falls below what is reasonable, we will implement additional control measures to try to bring the temperatures back to reasonable limits, including using portable heaters where available; where this is not possible windows and blinds will be closed to retain heat.

Where portable heaters are used the following control measures will be put into place:

- A risk assessment will be carried out and read by all adults
- The heaters will not left unattended whilst switched on
- The heaters will be located near a plug, so there is less risk of people tripping over the wire

- The heater will remain stationary
- The heater will not be used to dry things

Where snow or icy present a problem, the site agent will ensure that access routes are cleared and gritted, where possible. Parents will be informed via Parentmail about any restricted access to the school site.

The site agent and school staff are responsible for ensuring they assess the condition of outdoor play areas prior to the children using them. Any unsafe item should not be used.

The Headteacher will have the final say as to whether equipment or the outdoor area is closed due to health and safety concerns; Staff are expected to follow this instruction.

Hot Weather

Hot weather can cause people to become dehydrated, dizzy or lightheaded. In more severe cases, this can lead to heat cramps, fainting, heatstroke or collapse. To prevent this, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that the school remains a comfortable temperature for all, by opening doors and windows to gain a breeze and by closing blinds to keep the classrooms cool.

Where weather exceeds 20°C, the staff team will try hard to adapt lessons and activities to ensure children do not over exert themselves. The school will communicate the need to ensure their children are dressed suitably for the hot weather; this includes wearing sunscreen, hats and sunglasses where appropriate. Staff will also ensure that water is available throughout the day for both staff and children, so that everyone is learning how to take care of their body.

Wind and Rain

Where a storm is predicted, the site agent will ensure the school site is secure before children enter the school. They will report any defects or concerns to the most senior member of staff available on the day.

School staff will ensure that all school equipment is safe and secure when a storm is forecast and make sure that children do not access the outdoor area, when there is storm taking place, due to the high number of trees in the school grounds.

When there a high level of rain, the children will be able to access the school grounds, however will need to ensure they wear waterproof clothing and wellington boots. The site agent will check for signs of flooding and make staff aware of any areas that could become a risk. They will make sure that gutters and drains are cleared bi-annually to prevent a buildup of debris.

Minimising Disruption to Education

We will adhere to our duty of care by ensuring the school remains safe and secure during times of adverse weather. We will implement this policy in line with the school's Business Continuity Plan.

The Headteacher and site agent will carry out necessary risk assessments for ensuring it is safe for the school to remain open during adverse weather.

The site agent will be responsible for assessing the site and informing the Headteacher, as early as possible of the state of the site to help inform decision making, preferably before 7am. Where a significant adverse weather system has taken place in an evening, the decision to open later than normal may be communicated the night before, to allow time for a thorough assessment.

The decision to close the school lies with the Headteacher, where this is in the best interests to safeguard children and staff, under health and safety grounds. The Headteacher will always inform the Chair of Governors when a decision to close has been made.

The school may be closed due to the following reasons:

- The weather makes it difficult for staff to come to work and the school would not be able to maintain the legal ratios for young children, as defined by the DFE.
- The weather would make it extremely dangerous for families to try and leave their homes to bring children to school
- The access roads and pathways are not clear and would make the journey dangerous for stakeholders
- The site agent is unwell and unable to clear the site in time for opening (in this incident the school staff would clear the site ready for the next day)
- The damage from the adverse weather makes the school unsafe to educate children
- The school is not maintaining a safe temperature and having stakeholders in the building could cause illness or a medical risk

There may be a time where the school needs to make a decision to close during the school day. Safe and speedy dismissal of children in the event of an emergency will depend on the school and parent working together in partnership. The school will use all emergency contacts available to the school to ensure that children are collected as soon as possible. Where stakeholders need to take shelter away from the school site, due to severe damage the school will follow the Business Continuity Plan.

Communication Procedure

The school will keep parents up to date with the condition of the school via Parentmail, the school website and the school Facebook page. In addition, the Headteacher will inform the Local Authority of the school closure position for promotion on the LA website.

The Headteacher will inform all staff, via the school's Whatsapp group of the school's condition and whether the school is closed. This will include what staff are expected to do during the closure. Any staff that feel they cannot complete the request, can request unpaid leave. Staff should assume that no message means the school is open and travel to work as normal, unless informed otherwise and should understand that it may not be possible to inform staff prior to their normal 'setting off' time, as this would depend on the nature of the closure.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this plan will be monitored by the Headteacher and any amendments made accordingly. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle and all updates will be communicated to all stakeholders.

