



## THE FEDERATION OF HACKBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL & SPENCER NURSERY SCHOOL

### Adverse Weather Policy and Procedures

#### 1. Introduction

It is the aim of the federation to ensure the schools remain open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

The federation intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school/s before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school/s.

#### 2. Purpose

- We aim to make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the school/s during adverse weather conditions.
- To make clear the grounds for school closures due to adverse weather and conditions.
- To advise and inform staff, parents and carers of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather and conditions.

#### 3. Decision to close

- The decision to close the school/s will be made by the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will consult the Chair of Governors when making a decision about closing the school/s.
- In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher, in liaison with the Chair of Governors, will assume the responsibility of the Headteacher.
- The school/s will be closed if one of more of the following applies:
  - Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and likely to give rise to danger to users of the site.
  - Staff numbers are insufficient for the school to be operated safely.

#### 4. In the event of school closures

- The Headteacher, via the Deputy Headteacher, will inform staff via text message.
- The Headteacher will inform the Local Authority.
- The School Business Manager (SNS) and HR & Governance Officer / Finance and Operations Manager (HPS) will update the school websites and OpenCheck systems, to inform the parents/carers.
- The Site Manager/s will display closure signs on the schools entrance gates – only if the site can be accessed.
- In the event of the school having to close during the school day, the parents/carers will be contacted via email or telephone, using details previously provided to the school/s and asked to collect their child/ren.

- A closure of the school/s during the school day, and an early release of staff, will only be contemplated in extreme circumstances.

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

- If the school/s remain open when there has been snowfall or the sites are icy, access to the site for pedestrians may be restricted.
- The Site Manager/s will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of increased hazards.
- All pathways, where practically possible, will be cleared and gritted.
- A noticed will be put on display to warn vehicles of risks if entering the premises (at HPS only).
- During periods of adverse weather, the playgrounds and outside areas may be out of bounds to pupils and parents/carers – this will be at the Headteacher's discretion.
- All persons entering the school sites will be asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly to reduce slip hazards.

#### **6. Health & Safety**

- The federation has a duty of care to anyone accessing any of the sites and surrounding grounds.
- The federation will be liable if it is found that either of the schools have been negligent in their responsibilities and have not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents/carers entering the school sites.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the federations Health and Safety policy and procedures.
- Staff, visitors and parents/carers have personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst accessing the school grounds.
- Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of the children under their supervision.
- If anyone believe the school sites are unsafe, it is advised that they do not enter the grounds.
- In the event of adverse weather and conditions, the Site Manager/s will assess the sites and inform the Headteacher at 7:00am of the state of the site/s.
- A risk assessment will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to adverse weather and conditions.
- Closing the school is a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of injury due to the weather conditions.
- When roads are impassable, the health and safety issues are overridden by practical issues of access.

#### **7. Limited staff numbers**

- During periods of adverse weather, the school/s will be flexible with teaching when subject to reduced staffing numbers.
- 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.
- Staff are expected to attend work if the school/s are open and it is safe for them to travel from their home to the school/s. The Headteacher will assess individual cases in line with staff absence procedures.
- No maximum class size limits are set.
- For HPS: a limit of 30 pupils per class will apply if the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven in that school year.
- The school/s will continue to provide high quality education and care in the given circumstances.

#### **8. Attendance for pupils**

- Where the school is officially closed, absences will be registered as authorised.

- When a pupil cannot attend the school due to adverse weather conditions, the absence will be registered as authorised.
- If the Headteacher believes the pupil could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the absence will be registered as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers acting on the assumption that the school/s would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school/s of the circumstances that prevented the child from coming into school risk the absence being registered as unauthorised.

## **9. Emergency Plan**

- In the case of an emergency, each school will follow their planned emergency procedures.
- These plans contain:
  - Information on where to find parent/carer contact details
  - Staff contact details for out of hours emergencies
  - Details of which staff members perform certain tasks during an emergency
- Nominated staff will:
  - Contact and liaise with emergency services
  - Provide first aid, if necessary
  - Move children to a safe place
  - Calm and comfort children
  - Contact parents/carers
  - Deal with media interest
- All members of staff across the federation have been provided with copies of the emergency plans.
- Nominated staff keep copies of the plan at their home addresses, in case of out of hours emergencies.

**This review: Autumn 2019**

**Review: Autumn 2022**