

St. Theresa's Catholic Primary School

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Catholic Primary School



ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

"We learn together, we play together, we pray together, we grow together in the love of God"

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Catholic Primary School



Validation Grid

Title	Adverse Weather Policy
Author	Barbara Costa
Associate Author	N/A
Committee	Wellbeing
Target Audience	School Community
Stakeholders Consulted	Governors
Curriculum / Non Curricular	Non Curricular
Associated Policies / Documents	Health & Safety, Critical Incident
New Policy or Review of Existing Policy	New
Date of Submission	October 2021
Date for Review	October 2024
Review Term	3 years
Statutory	No

Headteacher

Barbara Costa

Barbara Costa

Chair of Governors

Fiona Kerin

Fiona Kerin

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1. Statement of Intent

It is the aim of St. Theresa's Catholic Primary School (St. Theresa's / we / school) to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

St. Theresa's 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 / carers of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Deciding whether the school will close due to adverse weather.
- Informing parents / carers and staff of any closure.
- Deciding whether pupils should be kept indoors during break times and reporting this decision to staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensuring the school is fully stocked with snow clearing equipment.
- Ensuring the school has an adequate supply of salt.

The Site Manager is responsible for:

- Completing a risk assessment that covers adverse weather and gritting.
- Ensuring gritting is carried out in line with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring all equipment is maintained and stored properly, notifying the Headteacher of any damages.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the requirements of this policy.
- Reporting any concerns relevant to this policy to the Headteacher.
- The safety of pupils, colleagues and themselves.
- Wearing appropriate footwear and clothing during periods of adverse weather.

- Liaising with one another before the end of the day to discuss an exit plan for pupils, this includes escorting younger pupils to the entrance to be collected by their parents / carers.

Parents / carers are responsible for:

- Only using the designated and cleared areas whilst on the school premises.
- Collecting their children when the school needs to close.
- Keeping all their contact information up-to-date.
- Ensuring they and their children wear the appropriate footwear and clothing for adverse weather.

3. Decision to Close

The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors will be consulted when making a decision about school closure. In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher will assume the responsibility.

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.

In the event of school closure:

- The Headteacher will inform staff and parents / carers via text message.
- The Headteacher or Secretary will post an update on the school website.

In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents / carers will be contacted via text message, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the school.

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

4. Remaining open in Adverse Weather Condition

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 identified pathways only.

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

All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.

At the Headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents / carers.

All persons entering the school buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

5. Health and Safety

The school has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.

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 / carers entering the school site.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's Health and Safety policy.

Staff, visitors and parents / carers have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds.

Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.

If anyone believes that the site is unsafe, 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.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the Site Manager will assess the school site and inform the Headteacher at 7.30am of the state of site.

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

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

6. Limited Staff Numbers

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.

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.

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 are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport, and fitness to walk when making their decision.

Staff members are required to liaise with the Headteacher to discuss options of attending work.

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:

- No maximum class size limits are set out.

- 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 will continue to strive to provide high-quality education in the given circumstances.

7. Attendance Statistics

Where the school is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.

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.

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.

Parents / carers 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.

8. Emergency Plan

In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the Critical Incident Plan.