

Plymouth Studio School Severe Weather Policy

During severe weather conditions, such as flooding or snow, we will aim to keep our school open for as many children as possible.

However, it might be necessary to close temporarily due to inaccessibility or risk of injury. We will do all we can to reopen as soon as possible.

Possible reasons for closing the school

The following are four reasons to close a school in severe weather conditions. These are:

1. An insufficient number of staff are able to get to school
2. Severe travel restrictions
3. Severe conditions around the school presenting major obstacles or danger. However, risks should be assessed realistically and preventative action such as salting and gritting should be taken into account
4. Heating failure or inability to warm the school to reasonable and acceptable levels

Plymouth Studio School's severe weather policy aims to maintain safe access, egress and routes across the school site as far as reasonably practical within the resources available.

All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the school remains open as normal before the decision is made to completely close the school.

Management plan and procedures

A management plan has been devised together with a generic risk assessment to describe how the procedures will be implemented and put into practice in order to meet the aims and objectives of the policy.

Due to the expanse of the site (considering PE facilities in Marjons and the distance many students walk from the bus stops to the school building) it is recognised that it is

impossible to immediately clear severe weather from the many pathways on all sites. The procedures do however, require those responsible to exercise careful judgement in prioritising key access, egress and routes throughout the site as well as outline the responsibilities of all users to exercise their own initiative in ensuring their own and others safety during times of severe weather in the school grounds.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

Responsibility for this policy has been delegated to the Principal. The effectiveness of these procedures in minimising the risks from severe weather will be judged through and in conjunction with the annual accident analysis.

Principal

Formally review the policy on an annual basis.

Ensure means of access, egress and routes across the school are safe for employees, pupils and visitors and that adequate arrangements are made to ensure that the risks from severe weather are minimised. In circumstances when safe access, egress and safe routes cannot be achieved and with the agreement of the Chair of Governors, close the school and communicate the closure to all relevant parties.

Consider how severe weather may affect the operation of the school e.g. transport difficulties in getting to school and the availability of staff and other services.

Advise parents and students of the risks during ice and snow and the importance of suitable footwear.

Facilities Manager

Formulate a policy and management plan for approval in the first instance by the Governors' Premises, Health and Safety Committee which will enable the Principal to fully discharge his responsibilities as described in the above paragraph.

Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and management plan and report any concerns to the Governors' Premises, Health and Safety Committee.

Include information regarding the effectiveness of this policy and management plan in the annual accident analysis.

Amend the procedures as required.

Develop procedures and maintain records to include generic risk assessment for clearance of ice and snow from site and communicate procedures and methods of work

to premises staff. Proactively monitor the weather forecast and initiate preventative measures to manage risks from severe weather.

Ensure sufficient supply of suitable equipment and salt grit/other materials are available in order to meet demand.

All staff

Be aware that when areas have had salt grit/other materials applied it is not a guarantee that the paths are completely safe or slip-proof; please travel with caution when moving around site.

Be aware of the risk assessment in place for severe weather and take responsibility for following the designated routes when such conditions exist.

Safeguarding their own, colleagues' and students' health and safety.

Ensure appropriate footwear is worn to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.

Report any internal wet areas/external icy patches to the Main Office who will inform the Premises staff to enable them to position wet floor signs/mop up any excess water/re-apply salt grit/other materials.

Communicate to students the need to wear appropriate footwear in severe weather and to exercise caution when moving around site.

Risk assessment

Hazard	People affected
Snow and ice	Employees, students and visitors, premises staff
Risks and controls	
Risk	Control
Slips, trips and falls	Staff aware of the severe weather policy, risk assessment, procedures and routes to be followed and reinforce these to students and visitors.
Risks to Premises staff	
Risk	Control
Manual handling	All staff trained in manual handling techniques.
Exposure due to low external temperature	Protective, warm clothing including hat and gloves worn. Take regular breaks

Slips, trips and falls	Adopt route which minimises the need to walk over uncleared areas, clearing heavily used paths first.
Exhaustion	Take regular breaks

Mechanism

Decision to close the school made by the Principal by 07:00 in consultation with the Premises manager.

Website updated by the Data and Marketing manager by 07:10

Staff, students, parents, CoG, city council, CaterEd e-mailed to state that the school will be closed by the Deputy Principal by 07:10

If staff cannot attend school due to snow/ice or other extreme weather they are to follow the absence policy, which is to e-mail the Principal and Office manager by 07:00, and to phone the school absence line, leaving an answer phone message.

Who	Why	Email
Education Team and Communication Team (Council)	This will be the main source of information for updating the Council website and ensuring accuracy	schools.closures@plymouth.gov.uk
School Transport Team (Council)	The team will inform transport operators	school.transport@plymouth.gov.uk
CATER ^{ed} / School Meals Provider	To inform staff that the school will be closed	catering@catered.org.uk