



# Kingfisher Schools Trust

**SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY**

**VERSION 2**

**01.09.2022**

## **School Closure Policy**

It may be necessary to temporarily close one or more of the schools within the Kingfisher Schools Trust for a variety of reasons including but not limited to:

- Severe weather including snow, flooding or storms
- Disruption to transport, for example through petrol or diesel shortages
- Accommodation issues, for example loss of power supply, heating failures or fire damage
- Advice from the Local Authority or emergency services as a result of a major incident in the locality of the school

The schools within Kingfisher Schools Trust will endeavour to remain open where possible.

### **In the event of School Closure**

The decision to close a school rests with the headteacher (or, in their absence, a delegated senior staff member) If a school is to be closed, it is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair of the School Committee and the Chief Executive Officer
- The decision is advised to the Chair of the Trust Board
- Parents/carers are informed
- School staff are informed
- Contract staff (for example catering and/or cleaning services) are informed
- The information is passed to the Local Authority as soon as possible
- Where possible, the school's website and social media pages are updated
- Where possible, the school office answerphone is amended to a short closure message
- Where possible, notices are placed on school entrances advising parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors that the school is closed
- If the closure is after the start of a school day, the school remains appropriately staffed to supervise and safeguard pupils/students on site until parents/carers or emergency contacts can collect them

### **Closure before the start of the school day**

Where possible, the decision should be made before 7:30am and on the basis of information received from reliable media sources and external agencies, supplemented by 'on the spot' observation if this can be undertaken safely.

Factors involved in reaching the decision to close a school are likely to include:

- Access to the school, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc.)
- Conditions at the school site (snow, ice, flooding, storm or fire damage.)
- Decisions of transport providers regarding the availability of home to school transport
- Breakdown of essential services (eg heating, hot water, electrical services, water supply)

## Ongoing closure

Ongoing closures will be considered on a daily basis. During periods of ongoing closure, the local authority operates a helpline for parents/carers which will work alongside the school closure pages of the website.

## Closure during the school day

On occasions, it may be necessary for a school to close during the school day (eg: if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether children can be safely returned home later in the day). In this event, the school will make every effort to urgently contact all parents/carers to notify them of the closure. Parents/carers who are unable to collect their child/children and need to make alternative arrangements should telephone the school. It may be necessary to obtain verbal permission for their child to be collected by another named individual. The safety of all children will remain paramount.

In the event of a closure during the school day, the Local Authority will be kept fully informed by the school.

## Staff Attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions can make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work unless advised to the contrary by the headteacher. Travel to work/school is regarded by both the Police and the Council's Highways Management as an essential journey and every effort should be made to get to work unless staff have been formally advised that the school is closed or a staff member considers it unsafe to make the journey.

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| <b>Reviewed and approved by:</b> | Trust Board |
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