



TIMU ACADEMY TRUST

Policy Document for: Severe Weather

Approved: January 2017, reviewed December 2019

Due for Review: December 2022

This policy aims to keep our schools open during bad weather, where it is safe to do so..

As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep our schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. On, hopefully, rare occasions our schools may be looking after children and not providing teaching and learning due to levels of supervision and for health and safety reasons. The decision to close or restrict attendance will be taken by the executive principal, in consultation with the heads of school.

Before deciding whether to close, a range of factors will be considered such as:

- Whether there are **on-site** hazardous conditions that cannot reasonably be mitigated (for example the pathway to the school entrance or where pupils have to move around the site during the school day). The site staff will use salt and or grit as appropriate, where it is safe to do so.
- Will there be enough staff to supervise (but not necessarily teach) the number of children likely to be present?
- Can a reasonable temperature be maintained in the building or parts of the building where children and staff are likely to be?
- Is water available and are sufficient toilets working satisfactorily?

If health and safety conditions are satisfied, then the school will remain open.

During each day the senior staff will probably review whether or not the school should be closed early in the afternoon to enable pupils and staff to travel home in safety, or before the light fails.

We will also endeavour to let other agencies know of school closure, e.g. school transport, catering and cleaning contractors, road crossing patrols and mid-day supervisors.

A school must **never** close completely unless the executive principal is certain that no child will present his/herself. Arrangements must always be made for the security of children and parental assent must be sought if sending them home.

How will we let you know of the school is closed?

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, we may have to take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Kent

Closures website. To determine whether any of our schools are open or closed please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk. Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website can also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children's centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for SMS/Email alerts on the Kent Closures website..

Parents can also listen to KMFM, BBC Radio Kent or Heart FM to hear if the school has closed.

We will also announce a closure under Latest News on the school pages at our website: www.timuacademytrust.org.uk

The school Facebook pages will be updated and parents will be alerted by text.

If the school remains open, ALL pupils are expected to attend unless their journey to and from school would put them at risk. Any absence that has not been agreed with the school will be recorded as unauthorized.

Staff who are unable to attend school in severe conditions

The expectation is that staff will make every effort to attend school during severe snow and ice except in the most extreme cases where they can demonstrate a high degree of risk or by virtue of distance or terrain and absence of transport that it's simply not possible for them to attend.

- The head of school will be aware of the location of their staff and be able to communicate with them to determine attendance.
- If possible, staff will arrange to accommodate each other locally in severe conditions if returning home is impossible.
- An agreement may be reached for certain staff not to be expected until later in the morning or to be released early rather than not attending at all

All staff are asked to complete a severe weather questionnaire to assist the school in winter planning.

Management of ice, frost and snow conditions on site

The site team will monitor the temperature and forecasts as prevention is key.

Gritting and rock salt will be used to de-ice commonly used areas prone to be slippery in frosty, icy conditions (it is the substance used on public roads by the highways authority). Where appropriate, pedestrians will be diverted to less slippery walkways and barriers will be used to prevent access to others.