

School Closures Policy

*This policy applies to all staff and children from EYFS to Year 6
(including the Nurture Provision)*



Chair of Governors:- Mrs Christine Bartley
Headteacher:- Mrs Elaine Preston
Policy Status:- Not Statutory
Policy Area Responsibility:- Headteacher

Date Written:- January 2018





GLADSTONE PRIMARY ACADEMY

School Closure Procedure

Procedure – Inclement Weather and Other Emergencies

The Governing Body consulted and agreed this procedure which puts in place a robust process so that parents and staff, as well as the general public and the Trust, understand why and when the school has to close.

- (a) When the school has to close for an unexpected reason, that decision is made by the Headteacher or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Headteacher. The following need to be informed:
 - (i) the Chair of Governors;
 - (ii) the Societas Trust CEO;
 - (iii) the Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority Emergency School Closure website;
 - (iv) parents/carers (this will be via the website and local radio stations);
 - (v) staff, using the Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority website/the school web site and/or text messaging service.
- (b) The decision to close a school is the responsibility of the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. The prime concern is the well-being and safety of parents, pupils and staff.
- (c) When the school is in session and affected by poor weather conditions, the key question is whether pupils would be safer leaving early. Consideration is given to the age of the pupils and, for younger pupils, whether parents will be at home. For pupils who can walk between school and home, it is perhaps safer to close at the normal time but to leave the responsibility with the parent to collect their own child earlier, if they wish to do so. For pupils using public transport or a school bus, then advice should be sought from the company and, if pupils are to be released earlier, parents need to be informed.
- (d) When, because of weather conditions, the question arises about closing the school rather than normal opening, the following procedure is in place:
 - (i) the decision is made by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

Consideration is based on the condition of the site and the surrounding area and the supervision of pupils when on site. In order to assess the latter, each school has a procedure whereby staff can inform the Headteacher of any difficulties in getting to work on time; Staff must ensure that Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have an up-to-date mobile telephone number for use in such circumstances where one is available.
 - (ii) if the Headteacher decides to close the school, the people designated in (a) are be informed. The school will be open unless it states the opposite on the website, radio or text messaging service. (There will be less

difficulty in communicating with Radio Stoke/Signal if schools do not try to announce that they will be open);

Parents are asked not to ring the school to check if school is open to allow staff to communicate via the text messaging service. We also suggest that, if possible, parents accompany their child to school and check if it is open before leaving them.

(e) In the event of the school having to close, all employees will be paid normally, regardless of whether they were able to report for duty, unless the Governors believe that individuals did not make reasonable attempts to travel to work and the closure was caused mainly by their non-attendance. The Headteacher will decide whether it is reasonable or necessary to require them to remain on the premises undertaking other duties within their job description. This will depend on:

- paying due regard to matters relating to health, safety and welfare of employees and pupils;
- whether or not these duties could be carried out at home;
- whether staying on the premises would create unreasonable difficulties for the journey home, particularly where conditions are deteriorating.

(i) In the case of a school remaining open, where the employee does not report for duty, the Governors have discretion to allow normal pay. In determining whether or not pay is to be allowed, the basic issue should be whether or not the employee has made every reasonable effort to attend school.

(ii) Advice from weather forecasters and the Police for people to 'stay at home' does not constitute an entitlement to pay for staff that follow this advice.

(iii) Where the Governors decide to withhold pay because of the employee's absence, they should notify the trust so that the appropriate deduction can be made. This could involve a deduction for less than the full period of absence, if they believe that some of it was justified.

(iv) Governors are advised not to consider disciplinary action against staff who are absent because of inclement weather.

(f) Safety of the Site

The Governing Body ensures that procedures are in place to minimise the dangers of slipping on frost, snow and ice in outside areas and on access routes. Pedestrian walkways are clearly marked to encourage visitors, parents and pupils to walk on these "safer" areas. The Site Supervisor keeps abreast of the latest weather forecasts and ensures that there is a clear path to the entrance points, supported by other staff.