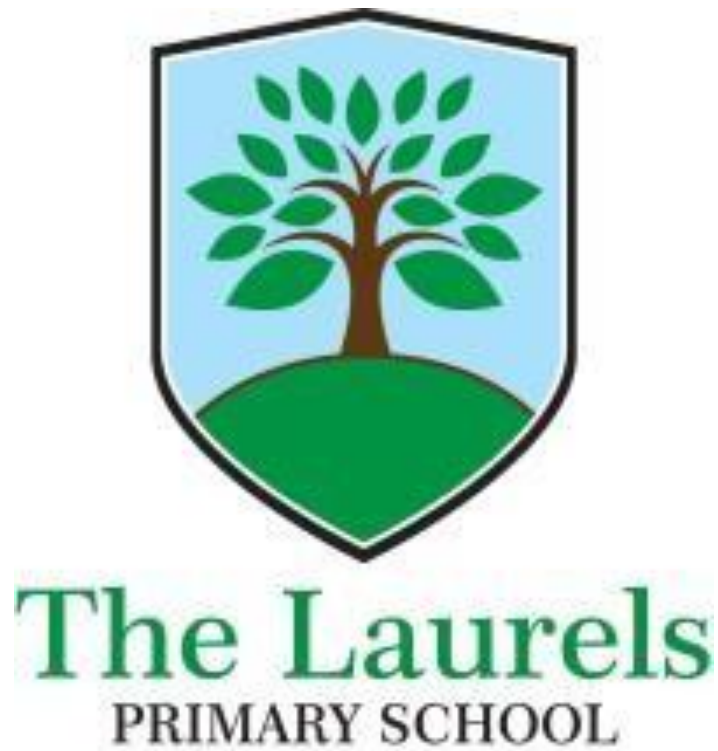




Severe Weather and Extreme Temperature Policy

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1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors during periods of severe weather.

The policy applies to adverse weather conditions including:

- Snow and ice
- Extreme cold
- Flooding
- High winds and storms
- Extreme heat and heatwaves
- Any other weather-related event that may impact on the safe operation of the school

The school will take reasonable measures to remain open wherever it is safe to do so. The Headteacher may implement alternative arrangements, partial closure or full closure where severe weather presents risks that cannot be adequately controlled.

2. Principles

The school will:

- Monitor relevant Met Office weather warnings and, during periods of extreme heat or cold, relevant UKHSA health alerts and government guidance.
- Undertake risk assessments where severe weather is forecast.
- Prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- Take proportionate measures to reduce risks.
- Communicate promptly with parents, carers and staff regarding any disruption.
- Review control measures throughout any severe weather event.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Assessing whether the school can operate safely.
- Authorising any partial or full closure.
- Liaising with governors where appropriate.
- Communicating decisions to staff, parents and carers.
- Ensuring appropriate control measures are implemented.

The Site Manager is responsible for:

- Monitoring site conditions.
- Arranging gritting, snow clearance and other practical controls.
- Monitoring building conditions, including heating, ventilation and temperature.
- Reporting significant hazards to the Headteacher.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following guidance issued during severe weather.
- Monitoring pupils' wellbeing.
- Reporting hazards and concerns.
- Promoting safe behaviours and appropriate hydration where required.

4. Snow, Ice and Extreme Cold

Where snow, ice or extreme cold conditions occur, the school will:

- Grit priority pedestrian routes where practicable.
- Restrict access to unsafe areas.
- Assess whether outdoor activities can proceed safely.
- Consider indoor break and lunch arrangements.
- Monitor staffing levels and transport disruption.
- Assess whether school can remain safely operational.

The Headteacher may decide to partially or fully close the school where:

- Safe access routes cannot be maintained.
- Staffing levels are insufficient.
- Building services fail.
- Travel conditions present unacceptable risks.

5. Extreme Heat and Heatwaves

During periods of hot weather or heatwave conditions, the school will undertake risk assessments and implement additional control measures.

Measures may include:

- Ensuring access to drinking water throughout the day.
- Encouraging regular hydration.
- Increasing opportunities for pupils to refill water bottles.
- Allowing pupils and staff to remain in shaded areas.
- Increasing ventilation within classrooms where possible.
- Using blinds, curtains and shading measures to reduce solar gain.
- Adjusting PE lessons and outdoor activities.
- Rescheduling strenuous activities to cooler periods of the day.
- Providing additional rest breaks.
- Allowing flexibility in school uniform requirements where approved by the Headteacher.
- Monitoring vulnerable pupils and staff, including those with medical conditions.
- Encouraging the use of hats when outdoors.
- Encouraging parents/carers to apply sunscreen before school where appropriate.
- Reducing prolonged exposure to direct sunlight.

Where appropriate, windows will be managed according to whether the external temperature is higher or lower than the internal temperature, rather than routinely being kept open.

The school may move breaktimes or lunchtimes indoors where outdoor temperatures present a risk to health and wellbeing.

6. High Winds, Storms and Lightning

During high winds, storms or thunderstorms, the school will assess the safety of outdoor areas, trees, temporary structures and equipment. Outdoor activities may be restricted or suspended where conditions present a risk. Pupils and staff will be brought indoors where lightning or other conditions make remaining outside unsafe.

7. Flooding

Where flooding occurs or is forecast, the school will assess the impact on the safety and operation of the site. Measures may include:

- Restricting access to flooded or waterlogged areas.
- Assessing safe access to and from the school site.
- Monitoring any risk of water entering school buildings.
- Isolating affected areas where there may be electrical or other hazards.
- Relocating pupils and activities away from affected areas.
- Liaising with the Trust, emergency services, utility providers or other relevant agencies.
- Considering partial or full closure where safe access cannot be maintained or the site cannot operate safely.

Pupils and staff must not enter floodwater or areas where the depth, condition or associated hazards are unknown.

8. Recognition of Heat-Related Illness

Staff should be alert to symptoms of heat-related illness, including:

Heat Exhaustion

- Excessive sweating
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Weakness
- Muscle cramps

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

Symptoms may include:

- Confusion
- Altered consciousness
- Seizures
- Hot dry skin
- Collapse

Staff should follow the school's First Aid Policy and current NHS guidance where heat-related illness is suspected.

9. Outdoor Activities

The school will review planned outdoor activities during periods of severe weather.

This includes:

- PE lessons
- Sports events
- Educational visits
- Outdoor learning sessions
- Playtimes and lunchtimes

Activities may be modified, relocated, postponed or cancelled where risks cannot be adequately controlled.

10. Vulnerable Individuals

Individual needs will be considered as part of severe-weather planning, including where a pupil's SEND, medical needs, communication needs, mobility, sensory needs or ability to regulate body temperature may increase risk.

Additional consideration will be given to:

- Young children
- Pupils with medical conditions
- Pupils with SEND
- Pregnant staff
- Staff with underlying health conditions

Individual risk assessments may be undertaken where required.

11. School Closure and Business Continuity

The Headteacher may consider partial or full closure where severe weather results in:

- Dangerous site conditions.
- Unsafe temperatures within school buildings.
- Failure of essential utilities.
- Significant staffing shortages.
- Unsafe travel conditions.
- Risks that cannot be adequately controlled through other measures.

Where closure is necessary, parents and staff will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable through the school's normal communication channels. Any decision to close or partially close the school will be based on the school's individual circumstances and a dynamic assessment of risk, rather than on weather warnings or temperature alone.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following a significant severe weather event
- Following changes in legislation, guidance or operational practice