

Leek High School



Adverse Weather Policy

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Statement of intent

It is the aim of **Leek High School** to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

We will, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the school during adverse weather conditions.
- Make clear the grounds for a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- Advise and inform staff and parents of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____

1. Leek High School policies and procedures

1.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following school policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Snow and Ice Risk Assessment
- First Aid Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Deciding whether the school will close due to adverse weather.
- Informing parents and staff of any closure.
- Deciding whether students should be kept indoors during break times and reporting this decision to staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensuring the school is fully stocked with snow clearing equipment.
- Ensuring the school has an adequate supply of rock salt.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

2.2. The **Senior Site Technician** is responsible for:

- Completing a risk assessment that covers adverse weather and gritting.
- Ensuring gritting is carried out in line with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring all equipment is maintained and stored properly, notifying the **Headteacher** of any damages.

2.3. Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the requirements of this policy.
- Reporting any concerns relevant to this policy to the **Headteacher**.
- The safety of students, colleagues and themselves.
- Wearing appropriate footwear and clothing during periods of adverse weather.
- Liaising with one another before the end of the day to discuss an exit plan for students, this includes escorting younger students to the entrance to be collected by their parents.

2.4. Parents are responsible for:

- Only using the designated and cleared areas whilst on the school premises.
- Collecting their children when the school needs to close.

- Keeping all their contact information up-to-date.
- Ensuring they and their children wear the appropriate footwear and clothing for adverse weather.

3. Decision to close

- 3.1. The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher.
- 3.2. The **Senior Site Technician** and the **Talentum Learning Trust CEO** will be consulted when making a decision about school closure.
- 3.3. In the absence of the Headteacher, the **Senior Leadership Team** will assume the responsibility of the Headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.
- 3.4. The school will be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:
 - Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
 - Staff numbers are insufficient for the school to operate safely.
- 3.5. In the event of school closure:
 - The **Headteacher** will inform staff and parents via text message.
 - The **IT Manager or IT Technician** will post updates on the school website and social media pages.
- 3.6. In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents will be contacted via text message or telephone, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the school or to give permission for their child to walk home.
- 3.7. The early release of staff will be considered on an individual basis through discussion with the Headteacher.

4. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions

- 4.1. When deciding whether the school will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the **Snow and Ice Risk Assessment**.
- 4.2. If the school remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the main pedestrian gate only.
- 4.3. The **Senior Site Technician** will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

- 4.4. All main pathways, wherever practical, will have been cleared and gritted before students arrive on the premises, following the procedures in section 5.
- 4.5. A notice will be erected to inform vehicles and pedestrians entering the school grounds that they do so at their own risk.
- 4.6. At the Headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the main yard may be out-of-bounds to students and the main car park closed to parents and visitors.
- 4.7. All persons entering the school buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

5. Procedures for gritting

- 5.1. The first phase of gritting will prioritise those areas which are most used by students and staff. This includes the main entrance of the school, as well as the following areas:
 - **The footpath from the front pedestrian gate up to the main entrance**
 - **The footpath next to the Astroturf pitch**
 - **The main steps leading up to The Fulmar**
 - **The pathways and steps between Main Building, The Fulmar and Top Building**
- 5.2. The second phase of gritting will include areas that are not covered by phase one, but are likely to be used. These include, but are not limited to, the following areas:
 - **The pathway alongside the Youth Club building**
 - **The rear steps and pathway at the back of The Fulmar**
- 5.3. The **Headteacher** decides which areas of the school are designated 'first phase' and 'second phase' for gritting.
- 5.4. The **Senior Site Technician** and **Janitor** are responsible for ensuring that the correct areas have been gritted and are safe for students and staff.
- 5.5. The **Senior Site Technician** ensures that the relevant equipment is used during gritting. Any damaged equipment is reported to the **Office Manager** so that it can be replaced.
- 5.6. The supply of rock salt is monitored – if supplies are low, the **Office Manager** is notified.

- 5.7. A record is made of the areas that have been gritted, along with the frequency of gritting. This record is passed on to the **Office Manager**.

6. Health and safety

- 6.1. The school has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.
- 6.2. The school will be liable if it is found to have been negligent in its responsibilities and not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, visitors and parents entering the school site.
- 6.3. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's **Health and Safety Policy**.
- 6.4. Staff, visitors and parents have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds.
- 6.5. Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.
- 6.6. If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter the school grounds and inform either the **Headteacher** or **Senior Site Technician** so the safety can be reassessed.
- 6.7. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the **Senior Site Technician** or **IT Manager** will assess the school site and inform the Headteacher at **7.00am** of the state of site.
- 6.8. A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.
- 6.9. Closing the school is a reasonable decision if students or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.
- 6.10. When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

7. Limited staff numbers

- 7.1. During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.
- 7.2. Staff members are expected to assess the availability of all public transport and consider the feasibility of walking to work, if they live relatively close and are fit and able to do so, in order to attend work.

- 7.3. The school understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk.
- 7.4. In line with 4.3, it is therefore at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.
- 7.5. Staff members are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport and fitness to walk when making their decision.
- 7.6. Staff members are required to liaise with the **Headteacher** to discuss difficulties attending work due to adverse weather.
- 7.7. In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different teaching or form groups within a year group may be brought together to be taught under the supervision of the available teachers and support staff.
- 7.8. The school will continue to strive to provide high-quality education in the given circumstances.

8. Attendance statistics

- 8.1. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.
- 8.2. When a student cannot attend school due to adverse weather conditions, the student will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will, therefore, not affect the school's attendance statistics.
- 8.3. If the Headteacher believes the student could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the student will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.
- 8.4. Parents or carers acting on the assumption that the school would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

9. Exam disruption

- 9.1. If the school has to close, or if a student misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.

9.2. The school takes full responsibility for informing parents and students of any agreed changes concerning exams in adverse weather conditions. This includes:

- Using alternative venues.
- Exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject.
- The opportunity for the student to sit any missed exam later in the year.

10. **Emergency plan**

10.1. In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the **First Aid Policy**.

10.2. The school's **Emergency Plan** will contain:

- Information on where to find parent contact details.
- Staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies.
- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency.

10.3. All nominated staff will be trained to:

- Contact and liaise with emergency services.
- Provide first aid.
- Move students to a safe place.
- Calm and comfort students.
- Contact parents.
- Deal with any media interest.

10.4. Each member of staff will have a copy of the emergency plan.

10.5. Paper copies of the plan will be kept at nominated staff members' homes in case of out-of-hours emergencies.

10.6. All parents will be sent a letter informing them of their responsibilities, e.g. their duty to collect children.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the **Headteacher**, and any necessary amendments will be made **during review**.

11.2. This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the **Headteacher**.

11.3. The next review date for this policy is **March 2021**.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____