



# Transform Trust Severe Weather Guidance

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209	Operational Safeguarding Lead	V8 September 2024	Annually

## Introduction

Schools will always make every effort to open to our children. The decision to close a school (or partially close) will be made by the Headteacher. The decision will be made only if one or more of the following conditions apply: -

1. Conditions on site are dangerous (this includes the grounds of the school).
2. Insufficient staff are able to come onto site to keep the school running safely.
3. Conditions are considered to be, or anticipated to become, too hazardous to travel for children, families and staff.

## School Closure due to Severe Weather (severe weather includes, - snow, storms, hot weather)

Closing the school has a clear impact on children and families. When considering whether to close your school please check your own school's Emergency Plan and Guidance

Consider if it is possible to remain open, even if for reduced year groups and assess the risks (risk assessment attached). If some of your teachers can't get to work, you should be flexible, for example by:

- bringing together groups and classes with teachers and support staff working together;
- using other school staff or appropriate volunteers to provide cover supervision or oversee alternative activities;
- re-arranging the curriculum.

Consideration should be given to any person/child with a disability and any potential impact the weather conditions have on their ability to get to, from and/or around the school site.

It may also be possible, in some instances, for schools to agree between them that staff who cannot get to their own school should report to a more local school within the Trust and help at that school to cover any staff shortages. This may only be feasible where there is the possibility of arrangements being made in advance and set out in contingency plans.

It should be noted that schools must by law meet for 380 half-day sessions (190) in each year so you will be expected to make up any lost days.

## Who to notify:

**Chair of Governors** to confirm your recommendation to close the school

**Derby Schools** Radio Derby via their website: [radio.derby@bbc.co.uk](mailto:radio.derby@bbc.co.uk)

**Nottingham Schools** Radio Nottingham via their website NG Alerts: [www.ngalerts.co.uk](http://www.ngalerts.co.uk)  
(please note they will not accept notifications via telephone)

**Parents/Carers** - by your usual school methods (group/group/text; class dojo; website – please include the reason for closure, how they can receive updates; how long you anticipate being

closed. You may request that they do not phone the school (to avoid blocking up the phone system) and remember to thank them for their co-operation.

Keep your website updated.

**Staff** – all staff should make all reasonable efforts to attend work. It is appropriate for staff to attend work even when children are not in school. When not able to attend consider what other things could they be doing – planning or CPD (SSS modules for example).

**Transform Trust** Claire McKendrick on : 07929 521578  
[claire.mckendrick@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:claire.mckendrick@transformtrust.co.uk)

or

Steve Cox at [steve.cox@transformtrust.co.uk](mailto:steve.cox@transformtrust.co.uk)

Or any member of the Trust's Executive Team

### **Closing school early**

During severe weather some parents and staff may get anxious and want to get their children/themselves home straightaway. Factors such as re-organising childcare, time off work to collect children and ensuring there is someone home to let those children in (who are allowed to go home on their own) should all be considered and arrangements put in place for those who cannot be collected or those nearest to the area of concern. Those staff who live furthest away will be allowed to leave at the earliest opportunity. A skeleton staff should remain in school until all the children have been collected. Please remember to inform both your Chair of Governors and the Trust if you are to close early.

Please note: Traffic organisations that recommend only *essential travel*, in the DfE's view, *essential travel* includes pupils going to school to keep learning, and school staff going to work.

### **Storm warnings**

If the local weather forecast indicates that there is a storm warning in place. Consider any actions which you will need to implement to keep children and adults safe. This can include, but not limited to:

- Not permitting children or adults to go into areas of the school grounds with trees etc.
- Ensuring that all play equipment and storage is secure and will not cause any damage.
- Following advice from the emergency services.

### **Extreme hot weather warnings**

In the event of an extreme hot weather warning being issued by Public Health England, the Trust will endeavour to adhere to this guidance, but any change will be communicated promptly. Unless advised otherwise, it is expected that schools will remain open throughout, with some adjustments being made, such as increase access to drinking water, no prolonged outdoor

activities and changes to the standard school uniform. They will also liaise with their Health & Safety Consultant and communicate any additional guidance.

### **School attendance statistics – a reminder**

Where children are unable to get to school due to severe weather conditions, you will need to use the updated attendance codes from [Working Together to improve school attendance August 2024](#):

Y3 – unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Y4 – unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed unexpectedly

However, if you believe that a child could have got to school, their absence should be recorded as unauthorised using code 'O'.

Reception and other infant classes (children aged 5, 6 or 7) should normally be groups of 30 or fewer but having more than 30 in one class due to temporary exceptional circumstances is not a reason to close the school or the class.

This guidance will be reviewed annually.