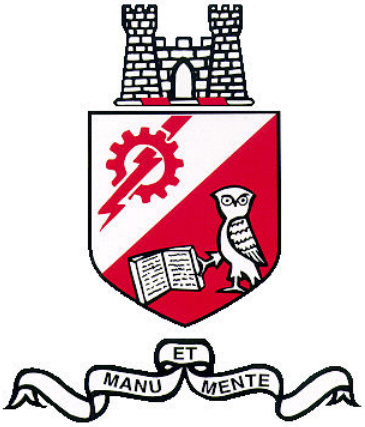
WEST HATCH HIGH SCHOOL



THE BEST THAT I CAN BE

Adverse Weather Policy

Policy Date:	November 2026
Policy to be reviewed on:	November 2029
Signed:	

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1. Introduction

West Hatch High School aims to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing this can be done in a safe manner.

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.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999
- UKHSA (2023) 'Looking after children and those in early years setting during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals'
- UKHSA (2023) 'Looking after children and those in early years setting before and during cold weather: teachers and other educational professionals'
- UKHSA (2023) 'Adverse Weather and Health Plan'
- DfE (2023) 'Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Critical Incident Policy & Management Plan
- Exam Contingency Plan
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Welfare Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

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 classroom temperatures are maintained at an appropriate level where appropriate
- Ensuring that staff model good practice in terms of sun safety and understand the precautions for students in terms of sun safety.
- Ensuring staff have received appropriate training and guidance on the stipulations in this policy, and ensuring staff act in accordance with this policy.
- Completing a risk assessment that covers adverse weather and gritting.

- Consider how snow and ice may affect the operation of the school, e.g. transport difficulties for staff and having rehearsed a number of scenarios in terms of staffing numbers we would need to keep the school open for KS4 and KS5.

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
- Modelling good practice in terms of sun safety.
- Encouraging students to stay appropriate hydrated in hot weather.
- Report any internal wet areas/external ice patches to the Main Office who will inform the site staff to enable them to respond accordingly.

Site Staff
- Commence the immediate clearance of snow and ice in designated areas, in line with the procedures under section 6 of this policy.
- Ensuring the school is fully stocked with snow clearing equipment and has an adequate supply of rock salt.
- Ensure equipment provided to clear snow and ice is maintained in a satisfactory condition.
- Temporary closure of designated areas until cleared. Such areas should be clearly marked.
- Maintain records of clearance and temporary closures on the daily caretaking sheets.

Parents / Carers 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.

Students are responsible for:
- Following the instructions and guidance of staff during adverse weather.
- Attending school prepared for adverse weather conditions.
- Following the Behaviour Policy at all times.

4. School Closure

The Headteacher will sign the school up to receive Weather-Health Alerts from the UKHSA and Met Office. The school will make a local assessment and initiate all appropriate procedures in response to an alert. Alerts will be reviewed to ensure the school fully understands the potential impacts and how likely they are to occur.

The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team and Head Caretaker by 6.30am. In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher will assume the responsibility of the Headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.

An assessment and risk assessment will by conducted as to whether the site can be sufficiently cleared and made safe. The Headteacher will then liaise with relevant SLT

members and inform staff and parents by 7am; updates regarding closure will be regularly issued thereafter.

The first consideration is always the safety of the students. In adverse weather conditions, where staff live some distance from the school, the journey to school may be too hazardous for them to set out and, once here equally hazardous for them to get home. They may also be affected by the closure of their own children's schools. Health and Safety risk assessments mean that we cannot open the school if there is insufficient staff to properly supervise the children.

Staff who are likely to face particular difficulties in getting home may have to leave work early, taking into account their person safety. This decision will be taken in collaboration with the Headteacher. Minium cover arrangements in school will be provided by employees who do not have a particularly long or difficult journey home to ensure staffing ratios are maintained for the safety of students.

A closure of the school during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

The school will be closed if one of 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.

In the event of school closure:
- The Headteacher will inform staff and parents via text message or email.
- An update will be posted on the school website and social media channels.

School Closure Timetable

If school is closed online lessons will take place following the usual school day timings but lessons will only be 50 minutes long and the school day will start after lesson 3 in order to allow staff time to log on and change lessons/resources to an online format. She below:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday online lesson timings

Time	**Period**
10.10 – 11.00	Period 3 lesson
11.00 – 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.20	Period 4 lesson
12.30 – 13.20	Period 5 lesson
13.20 – 14.15	Lunch
14.15 – 15.05	Period 6 lesson

Tuesday online lesson timings

Time	**Period**
9.40 – 10.30	Period 3 lesson
10.30 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 11.50	Period 4 lesson
12.00 – 12.50	Period 5 lesson
12.50 – 13.45	Lunch
13.45 – 14.35	Period 6 lesson

Snow Day Timetable

West Hatch has a Snow Day timetable in place so that should a part day closure be required, for example to ensure the site is safe to access, the school will open and close at the times listed below.

Time	Period
9.55	School Starts
10.00 – 11.00	Period 3 lesson
11.00 – 12.00	Period 4 lesson
12.00 – 12.30	Lunch (this will be a grab and go lunch)
12.30 – 1.30	Period 5 lesson
13.30 – 14.30	Period 6 lesson
14.30	School Ends

5. Remaining Open in Adverse Weather Conditions and Clearance Procedures

Due to the expanse of the school site, it is recognised that it is impossible to immediately clear snow and ice from all pathways. The procedures do, however, require those responsible to exercise careful judgement in prioritising key areas, egress and routes through the site as well as outline the responsibilities of all users to exercise their own initiative in ensuring their own and others safety during times of snow and ice in the school grounds.

During severe weather site staff will suspend their other duties and priority will be given to clearing snow and ice. The supply of rock salt is monitored – if supplies are low, the Headteacher is notified. All site staff will be provided with suitable equipment and Personal Protective Equipment.

Gritting/Clearing will be prioritised in the following order of priority and in line with the site map sat Appendix C:

- Main Car Parks
- Main driveway and pathways into the school
- Steps/slopes to English, delivery bay, Design Technology pathway to carpark, Drama steps, main pedestrian entrance slop to C block
- Pathway to reception
- Pathway to all main entrances to other buildings
- All other pathways around site
- Tennis courts/playgrounds

The Headteacher and Head Caretaker will ensure that the correct areas have been gritted/cleared and are safe for students and staff. Any areas that have not been gritted or cleared will be clearly marked or cordoned off, so that students do not enter them.

Where snow has fallen, clear a path 1 meter wide in order of priority shown on the site map and treat cleared paths with salt/grit materials to maintain a clear pathway especially where temperatures remain below freezing.

Routes will be regularly checked throughout the day to ensure freezing or further snow coverage has not occurred. Additional care should be taken when clearing sloping pathways and steps, it may be necessary for safety reasons to consider the temporary closure of some

non-essential areas of the premises (e.g. steep pathways, playgrounds, etc.) to avoid risks to staff, students or visitors.

There is no advantage in applying grit salt/other materials to deep snow; this should be cleared from the path first.

When severe weather is forecast site staff will spread salt/other materials the night before as well as on arrival at 6am or earlier by arrangement.

The gritting of roads and pavements outside the site are dealt with separately by the Highways department.

6. Health and Safety

The school will recognise its duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds. 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.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

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. Staff members must take responsibility for the health and safety of any students under their supervision.

If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the appropriate risk assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter the school grounds and inform either the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher so the site can be reassessed.

Closing the school is a reasonable decision if students or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.

Relevant staff members will be trained and made aware of how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be suffering from ill health due to adverse weather conditions. All staff will understand the school's Emergency Plan.

7. Extreme Heat

When there are red weather warnings in place due to extreme heat West Hatch will follow a Tuesday timetable as follows:

Time	**Period**
8.40 – 9.40	Period 2 lesson
9.40 – 10.40	Period 3 lesson
10.40 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Period 4 lesson
12.00 – 13.00	Period 5 lesson
13.00	School ends

In addition to the above timetables:

- All extra-curricular clubs and fixtures are to be cancelled where amended timetables are in place.

- There will be grab and go food options at break time only.
- The school uniform will be relaxed, see Appendix B and staff may wear lightweight clothing outlined in Appendix A.

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Where a student is suffering from heat exhaustion, the following steps will be taken immediately:

- Contact the first aiders in the main office
- Moving the student to as cool a room as possible and encouraging them to drink cold water
- Cooling the pupil as rapidly as possibly, using whatever methods possible, e.g. sponging or spraying the pupil with cool water, placing cold packs around the neck and armpits, wrapping the pupil in a cool, wet sheet, and assisting cooling using a fan.
- Where the student does not respond to treatment within 30 minutes, an ambulance will be called.
- If the student loses consciousness or has a fit, they will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called immediately; treatment to cool the student will continue until the ambulance arrives.

Where a pupil is suspected to be suffering from heatstroke, 999 will be called immediately and the pupil will be cooled down in line with the procedures for managing heat exhaustion outlined above whilst awaiting medical assistance.

8. Exam Disruption

Staff will follow procedures in the school's Exam Contingency Plan in the event of disruption due to adverse weather.

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

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.

9. Emergency Plan

In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the school will follow their Critical Incident Policy and Management Plan.

Appendix A – Risk Assessment

Hazard	People Affected	Risks	Controls
Snow and Ice	Employees Students Visitors	Slips, trips and falls	• Staff are aware of the Adverse Weather Policy. • Risk assessment in place. • Procedures and routes to be followed and reinforce these to students and visitors. • Barrirer matting in place at all entrances.
	Premises Staff	Manual Handling	• All staff trained in manual handling techniques. • Where possible, purpose-built push or motorised equipment used, i.e. spreader and snow plough.
		Exposure due to low external temperature	• Protective, warm clothing including hat and gloves worn. • Take regular breaks.
		Slips, trips and falls	• Snow and ice over shoe protectors issued. • Adopt route which minuses the need to walk over uncleared areas, clearing heavily used paths first.
		Injury caused by salt when spreading	• Goggles and cut resistant insulated gloves to be worn.
		Exhaustion	• Take regular breaks.
Extreme Cold	Employees Students Visitors	Unpleasant working conditions – too cold	• Heating systems maintained and in good working order. • Draught-proof windows, doors and other points of energy loss. • Provide fan heaters where possible • Encourage physical activity where appropriate to help keep students warm.

	Employees Students Visitors	Infections spreading	• Ventilate indoor spaces, especially where people gather, to help reduce the risk of infections spreading. • Reinforce messaging around the importance of hand and respiratory hygiene. • Promote the flu vaccine for staff and students.
Extreme Heat	Employees Students Visitors	Feling unwell due to heat – could lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke	• Staff allowed to wear light, loose-fitting clothing, tailored shorts, professional appearance to be maintained – staff informed via email and briefings. • Relaxed uniform rules introduced for students (Appendix B) – parents and staff informed via email • Encourage staff and students to take their breaks in the shade, if possible, rather than staying out in the sun. • Reschedule work/outdoor lessons according to the outdoor temperature. • Ensure that there is an adequate supply of drinking water. • Ensure adequate water breaks and rest areas in the shade during hot temperatures. • Encourage staff and students to stay hydrated. • Parents and students informed about heat safety including wearing hats and applying sun cream.
	Visitors	Unpleasant working conditions – too hot and lack of ventilation	• Opening windows in rooms without air conditioning – all staff advised to do so via email and briefing • Closing blinds • Using as few lights as possible • Turn off unnecessary electrical items

			• Opening doors to corridors • Classroom schedule altered where possible to take advantage of those classrooms with air conditioning. Updates given to staff via cover team. • Using fans in classrooms / offices where available. • Catering Team to consider only offering cold food / sandwiches.
	Employees Students	Classroom activities not appropriate	• PE activities to be limited as per the direction of the PE staff. • Food technology staff to consider postponing any practical work during extreme heat. If practical work must go ahead then students and teachers to take regular breaks during class and ensuring that they stay hydrated.

Appendix B – Adjusted Uniform in extreme heat

Years 7–11

Boys:
- May wear either the West Hatch grey polo shirt or PE top with PE shorts.
- Trainers must be worn if students choose to wear PE kit.
- If wearing standard school trousers, school shoes must still be worn.

Girls:
- May wear either the grey polo shirt or PE top.
- Bottoms may include: school skirt (knee length), school trousers, or PE shorts/skort.
- If wearing skirt or trousers, school shoes are required.
- If wearing PE shorts or skort, trainers may be worn.
- *Note:* Fashion/adapted shorts such as fitted Nike shorts are not permitted.

Footwear (All Students):
- Sliders, crocs, flip-flops, sandals, or any open-toed footwear are **not permitted** for health and safety reasons.

Sixth Form

Male Students:
- May wear polo shirts and tailored shorts in place of trousers.

Female Students:
- Should continue to wear smart business attire.
- Spaghetti straps, sportswear, or attire more suitable for the beach/gym is not permitted.

Appendix C – Site Map for snow and ice gritting/clearance

