



SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Reviewed : October 2017

To be Reviewed : October 2019

BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Information and advice on unavoidable school closures and travel arrangements in difficult weather circumstances.

On rare occasions, the weather can be so severe that getting to and from school becomes hazardous. A school like ours, which most pupils and some staff travel to on public transport, sometimes over long distances, is particularly vulnerable. This is especially so if the weather worsens in the afternoon.

Really bad weather is disruptive and can cause anxiety and stress especially if snow starts falling heavily during the day or if you wake up to a blanket of snow that you know is going to cause chaos on the roads.

BAD WEATHER OVERNIGHT

The decision to close the school will be taken by the Headteacher, other key staff (after consulting with the resident caretaker about the conditions in school) and with the Chair of Governors. Where the school is officially closed, all absence will be counted as an authorised absence. The school will be closed **only in extreme cases.**

We will ensure that our website www.brentford.hounslow.sch.uk is updated by 7.30 am to inform staff and students whether school will be open or closed. Staff and parents who have given us details of email/telephones we can use will be notified by a text/email. Students and staff should check the website before leaving home to make sure that no unnecessary travelling is incurred so that no one is put at risk travelling unnecessarily.

If the decision is made to keep school open, we encourage both students and staff to take care when travelling when the conditions are hazardous. It is better to give yourself plenty of time and arrive safely, than not to arrive at all.

BAD WEATHER DURING THE DAY

Should a severe weather warning be put in place by the Met Office or if the weather deteriorates throughout the day,

The school will endeavour to

1. Find out which forms of transport will be affected and how this will affect students and staff getting home.
2. Consider, by remaining open, whether students and staff could be put at risk.
3. Inform students and staff of any changes to be made to normal routes so that they can decide the best route home.

If the school makes the decision to close early due to bad weather:

1. The decision will be made by the Headteacher and other key staff after consultation with the Chair of Governors.

2. Parents/carers will be informed by text/email that school will be closing early to allow students to get home safely before the weather worsens or before dark.
3. Should there be any students that we do not have email/ text contact details they will be allowed to call their parents via a mobile phone to let them know. Such calls **must** have prior approval of a teacher and will be made in a supervised environment.
4. Staff should not normally offer to give students a lift home.
5. Any decision to close the school early will be passed on to staff and pupils as soon as arrangements are in hand.
6. The school will **only** be closed early in extreme cases.

Decisions about closing the school or sending pupils home early are always difficult ones to make. We will make every effort to gather reliable information before making a judgment. We will check weather reports, get advice from TfL and try to assess what is happening elsewhere in the area. School will be kept open with staff on hand until the last pupil has left.

HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO HELP

1. Encourage parents/students to check school website, Twitter or Facebook before leaving home.
2. Plan ahead with their child what to do in a bad weather emergency making sure they have a contact number for them in case of an emergency. These can be discussed during tutor time.
3. Encourage parents only to call school if they really have to, calls in prevent calls out and if school is closed they will only get the answer machine!

EXAMINATIONS

EXTERNAL

We will always do our best to ensure that school is open for students to sit external examinations. However, there may be exceptional cases when this won't be possible.

If our website states that school is closed to all pupils and you are meant to be sitting an **external** exam on the same day, don't panic! We will enter you for the next available sitting, for example in the summer term rather than in January. If this is not possible then we will apply for special consideration for all those pupils affected. If the weather is bad enough to close our school other schools will be affected and the Exam boards will take this into account

If school is open but the weather is bad you should still do your very best to get into school, as long as your parents think that it is safe to do so. Don't worry if you have tried your best to get in for the start of the exam but have still been delayed as we can, in exceptional circumstances, allow such pupils to start the exam a little later. However, we are not allowed to postpone the examination to another day. If it's not safe to travel to school, in most cases we can enter you for the next scheduled date for the module you have missed.

Mock Examination & Controlled Assessments

We will always do our best to ensure that school is open for students to sit a mock examination or controlled assessments. However if conditions are not considered safe and school is closed these mock examinations/controlled assessments will be rescheduled at a time when it is safe to open school again.

If school is open but the weather is bad you should still do your very best to get into school, as long as your parents think that it is safe to do so. Don't worry if you have tried your best to get in for the start of the exam but have still been delayed as we can, in exceptional circumstances, we will allow such pupils to start the exam a little later.

APPENDIX A –

PROCESS TO INFORM STUDENTS AND STAFF OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

School Resident Caretaker to phone and liaise with Headteacher about condition of site by 7:00 am:

If school is considered safe, site staff to make sure that grit/salt is in place for when staff and students arrive. High risk areas to be put down first, followed up with low risk area as time permits.

If school is to be closed:

Caretakers will fix notices to all school gates giving information of school closure and details of school website for further information.

IT Support contacted by School Business Manager, as early as possible and informed of school closure. IT Support will access school phone system making sure that there is an updated message in case parents call in. Message left should include details of length of closure, if known and details of where to get additional information e.g. our website details.

School Office Manager and Community Liaison Officer contacted as early as possible by School Business Manager – Details of closure to be put on school website, twitter and facebook as quickly as possible so staff and students are notified as quickly as possible.

Head Teachers PA contacted as early as possible by School Business Manager - staff/students contacted from information contained within Sims. They will be sent a text/email message giving details of school closure and information around where updates will be posted.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that contact details held by the school are correct and that if they are concerned that school, **might be closed**, and they have not heard, they check the school website, Twitter or Facebook as all these methods will be used to communicate to all concerned.

Brentford School for Girls – Severe Weather – Closure contact details - overnight

Brentford School for Girls – Severe weather tree of notification

Site Team check site by 6.00 am – Site considered dangerous etc



Headteacher called by Site Team to discuss conditions – decision to close made



Headteacher to contact SLT



School Business Manager to contact the following staff about closure via group text and they will update –



Headteachers PA: Email & text sent to staff & students via Sims stating school closed, please check website for further details

IT Support: School telephone message greeting - stating school closed and to check website;

Office Manager: Website – Initially to state closure and then to update when information becomes available;

Community Liaison: Twitter and Facebook Initially to state closure and then to update when information becomes available;

Site Team: Signage for all gates initially stating closure and then where updates are to be posted - Website/Twitter/Facebook

