



Brentford School for Girls

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

<i>Rev</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
	<i>October 2024</i>	<i>Next review due</i>
5	October 2022	Reviewed
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1	October 2015	Initial version

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Bad weather overnight
3. Bad weather during the day
4. How Parents/Carers can help
5. Examinations
 - a. External/public examinations
 - b. PPE/Controlled assessments

Appendix A: Process to inform students and staff of school closure

Appendix B: Severe weather tree of notification

INTRODUCTION

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. Many of our students and staff travel to school on public transport, sometimes over long distances, which makes the school more vulnerable to problems during severe weather, especially if the weather worsens throughout the day.

Extremely bad weather is disruptive and can cause anxiety and stress, therefore the school will do everything possible to reduce stress by implementing this policy when necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all staff and students.

BAD WEATHER OVERNIGHT

The decision to close the school will be taken by the Headteacher, other key staff (after consulting with the Site Manager 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 provided details of email/telephones will be notified by text/email. Students and staff should check the website before leaving home to make sure that unnecessary travelling is prevented and no one is put at risk.

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 would 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 staff member and will be made in a supervised environment.
4. Staff should not offer to give students a lift home.
5. Any decision to close the school early will be passed on to staff and students 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 students home early are always difficult ones to make. The school will make every effort to gather reliable information before making a judgment, such as checking weather reports, getting advice from TfL and assessing what is happening elsewhere in the area. The school will be kept open with senior staff on hand until all students have left the school safely.

HOW PARENTS/CARERS CAN HELP

1. Encourage parents/students to check school website, Twitter, Instagram or Facebook before leaving home.
2. Plan 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, in order to keep the switchboard clear for emergencies.

EXAMINATIONS

External/Public Examinations

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 will not be possible. If our website states that school is closed to all students when an **external** exam is scheduled, we will re-schedule students 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 students affected.

If school is open but the weather is bad, students should do their best to get into school, as long as it is safe to do so. In exceptional circumstances, where bad weather has delayed students for the start of an exam, the school can permit those students to start the exam a little later. However, the school is not permitted to postpone the examination for another day. If it is not safe to travel to school, in most cases students will be entered for the next scheduled examination date.

Pre Public Examination (PPE) & Controlled Assessments

The school will endeavour to remain open for students to sit a PPE examination or controlled assessment. However if conditions are not considered safe and the school has to close these PPE/controlled assessments will be rescheduled.

If school is open but the weather is bad, students should do their best to get into school, as long as it is safe to do so. In exceptional circumstances, where bad weather has delayed students for the start of a PPE or controlled assessment, the school can permit those students to start a little later.

LINKED DOCUMENTS

Sun Protection guidance
Health and Safety Policy

APPENDIX A

PROCESS TO INFORM STUDENTS AND STAFF OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

Site Manager will liaise with Headteacher about condition of site by 7:00 am at the latest:

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 the school is to close:

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 contacted as early as possible by School Business Manager – Details of closure put on school website, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook as quickly as possible so staff and students are notified as quickly as possible.

Head Teacher's 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 and/or social media as all these methods will be used to communicate to all concerned.

APPENDIX B

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 –



Headteacher's 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 & Marketing Officer: Website, Twitter, Instagram 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 will be posted -
Website/Twitter/Instagram/Facebook