



# Sawley Infant & Nursery School & Sawley Junior School



## Adverse Weather Policy (Parent Version)

### Policy Statement

The education of our children is our utmost priority. Wherever possible, Sawley Schools will endeavour to remain open during adverse weather conditions, providing this can be done in a safe manner that does not give rise to danger to users of the site.

### Purpose

- To ensure a clear policy and procedure in relation to operating the school during adverse weather conditions
- To define the grounds for a school closure due to adverse weather conditions
- To 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

### Site Specific Considerations

Sawley Infant & Nursery School and Sawley Junior School occupy the same site and share site entrances and a driveway. The duty of care in these shared areas falls jointly on both schools and as such any decision to close the site on the grounds of safety in these shared areas will be made jointly.

**In the event of snowfall overnight** the following considerations will be taken into account before a decision to close is made:-

- Are there enough members of staff to be able to provide satisfactory care at the appropriate ratios. Safe operating ratios are as follows:-
  - Nursery : 1:13 ratio including 1 teacher and 1 non-contact senior leader
  - Infant School: 1:30 ratio including 4 teachers and 1 non-contact senior leader
  - Junior School: 1:32 ratio including 5 teachers and 1 non-contact senior leader
- Are the school grounds sufficiently safe for children, parents and staff?
- Is the severity of the weather conditions on such a major scale that it is unlikely that many people will be able, physically, to make it into school?
- Are school utilities in good working order to provide heating, lighting and water across the site?
- Can the school provide lunch for the children?
- Are external agencies, e.g. police, local government, motoring organisations advising against school travel in our region?

***The Senior Leadership Team (usually the Headteachers) will consult regarding closure due to severe weather.***

**Where a decision to close is made, the SLT will ensure that:**

- The decision is made as soon as possible – preferably before 7.30am.
- Parents/carers are informed via the Parentmail facility.
- The school website is updated.
- Closure information is shared with appropriate council websites and radio stations.
- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of this policy, though individual tasks may be delegated to others.

There may be occasion when a late start to the school day will be considered. e.g.

- additional time needed to make the school site safe;
- additional travelling time for staff due to road conditions and the effect on safe operating pupil ratios.

In the event of late opening, parents and carers will be informed using the procedures set out above.

**If the school is to remain closed for a second day, a decision will be made by 6pm the same day.**

**In the event of heavy snowfall during the school day**

In extreme circumstances, when adverse weather is predicted or breaks out during the school day, a decision may be made to close the school with immediate effect. The decision to close the school during a working day is not taken lightly but the over-riding principle is the safety of pupils and staff.

Where a decision is taken to close during the school day, parents will be informed in the usual way by Parentmail, by updating the website and via the Derbyshire County Council school closures website.

Parents/carers will be expected to make arrangements for their children to be collected as soon as possible.

**Clearance of Snow**

Within the school site, the Sawley Schools are responsible for snow clearance: the clearance of school paths is the specific responsibility of the caretaking staff. When severe weather is forecast, the caretaking staff should be tasked to lay salt/grit on arrival. If heavy snow falls overnight or over a weekend, the Headteacher and caretaking staff should be in regular contact to ensure the safety of the premises. **The clearance of public roads and public footpaths is the responsibility of the Highways Department and the LA and NOT the school.**

**Where the school remains open in snow or ice**

When there has been snowfall or the school site is icy and the school remains open, in order to allow for snow clearance and gritting, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to:-

- the pedestrian gates adjacent to the main site entrance;
- the lower pedestrian gate on the junior school playground;

Caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on the site will be displayed at each entrance; the signs will advise pedestrians entering the school site to stay on the cleared pathways.

The priority for snow clearance/gritting are on the pedestrians routes described above. Adults wishing to drive onto school premises do so at their own risk however every effort will be made to grit these areas where time allows. Drivers are advised when leaving their vehicle to take a direct route onto one of the cleared and gritted pathways.

### **Playground**

During adverse weather conditions, parents and carers are advised to take care at all times, especially if waiting in un-cleared areas at drop off or collection times.

Children's access to the playground during adverse weather conditions will be considered carefully by staff. The field may be used as an alternative area if the playground is icy or slippery but consideration will be given to weather conditions on the day.