

School closure due to adverse weather conditions - Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement. To ensure the safety of the children and staff during the School day, or members of the public during festivals, it can be prudent to close the School during episodes of severe weather.

In this document, reference to “the School” includes Kindergarten and Main school.

Rationale.

- As the School is located in a valley accessible only by minor, hilly, roads edged with tall trees, storms can adversely affect these, making roads impassable and disrupting cables providing electricity and communications (telephone and internet) to the School.
- These narrow roads and hills are not gritted/salted during very cold weather by Pembrokeshire Council.
- The School estate also has tall trees, so when outside pupils and staff can be at risk of sustaining injury or death from falling trees or branches, masonry or slates during gales, or slipping on snow or ice.

This policy aims to minimise the chances of anyone getting injured or trapped while on their way to or from School, accessing or leaving the buildings, or while at School during severe weather.

Adverse weather conditions means weather that could impact the safe opening of the School due to

- justifiable concerns arising from weather forecasts for Llangolman on both the [BBC](#) and [Met Office](#) websites, or
- actual severe weather if not forecast accurately in advance.

Such forecast conditions include, but are not limited to;

- very strong winds (gusts greater than 55/60/higher? mph), particularly for several hours and if the forecast direction is between southwest, via south, to east-northeast
- freezing temperatures (air temperature less than 0°C), particularly for protracted periods of time
- severe weather warnings issued by the [Met Office](#).

Decision-making. If severe weather is forecast the School’s Health and Safety Team (HST) will review the forecasts daily. By 2pm they will alert the School Manager (Emily Hopfinger) of any concerns and/or ambiguities, with a recommendation to support a decision to potentially close the School the following day.

Weather forecasts are not infallible, nor is the subjective judgement of members of HST and the School Manager.

Procedures (agreed by the School Governance Team (SGT)).

1. Severe weather forecast for the following day.

By 2pm HST will advise the School Manager, who will arrange for all parents to be contacted **by 3pm**, via email, to inform them of either

- **the decision to close** the School the next day if the forecasts are unambiguous, or
- **the potential of a School closure or a later opening** the following day. In this scenario, one or more of a volunteer group of local residents with affiliation to the

School who have agreed to check local road conditions will be alerted by the School Manager to check conditions early the following morning.

2. Severe weather before School. If severe weather has not been forecast the day before, or if the previous day's forecast has been ambiguous, the procedure will be;

- The local residents will check road conditions in the School locality **between 6:15 and 06:45am** and report to the School Manager.
- The School Manager will keep HST, the Teaching Team and Early Years Team informed of the situation.
- Other members of the other Teams can add information on the weather and road conditions where they live, but this must be communicated back to the School Manager **before 6.55am**
- Any teacher who cannot travel due to adverse conditions should inform other members of their Team as soon as possible.
- **By 7am at the latest** the School Manager will make a final decision with regards to opening the School and ensure parents are contacted by email **at 7am** to inform them that the School is either
 - o open as usual (9am start),
 - o open at 11am as the forecast is for a significant improvement during the morning, or
 - o closed for the day.

3. Severe weather during School hours.

- If the weather deteriorates and driving conditions may become hazardous, emails will be sent to notify parents that the School will close as soon as possible.
- If a parent is worried by the state of the roads when their child is in School and before the School takes action, then they can telephone the School to come in to collect their child, or give permission for another parent to collect them.

School reopening. Once closed, the School will remain so until weather conditions improve. Information on reopening will be given to families by email and the website will be updated.

Reviewed by HST in March 2023 and January 2025.
