

Springwell School

Springwell



Adverse Weather Conditions Policy

Last review: May 2026

Next review: May 2027

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Position: Headteacher

Introduction

1. The school will make every effort to remain open whenever possible and ensure safe access across the site as far as reasonably practical within the resources available.
2. The decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:
 - Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
 - Conditions on site are dangerous.
 - Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel.

Section 1 – Heatwaves

Outlines the details of Heat Health Alerts (HHA), supporting documents that are available and the core responsibilities of Portsmouth and Southampton City Council's relevant services during a heatwave.

Section 2 – Cold weather

Outlines the details of Cold Weather Alerts, supporting documents that are available and the core responsibilities of Portsmouth and Southampton City Council's relevant services during cold weather.

1. Heatwaves

Springwell will assess risks to the health and safety of their staff and pupils. While there is no legal maximum temperature for workplaces, heat is classed as a hazard and should be treated like other hazards.

Everyone– whether working indoors or outdoors – is at risk and employers should discuss with staff changes to manage the risk.

Consider simple measures such as:

- Making sure workplace windows can be opened or closed to prevent hot air from circulating or building up
- Using blinds or reflective film on workplace windows to shade staff and pupils from the sun
- Placing workstations away from direct sunlight and heat sources
- Where possible, offering flexible working patterns so workers can work at cooler times of the day
- Provide free access to drinking water
- Relaxing dress codes if possible (make sure personal protective equipment (PPE) is used if required).

- Providing weather-appropriate PPE e.g. sunscreen, protective eye wear, wide brimmed hats
- Encouraging workers to remove PPE when resting (ideally in shaded areas) to cool off
- Sharing information about the symptoms of heat stress and what to do if someone is affected
- Work environment: Temperature, humidity, and your employee's proximity to heat
- Type of work: How physically demanding the job is
- Clothing: Whether your employee's clothing can protect them from sun exposure and extreme temperatures
- Vulnerable staff: Elderly staff or employees with medical conditions might find working in hot temperatures more difficult.

The EPRR team will engage with services throughout heatwave conditions, services should provide details of any severe impacts to service delivery or concerns for vulnerable people. If appropriate, the EPRR Team will escalate the response as set out in the Joint Emergency Response Plan.

In the Event of Heavy Snow Before the School Day Starts

Parents

3. When school closure is a possibility parents should find out whether the school is open by:-
 - Checking the LA Website detailing school closures
<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/school-closures/>
 - Checking their emails for communications from the School ARBOR System.
 - Checking the School Website for updated information.
 - Listening to local radio for updates on school closures.
 - Checking the Springwell Facebook Page.
4. If it is decided that the school is able to open, however due to road conditions the Transport Team are not able to run School Transport, Parents should ring the school to advise if they are bringing their child into school, whether they will be late, or they are keeping their child home due to no alternative transport being available.
5. If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

The School

6. The Headteacher will decide whether the school will open, taking into account the conditions at school and the ability for staff to travel to school safely.
7. If the Headteacher decide the school will close, they will inform the necessary contacts and ensure school closures information is updated on the Local Authority website. A message will then be sent to Parents and Staff via ARBOR, advising them of the closure.

It is important Parents ensure that we have their up-to-date contact details and they have signed up to ARBOR in order for them to receive important messages regarding school closures.

8. The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual due to issues with school transport or parents transporting their child into school.

Exceptional Circumstances

9. The school recognises that there may be cases where families are not able to transport their child into school, due to transport issues caused by severe weather and no alternative means of travelling safely to school.
10. In such cases parents should advise the school of their particular circumstances, so that School is able to justify to the Local Authority why the absence should be authorised.

In the event of heavy snowfall during the school day

11. If there is heavy snowfall during the school day, the Headteacher will need to decide whether it is necessary to close the school.
12. Parents will be contacted by ARBOR and the School Office advising of the decision and asking parents to collect their child from school as soon as possible, if they are able. The school will liaise with the Transport Team to see if it is possible for Transport to collect pupils from school earlier than scheduled, in order to transport pupils' home before the weather conditions deteriorate.
13. Staff that live furthest away from the school will be permitted to leave at the earliest opportunity. However, we will ensure that an adequate number of staff remain on site, until all children have been collected by either Parents or School Transport.

14. If parents contact the school requesting to collect their child early due to the weather, and a decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher.

Remote Learning

15. In the event that the school is required to be closed, Remote Learning will be available via our Springwell Learning Hub, so pupils are able to continue with their learning where possible. Resources and activities will be updated on a regular basis to ensure they are in line with pupil's current learning and class topics.

School Staff

16. It is recognised that adverse weather conditions will at time, make travel to and from work difficult.
17. All staff are expected to make "all reasonable efforts" to come into school. Staff will be informed by ARBOR and given regular updates in the event of a closure and notified directly when the school is to reopen.
18. There may be circumstances when although the school has been closed to pupils, all staff are still required to attend school where possible.

It is important Staff ensure we have their up-to-date contact details and they have signed up to ARBOR in order that they can receive important messages regarding school closures.

Management Plans and Procedures

19. A management plan has been devised together with a generic risk assessment to describe how the procedures will be implemented and put into practice in order to meet the aims and objectives of the policy.
20. Due to the expanse of the school across split sites, it is recognised that it is impossible to immediately clear snow and ice from the car park and many pathways across the sites. The procedures to do so however, require those responsible to exercise careful judgement in prioritising key access, car park and pathways to access the buildings, 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.

Safeguarding

21. In order to ensure safeguarding during school closures; Designated Safeguarding Leads will be required to be available to deal with all safeguarding issues during the school closures. DSLs will be required to work remotely during core hours and be available via telephone in the event of emergencies. DSLs are to ensure they have access to CPOMS, and all incidents will continue to be triaged.

Clearance Procedures

22. During severe weather, site staff will suspend their other duties, and priority will be given to clearing snow and ice. All staff will be provided with suitable equipment and personal protective equipment.
23. The site team will prioritise high traffic areas, such as paths with salt grit/other materials to maintain safe access across the sites and identify any particularly dangerous areas which require extra care and should be checked/treated more frequently e.g. steps, slopes, courtyards and play areas, especially where temperatures remain below freezing.
24. Routes will be checked regularly throughout the day to ensure further ice coverage or snow fall has not occurred. It may be necessary to temporarily close non-essential areas of the premises e.g. playgrounds to avoid the risk to pupils and staff. An assessment of the situation will be made by the Head of Business and Operations and Site Manager.
25. The car park will be treated by the site team as much as is able to ensure transport and parents are able to gain safe access to the car park.
26. The gritting of roads and pavements outside the school grounds are dealt with separately by Southampton Local Authority Highways Department.
27. Due to the specific needs of our pupils, including those with PICA, the school will **not apply salt or grit to play equipment or certain playground areas** where there is a risk of ingestion. In these areas, alternative risk control measures will be implemented, which may include restricting access, increased supervision, or temporarily closing the area where conditions are deemed unsafe. All decisions will be made with pupil safety as the primary consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important for this policy to be updated with regards to any changes in procedures. It is also important to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and as part of the policy review process an evaluation will be undertaken on a regular basis.