



Wilburton Primary School

Adverse Weather Conditions Policy

Last Reviewed: January 2026

1.0 Policy Aims and Objectives

Wilburton Primary School's policy aims to maintain safe access, egress and routes across the school site as far as reasonably practical within the resources available.

The school will make every effort to remain open whenever possible.

The decision to close the school will be made by the Head Teacher. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply.

1. Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
2. Conditions on site are dangerous and the risk cannot be isolated.
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel.

In the event of a weather related (eg snowfall, heatwave) or other emergency school closure (failed heating and boiler systems, etc.), the headteacher will notify the LA by completing the relevant online form.

2.0 In the Event of Heavy Snow Before the School Day Starts

2.1 Parents

When school closure is a possibility parents will be emailed directly from the school.

If it is decided that the school will open, but the road conditions are difficult, parents should ring the school to advise that they are likely to be late.

If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances (see 2.3).

Parents should ensure that children have suitable footwear for walking on snow and ice, which should normally include a change of footwear (wellies or boots).

2.2 The School

The Head Teacher will decide whether the school will open, in consultation with the chair of governors, taking into account the conditions at the school and the ability of staff to get there.

If the Head Teacher decides the school will close he/she will send an email to staff and parents advising them of the closure, and report this to the Local Authority.

The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

If there are adverse weather conditions in the morning, children will be allowed into the school building when they arrive on site via the main entrance.

The headteacher will clear snow from a pathway to the main office and around the edge of the playground to the mobile classroom (see appendix one). A snow shovel is kept in the outdoor shed beyond the staff room. If the headteacher is not available then the deputy headteacher will ensure clear access and egress.

2.3 Exceptional Circumstances

The School recognises that there may be cases where families are “cut off” due to particular difficulties in the area in which they live. In such cases parents should advise the Head Teacher of their particular circumstances so she/he can justify to the Local Authority why the absence should be authorised.

3.0 In the event of heavy snowfall during the school day

If there is heavy snowfall during the school day the Head Teacher will decide whether it is necessary to close the school. The Office will contact parents and ask that they pick their child/children up from school as soon as possible.

Staff that live furthest from the school will be permitted to leave at the earliest opportunity. Other staff will remain in school until all of the children have been collected.

If a parent rings requesting they pick their child up early due to the weather, and the decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher.

4.0 In the event of Ice

If conditions are icy before children and parents come onto the school site, then the following procedure will take place:

- The headteacher will carry out a site safety walk, covering the ground across the car park, the pathway alongside classes and the school playground.
- If hazardous ice is found, then the following areas will be gritted by the headteacher in priority order of (see appendix 1):
 - pathway from the pedestrian gate, across the carpark into the school office
 - outside the main school entrance
 - pathway around the edge of the playground, covering the route into Fieldmice Classroom, the hall and around to the mobile classroom.
 - side pathway alongside classes
- The playground may also be gritted but will be ‘closed’.
- The Headteacher will re-assess any ice on the playground at 10:15am, to see if the playground is suitable for children to go out at breaktime. This information will then be passed on to staff and children before 10:30am.

Grit, a bucket and hand scoop can be found under the boiler outside. A minimum amount of salt grit should be used.

If the headteacher is not available, then responsibility will fall to the Deputy Headteacher and then the Senior Leader and Office Staff.

The gritting of roads and pavements outside the site are dealt with separately by East Cambridgeshire County Council.

5.0 Wet Break and Lunchtime

As stated in our Play Policy, we encourage children to play outside in sporadic, gentle or light rain (see table below), and ask children to wear wellies and waterproofs when appropriate.

			
Just 'spitting' - light, sporadic rainfall	Drizzle - very fine rain	Light rain - gentle, light fall of rain	Heavy rain/downpour/drenching rain/"cats and dogs"
Outside - coats optional	Outside - wear a coat	Outside - wear a coat	Indoor play

If a wet break is declared no children must be left unsupervised. One member of staff (Teacher or Teaching Assistant) should remain in the classroom to supervise break with all children remaining in their own classes.

Members of staff who stay in the classroom during the 'wet break' can take a break once lessons have resumed. If a 'wet' lunchtime is declared the Lunchtime Supervisors will supervise the children with the support of other school staff. No children must be left unsupervised.

6.0 High winds and other intense weather including flash flooding.

The school will heed weather warnings, including those from the local authority, who warn of high wind and storms, and make an assessment about whether it is safe for children to be outdoors, including in planned outdoor lesson time such as Forest Schools. Where flash flooding makes access, egress and routes difficult to navigate, then the Headteacher will divert children and parents through a different route. If flooding makes the side pathway of school impassable at the end of the school day, then children will be lined up in the hall, and parents directed through the school to collect them from there. In the case of thunderstorms, children will not be allowed outside (this includes swimming lessons, playtimes and Forest School). School staff will check met office radar to see the location of lightning strikes and if these are within the area around Ely children will be kept inside until they have passed away.

7.0 Extreme Temperatures

On very hot days, school staff may decide that children cannot take part in vigorous physical activity for the benefit of their health (this will include, but is not limited solely to, times when the temperature is in excess of 30 degrees). The school will encourage children to wear loose, light clothing and sunhats with wide brims, and to stay in the shade as much as possible. Children will be asked to (re)-apply sunscreen during the day, and will have access to plenty of water, with regular times in the day for everyone to drink. Windows will be opened as early as possible in the morning and closed when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors. School staff will be vigilant for signs of heat stress and heat exhaustion. Where temperatures are particularly extreme, the school may adjust the times of the school day, to reduce pupil numbers in classrooms in the mid afternoon, and in classrooms that are particularly hot (e.g. the mobile classroom).

8.0 Equality Implications

There are none associated with this policy.

Appendix 1: Red route showing priority route for clearing and gritting:

