THE NEW GUILD TRUST

Inclement Weather Policy

POLICY

This policy has been adopted on behalf of all academy schools within The New Guild Trust.

Moorpark Junior School
Jackfield Infant School
Alexandra Junior School
Alexandra Infants' School

Approval and Review

Committee to Approve Policy	Trust Board
Date of Trustee Board / Academy Committee Approval	February 2026
Chair of Trustee Board / Academy Committee	Mrs L Eagle
Signature	*L Eagle*
Accounting Officer	Mrs K Peters
Signature	*K Peters*
Policy Review Period	12 months
Date of Policy Review	February 2027

Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Changes	Reason for Alterations
Initial	Feb 2021		
	Feb 2022	No change	
	Feb 2023	1. Deleted link and reference to LA website for reporting school closures. Replaced City Council employees with New Guild Trust employees	No longer exists Not relevant
	Feb 2024	Equans/Cleaning provider telephone numbers updated	Update
	Feb 2025	No change	
	Feb 2026		

SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

Schools need to be aware of the process to be followed if the school is to be closed due to extreme weather conditions or other emergencies. Ultimately, it is the Local Community Governing Body, which is answerable for the actions taken by the CEO/Headteacher, and it is therefore important that a robust process is in place so that parents and staff, as well as the general public and the Local Authority understand why and when schools have to close.

Local Community Governors are asked to approve a process on school closures for the CEO/Headteacher, staff and parents, based on the guidance from the City Council.

1. When a school has to close for an unexpected reason, that decision is made by the CEO/Headteacher or, in his/her absence, a designated member of senior staff. The following need to be informed and a detailed log kept:

    - The Chair of Local Community Governors.

    - Any affected staff or contractors' staff via T2P text message (including IT support, catering and cleaning).

    - Useful contact telephone numbers include:
      EQUANS Helpdesk telephone 0333 123 0467
      Phil Whittingham - Schools Catering telephone 07771501155 or 237883
      ServiceMaster Clean Ltd. - telephone 01270 875855
      StaffsTech – telephone 0330 016558

    - It is at the discretion of schools if they wish to update radio stations and The Sentinel directly. BBC Radio Stoke's Snowline 0800 121 8080 or email: studio.stoke@bbc.co.uk

For emergency school closures due to service failures e.g. flooding, electricity, gas and water supply, heating etc. please refer to section (3) below. Please also refer to The New Guild Trust's Business Continuity Policy.

- The decision to close a school is the responsibility of the CEO/Headteacher/Head of School or a designated member of staff. The prime concern is the well-being and safety of pupils and staff.

- When the school is in session and affected by poor weather conditions, the key question is whether pupils would be safer leaving early. Consideration must be given to the age of the pupils and, for younger pupils, whether parents will be at home. For pupils who can walk between school and home, it is perhaps safer to close at the normal time but to leave the responsibility with the parent to collect their own child earlier, if they wish to do so. For pupils using public transport or a school bus, advice should be sought from the company and, if pupils are to be released earlier, parents need to be informed.

- When, because of weather conditions, the question arises about closing the school rather than normal opening, the following procedure should be in place:

- The decision is made by the CEO/Headteacher or a designated senior member of staff and the Chair of Local Community Governors. Consideration is based on the condition of the site and the surrounding area and the supervision of pupils. Each school closure should be

logged-on a daily basis after reassessment of conditions of the site and the surrounding area and the supervision of pupils.

- If the CEO/Headteacher decides to close the school, the people designated in (1) should be informed. It should be made clear to parents that schools will be open unless informed otherwise by text message/email.

- It is the assumption of the New Guild Trust that its employees will report for work. Some employees, however, have chosen to live some distance from their place of work and that can cause them difficulties. It remains the view of the New Guild Trust that employees should not expect to be paid when they do not work because, by choice, they live where they do.

The guidance for school staff under the control of Governors remains as follows:

- **Schools Remaining Open** – staff failing to report for duty should not be paid.
- **Schools are Closed to Pupils only** – staff failing to report for duty should not be paid. Staff who reported for duty but undertook reduced duties should be paid as normal.
- **Schools are Closed** – where staff were informed that they would not be required to attend for duty they should be paid as usual.
- **Casual Employees** – it is suggested that, where casual employees arrived or departed early due to the inclement weather, they should be permitted to make up the hours lost at a later date in order to minimise loss of pay.

2. Safety of the Site

The Local Community Governing Body needs to ensure that a Gritting Policy is in place to minimise the dangers of slipping on frost, snow and ice in outside areas and on access routes. Pedestrian walkways should be communicated to encourage visitors, parents and pupils to walk on these "safer" areas. Site staff need to keep abreast of the latest weather forecasts and perhaps be required to attend school in advance of normal start time to ensure the safe routes are established before the arrival of staff and pupils. Please refer to each academy school's Gritting Policy.

3. Service Failures – examples include floods, loss of electricity, gas and water supply, loss of heating etc. Please refer to The New Guild Trust's Business Continuity Plan.

- Inform the EQUANS Helpdesk on 0333 123 0467 as soon as any service failure is apparent, recording this as "Category A" service event that is threatening school closure. An EQUANS operative will attend the school within 1 hour.

The latest information on rectification of the service will be made available to the CEO/Headteacher from the Equans management team that will allow an informed decision to be made.

- If the CEO's/Headteacher's decision is to close the school, then the EQUANS Helpdesk (0333 123 0467) must be advised. In the case of partial closure unique space reference "G" numbers for those rooms affected will be required to be notified.
- The process of notification as outlined in (1) above should then be adopted.