



Birchwood Community High School

Birchwood Community High School
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Extreme Weather Policy

Policy owner:	Tina Wiegand, School Business Manager
Governing body oversight:	Full Governing Body
Date of approval:	September 2024
Date of next review:	September 2025

1. Policy

In the event of extreme weather, we will make every effort to keep the school open and to continue to operate as normal. However, this may not always be possible and emergency procedures may have to be adopted where school does not open or school closes during the day. School will endeavour to give parents and staff as much notice as possible, but it is likely that decisions on closure of the school will be taken at short notice.

2. Extreme weather at the start of the day

2.1 A decision will be made by 7.15am (if possible) as to whether the school should be open or needs to be closed. In the event of a closure, by 7.30am (wherever possible), the school will ensure that:

- A message is sent to parents and staff informing of the closure and the school website is updated.
- An update is available on the school's Facebook and Twitter
- Local radio station Wire FM will be informed.

2.2 School will notify parents and carers via a classcharts message (will change to Arbor as of 1st November 2024), and a message via the website (birchwoodhigh.org), and social media as soon as possible if the school is unable to open due to extreme weather conditions overnight.

2.3 School will check your contact details annually to ensure they are as up to date as possible. If your contact details change, please inform school as soon as possible by contacting the main office.

2.4 If conditions allow, and school have not notified parents and carers of a closure, students should set off for school as normal. Parents and carers should take account of the weather conditions and ensure students are prepared for emergencies. This includes suitable footwear and clothing for the weather conditions. Students travelling by bus or train should check for news from the appropriate travel company before leaving home.

3. Extreme weather during the day

3.1 If school is open, but there are insufficient numbers of staff in school to keep students safe, then a decision may be taken to close school during the school day. In these circumstances, we will endeavour to contact parents and carers before sending students home. Please make sure your child knows the number they can use to contact you each day.

The decision to close the school will be made taking into account:

- School transport
- Weather advice through the Local Authority and MET office
- Staffing numbers

3.2 School may decide to send some or all students home early due to the state of the roads, where this is being advised by local travel companies or the local authority. School will send a message via classcharts (and then Arbor) and post an announcement on the website in this eventuality.

3.3 Parents and carers should discuss with their children what to do if they are sent home during the school day. This might include:

- Ensuring your child knows how to contact you in an emergency,
- Ensuring your child can access home when you are not there,

- Deciding on an alternative safe place where your child can go, e.g. a friend's house if a and b are not possible.
- If you are unable to look after your child in an emergency, or you think it is unsafe for them to travel home, you should tell your child to remain in school.

3.4 Students will not be allowed to leave school in an emergency if they do not have somewhere safe to go or if it is unsafe for them to travel.

3.5 Students who are unable to leave school in an emergency will be guided by staff on site.

4. Prolonged closure

4.1 In the event of prolonged closure due to weather/emergency, parents should continue to monitor the school website and social media pages as these will be updated on a regular basis with the latest information.