Snow and Bad Weather Policy

St Agnes C of E Primary School

Approved By:	Mrs Sue Gittins
Last reviewed on:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027

Our Vision and Mission Statement

'Learning together in God's Love'

St Agnes is an inclusive Christian family, we want our children to:

- Learn together with respect, patience and kindness
- **Treat each other as they would like to be treated (Matthew 7v12)**
- Flourish in education and friendships
- **Live life in all its fullness (John 10v10)**
- Be proud of themselves and others
- Ensure everyone is treated equally

Through the range of experiences we offer to all our pupils we encourage an understanding of the meaning and importance of faith and promote all the Christian Values. We particularly focus on Responsibility, Creativity, Forgiveness, Perseverance, Hope, Thankfulness and Friendship. These Christian values form the basis of our vision and are embedded throughout our school life and underpin all our teaching.
St Agnes is a small school that supports our community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We work closely with our families to ensure they are fully supported and cared for

We expect everyone at St Agnes C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School to follow 'The Great Expectations' –

Be Safe
Be in the right place at the right time
Do your best
Handle your emotions
Use appropriate language
Cooperate
Respect everyone and everything

Aims

"Schools should, wherever possible, stay open in severe weather. They play a key role in their communities and by staying open help both their pupils and parents." – **Department for Education.**

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service. As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. There is a legal requirement to keep schools open for children to attend for 189 days per year (378 sessions). However, schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite. We recognise that it is important that our school remains open, and we pride ourselves on doing so, to ensure that parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. St Agnes Primary School will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter.

The government has stressed the importance of schools remaining open, wherever possible, as closures have a knock on effect on parents/carers who are key workers in other areas of the public sector, e.g. Health Services, thus undermining crucial service delivery. The overriding principle is, therefore, for schools to remain open to the maximum degree possible, as is consistent with health and safety requirements, even if it is not possible to run a full timetable.
At St Agnes, we will endeavour to keep our school open and operating as normal. However in the event of severe adverse weather (for example snow/ice) it may be necessary to make a decision to close the school for the safety of the children and staff.

If the school is closed, we will try and make a decision as early as possible, and will intend to re-open as soon as we can.

If the school does open, but extreme weather develops during the day, we will aim to remain open until the end of the normal school day. However this is not always possible when roads are becoming treacherous. In which case parents will be contacted via text message (Teachers2parents) and asked to collect their children as soon as possible. Under these conditions we will take verbal permission for their child/children to be collected by a nominated adult. Normal lessons may be curtailed and the remaining pupils assembled in groups under the supervision of authorised members of staff to await collection.

If the school is open in snow or bad weather the decision as to whether or not to send a pupil to school, however, must be at the discretion of the parent, taking into account factors such as local road conditions and the availability of child care.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed. The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence to the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents the child coming into school will result in their child being registered as an un-authorised absence.

Staff will always make every reasonable effort to undertake the journey to school. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff may not be able to arrive before the normal start of the school day (although we expect staff to be prepared the night before and to set off a little earlier than their normal journey time in adverse weather). It may be necessary to ask all children to bring packed lunches if the kitchen staff are unable to reach school safely – although teaching/office staff will make a cold lunch available if kitchen staff are unable to get to school.

The decision to close will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors considering the following:

- Health and safety – will remaining open constitute a significant risk to pupils and/or staff.
- Availability of staff – has the severe weather meant that a significant number of staff have been unable to attend making it impossible to open.

Our first priority will always be to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, parents and families.

We will clear paths within school to make access as safe as possible, and will keep supplies of grit to support this.

School Closure Procedure:
Once the decision to close school has been taken, parents and staff will be informed via our text service – Teachers2Parents. A message will also be posted on the School website (www.stagnes.oldham.sch.uk) as soon as reasonably possible.

In addition, the Headteacher will contact the Local Authority through the School Closure Portal at the earliest opportunity giving the required information so that the closure of our school can be broadcast.

Where possible, a member of staff will be in school to advise parents and families on arrival that the school is closed, and to answer telephone calls from concerned parents.

Informing staff:
It is recognised that adverse weather conditions will, at times, make travel to and from work difficult. However, employees are expected to make all reasonable efforts to reach their workplace. Staff know that the school will be open unless they receive a message (via text to their mobiles) specifically informing them that it is not open. In the event of closure, staff will be informed by text.

School Closure Procedure:

- As soon as a decision has been made we will inform parents/guardians via our text service – Teachers2Parents.
- Headteacher will make the Local Authority aware of the closure via the School Closure Portal.
- Closures will be listed on the Oldham LA website.
- Where possible, a member of staff will be in school to advise you on arrival that the school is closed, and to answer telephone calls.
- If school is closed for more than 1 day due to severe weather our remote learning policy will be put in place on day 2 and children will receive online learning from day 2 until school is reopened.
- Remote learning will not occur if school is open but parents decide to keep children off due to the weather.

Policy Review

The staff and Governing Body will review this policy each year or when new statutory guidelines are issued. The views of all stakeholders are taken into account in this review.

Policy reviewed and ratified at the Governing Body meeting on 25/09/26

Headteacher…… Miss S Butterworth

Chair of Governors..……Mrs Sue Gittins

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy. All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit For Severe Weather Policy & Procedure					
What ?	**Probable Content**	**Why ?**	**Who ?**	**Where ?**	**When ?**
Pupil, parent and staff contact telephone numbers	Mobile telephone numbers stored on Teachers2Parents via SIMS	To alert parents/carers and staff about whether our school is open or closed due to severe weather conditions	Pupils, parents and staff	Electronic records – contact numbers for Teachers2parents via SIMS	Held on File throughout a child's/staff's time at school

As such, our assessment is that this policy:

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
	✓	

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation / school assessment systems change.