



**GEORGE  
SALTER  
ACADEMY**



## **Adverse Weather Policy**

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## Contents:

Statement of intent.....	2
1. Decision to close.....	3
2. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions.....	4
3. Health and safety.....	4
4. Limited staff numbers.....	5
5. Attendance statistics.....	5
6. Exam disruption.....	6
7. Monitoring and review.....	6
Appendix 1: Snow Clearance Procedures.....	7
Appendix 2: Risk Assessment.....	10

## **Statement of intent**

It is the aim of George Salter Academy to ensure the school remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

George Salter Academy intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the school before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the school.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the school during adverse weather conditions.
- To make clear the grounds for a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- To advise and inform staff and parents/carers of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions.

## **I. Decision to close**

- 1.1. The decision to close the school will be made by the Principal.
- 1.2. The Site Manager and the chair of governors will be consulted when making a decision about school closure.
- 1.3. In the absence of the Principal, the Vice Principal will assume the responsibility of the Principal in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.
- 1.4. The school will be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:
  - Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
  - Conditions are such that staff and students are unable to get to the academy.
  - Staff numbers are insufficient for the school to be operated safely.
- 1.5. In the event of school closure:
  - The Principal will inform staff and parents/carers via text message, the school website, social media and local media.
  - The Principal or ICT leader will post an update on the school website.
  - The Business Manager will notify Sandwell Council of the closure and call the local radio stations. It is noted that parents/carers will have previously been made aware that announcements concerning the school will be broadcasted via the local radio station.
  - A procedure is in place to notify staff, however, staff should also check the school website and local radio stations.
- 1.6. In the event of the school having to close during the day, parents/carers will be contacted via text message or telephone, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list.
- 1.7. A closure of the school during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

## **2. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions**

- 2.1. If the school remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only.
- 2.2. Appropriate pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted. See Appendix I for Snow Clearance Procedures.
- 2.3. At the Principal's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out-of-bounds to pupils and parents/carers.
- 2.4. All persons entering the school buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

## **3. Health and safety**

- 3.1. George Salter Academy has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.
- 3.2. George Salter Academy will be liable if it is found that the school has been negligent in its responsibilities and has not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff, visitors and parents/carers entering the school site.
- 3.3. The Principal is responsible for ensuring safety on the school site, in accordance with the school's health and safety policies and procedures.
- 3.4. Staff, visitors and parents/carers have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the school grounds.
  - Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any pupils under their supervision.
- 3.5. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the Site Manager/ other site team member will assess the school site and inform the Principal just after 6.00am of the state of site.

- 3.6. An on the day risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions. However, a generic risk assessment can be found in Appendix 2
- 3.7. Closing the school is a reasonable decision if pupils or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.
- 3.8. When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

## **4. Limited staff numbers**

- 4.1. During periods of adverse weather conditions, the school will be flexible with teaching when subject to reduced staff numbers.
- 4.2. In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different age groups may be brought together to be taught under the supervision of the available teachers and support staff.
- 4.3. The school will continue to strive to provide high quality education in the given circumstances.

## **5. Attendance statistics**

- 5.1. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.
- 5.2. When a pupil cannot attend the school due to adverse weather conditions, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will therefore not affect the school's attendance statistics.
- 5.3. If the Principal believes the pupil could have safely made it to school but did not attend, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.
- 5.4. Parents/carers acting on the assumption that the school would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

## **6. Exam disruption**

- 6.1. If the school has to close, or if a pupil misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, the school will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.
- 6.2. The school takes full responsibility for informing parents/carers and pupils of any agreed changes concerning an examination in adverse weather conditions. This includes:
  - Using alternative venues.
  - Exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject.
  - The opportunity for the pupil to sit any missed exam later in the year.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. The effectiveness of the Adverse Weather Policy will be monitored by the Principal, and any necessary amendments will be made during review.
- 7.2. The Adverse Weather Policy will be reviewed annually by the Business Manager.

## **Appendix I**

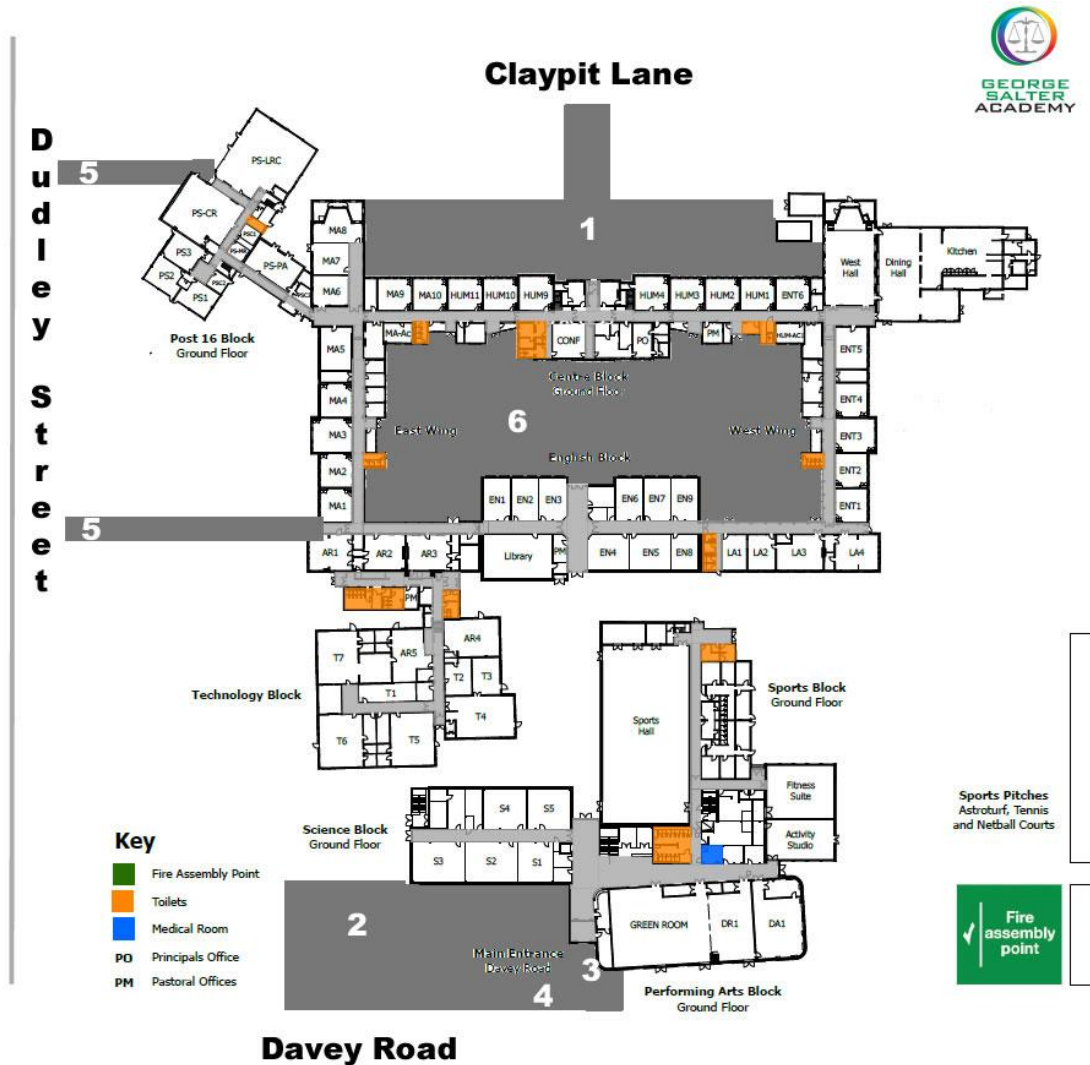
### **Snow Clearance Procedures**

- I.1 During severe weather site staff will give priority to clearing snow and ice. If there is an examination due to take place then priority will switch to clearing a path to allow students access to the building.
- I.2 Site staff will be provided with suitable equipment and Personal Protective Equipment.
- I.3 Site staff will treat paths with salt grit/other materials to maintain safe access, egress and routes across the site.
- I.4 Where snow has fallen, clear a path 2 metres wide in order of priority shown on the site map and treat cleared paths with salt grit/other materials to maintain a clear pathway especially where temperatures remain below freezing.
- I.5 Routes will be regularly checked throughout the day to ensure freezing or further snow coverage has not occurred. Additional care should be taken when clearing sloping pathways and steps, it may be necessary for safety reasons to consider the temporary closure of some non-essential areas of the premises (e.g. steep pathways, playgrounds, steps etc.) to avoid risks to staff, pupils or visitors. An assessment of the situation will be made by the Site Manager.
- I.6 There is no advantage in applying grit salt/other materials to deep snow; this should be cleared from the path first.
- I.7 The gritting of roads and pavements outside the site are dealt with separately by the Highways Department.



## 2. Site Map and Order of Priority for Application of Salt Grit/Other Materials

The site will be cleared/gritted in the following order of priority:



1. Claypit Lane Car Park
2. Davey Road Car Park
3. Clear pathways to reception
4. Unlock the pedestrian gate next to main gate and clear pathway along the path to reception

5. Clear pedestrian pathways from Dudley Street
6. Clear paths in the quad and cordon off the step areas
7. Clear fire escape routes.

## Appendix 2

### Risk Assessment

<b>1 Hazard</b>	<b>2 People Affected</b>
Snow and ice	Employees, Students and Visitors,  Premises Staff
<b>3 Risks and Controls</b>	
<b>Risks to Employee, Students and Visitors</b>	
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Control</b>
Slips, trips and falls	Staff aware of the Adverse Weather Policy, risk assessment, procedures and routes to be followed and reinforce these to students and visitors.
<b>Risks to Premises Staff</b>	
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Control</b>
Manual Handling	Staff training in manual handling techniques Where possible, purpose built push or motorised equipment used, i.e spreader and snow plough.
Exposure to low external temperatures	Protective, warm clothing including hat and gloves worn
Slips, trips and falls	Appropriate footwear issued/ worn,  Adopt a route which minimises the need to walk over uncleared areas, clearing heavily used paths first
Injury caused by salt when spreading	Goggles and cut resistant insulated gloves worn
Exhaustion	Take appropriate breaks