



# Ashfield Girls' High School



**“Each different. Each talented. All valued.”**

## **Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy**



|               |                              |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Author(s)     | Mrs Louise Hanvey, Principal |
| Adopted Date: | November 2025                |
| Review Date:  | November 2027                |



## Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy



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## **Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy**

Executive Summary

Section A – Aims of the Policy

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## **Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy**

### Executive Summary

The Exceptional Closure Policy outlines the situations in which an exceptional closure may be necessary, the procedures for assessing risk, communication procedures to all stakeholders and the review process.

The Exceptional Closure Policy is linked to the Health and Safety Policy and is reviewed annually by the Principal.



## Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy

### Section A – Aims of the Policy

The aims of the Exceptional Closure Policy are to:-

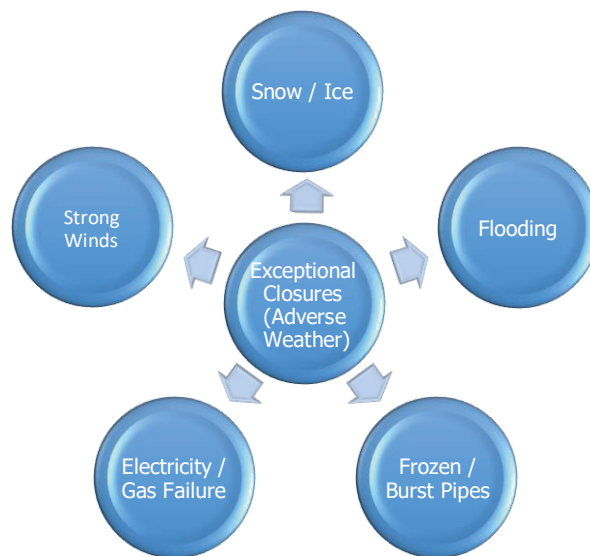
- Put pupils, staff, parents and visitors Health and Safety as a priority during adverse weather conditions.
- Provide timely and clear communication to pupils, staff, parents and visitors during adverse weather conditions regarding exceptional school closures.

### Section B – Legislation, Guidance and Linked Policies

The Department of Education’s Circular 2024/12; School Optional and Exceptional Closures states that schools are required to update their Exceptional Closure Policy, Exceptional Closure Action Plan in line with their policy review cycle.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the health and Safety Policy and the Critical Incident Policy.

What constitutes an Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather)?





## 4 Stages to successful Health and Safety management of Exceptional Closures

### Section C – Policy and Procedures

#### Stage 1 – Preparation

The preparation stage will usually take place during Term 1. The following documents will be reviewed and updated by the Principal and the Facilities Manager.

- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Snow / Ice Risk Assessment
- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Flooding Risk Assessment
- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Storm / Gale force winds
- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Frozen / Burst Pipes Risk Assessment
- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Electricity / Gas Failure Risk Assessment
- Exceptional Closure (adverse weather) Policy

#### Stage 2 – Exceptional Closure Incident

The Principal will consider the following factors when deciding to close / open the school.



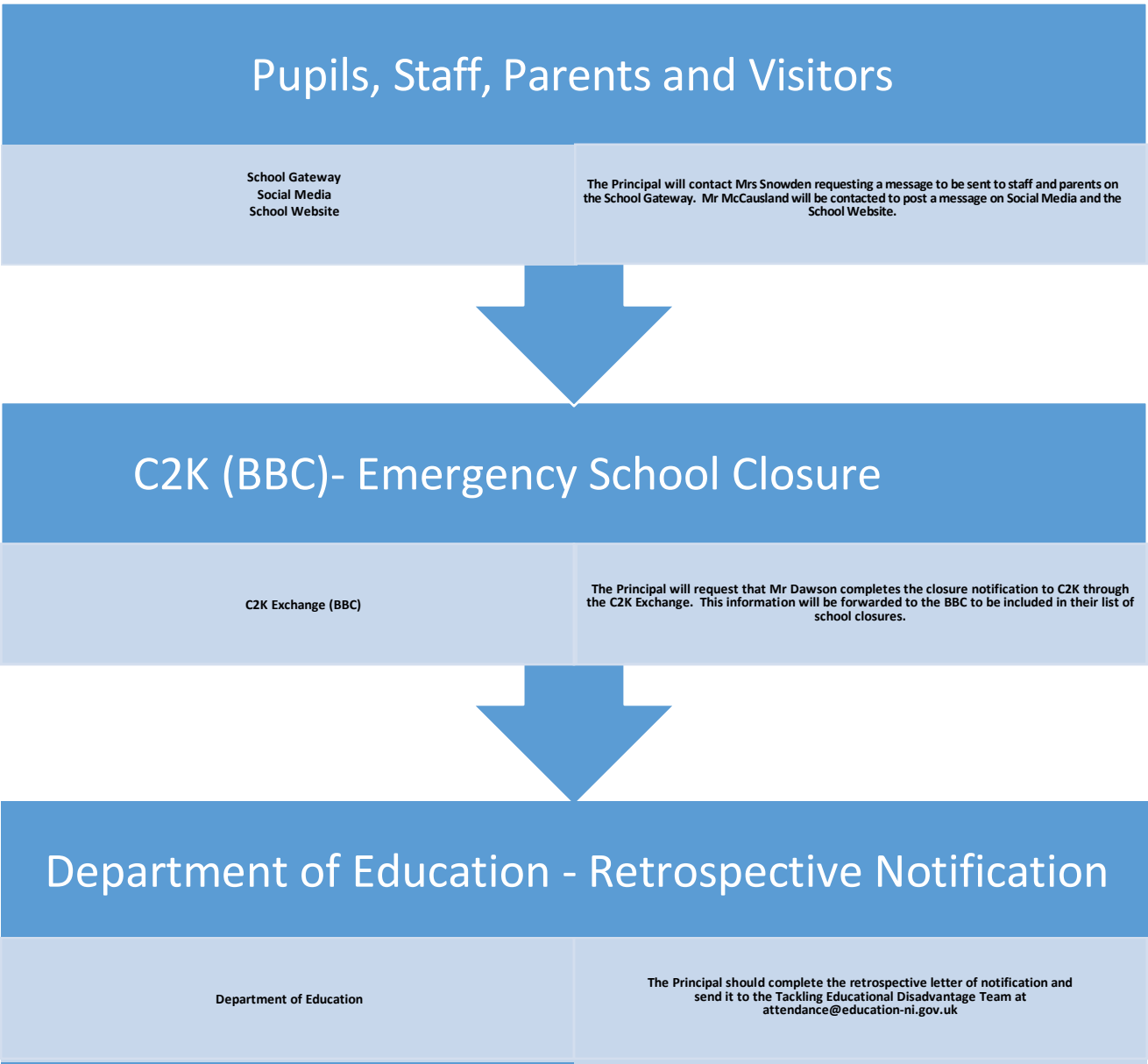


Stage 3 – Adverse Weather Incident Risk Assessment

The Principal may complete an Adverse Weather Incident Dynamic Risk Assessment prior to making a final decision regarding closing the school, due to adverse weather conditions. Where it is decided that the risk to pupils, staff, parents and visitors health and safety is too great the school will be closed. Once the adverse weather poses no further increased risk the school can be opened again.

Stage 4 – Communication

Once a decision has been made to close the school it is essential that there is clear and timely communication regarding this decision to allow all stakeholders to act appropriately regarding the adverse weather. The communication procedures are outlined below.





## **Specific Issue Statements**

### **Approval from the Department of Education**

The Principal will seek retrospective approval for exceptional closure days related to adverse weather conditions. The approval of Exceptional Closure days by the Department of Education does not affect existing operational and school development days.

### **Making up lost teaching days**

Exceptional closure days related to adverse weather do not affect operational or school development days and there is not obligation for a school to make up the time lost due to exceptional closure.

### **Communication (to Visitors and Community Group Users)**

If teaching staff have arranged for an outside provider to attend school and an exceptional closure day is decided upon, the member of staff will inform their contact and reschedule if appropriate.

If the Administration team have taken a booking for Community Use Hire, they should advise all groups that the facilities are closed due to an exceptional closure.

## **Section D – Roles and Responsibilities**

The Education Authority has overall responsibility for Health and Safety within a school. This responsibility is discharged to the Board of Governors and the Principal. At Ashfield Girls' High School the responsibility for Health and Safety is shared between AMEY (Facilities Management) and the Education Authority (Board of Governors and Principal). Key stakeholders review the Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy and the related risk assessments on an annual basis. The Principal retains the authority for closing and re-opening the school for pupils, staff, parents and visitors. This decision will be made following clear and timely communication with Facilities Management staff following the assessment of weather warning alerts issued by the Met Office.

### **Communication of Policy**

The Exceptional Closure (Adverse Weather) Policy will be available on the school website for all stakeholders to access.

### **Review of Policy**

The policy will be reviewed after any specific adverse weather incident and annually in line with all policies relating to Health and Safety.





# ***Challenging girls today; creating women of value in the future***



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