

Severe Weather Policy

Reviewed by JAFM: September 2018

Next Review: October 2019



RYDE SCHOOL SEVERE WEATHER POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PRINCIPLES

- As a good employer, the School has a duty of care for its employees and, as such, recognises that staff should not take unnecessary risks.
- The School is a business, with parents paying fees for teaching days. Hence, it is expected that all staff will make every reasonable effort to get to work. Where normal travel arrangements have broken down, all possible alternatives should be explored, including, where distance, fitness and safety permit, walking.
- A degree of flexibility will be required during periods of adverse weather or access problems. Unless specifically broadcast to the contrary, the School will stay open where possible to ensure continuity of normal or reduced service.
- If normal service is deemed impossible, the School may operate a reduced service, particularly when public examinations are due to be held. In this case all staff, parents and pupils will be notified by updates on the school website and via email.
- In the event employees are unable to access their normal place of work, they will be encouraged to continue working from home. Teachers will email sets via iSAMS and post work on the school hub and work on tasks such as marking or report writing should be undertaken.
- Where weather conditions show signs of worsening, the school will obtain the best reports on travel / road conditions etc. before reaching a decision as to allowing staff and pupils to leave early.
- When possible the School will look to make up for the lost teaching time resulting from a school closure; this may include rescheduling teaching days or extending the school day.

EMERGENCY SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

During the School Day

The School will remain open at all times until the Head Master (or the Deputy Head in his absence) decides that the weather is too severe and the children and staff should be sent home.

When there is a possibility of severe weather disrupting the school day and the School closing early as a result the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) will meet to formulate a plan of action. Due regard will be given to advice and information from appropriate sources, e.g. met office severe weather warnings, police and motoring organisations.

If the School experiences severe weather conditions during normal school hours, the school will accommodate pupils until it is safe for parents to collect their children.

When this decision is made the parents will be informed by clarion call and a notice will be placed on the website, Facebook and via Twitter. The pupils will not be told until after the parents have been informed.

Staff will be allowed to go home if there is a significant reduction in pupils; a reasonable staff pupil ratio must be maintained for safety reasons and decisions as to which members of staff go home will be determined by the SLG.

In the event of severe weather such as heavy snowfall, the maintenance staff will continue gritting and directing cars in the car park. The assistant bursar will notify any outside lettings that the school will be closing and contact the cleaning supervisor who will inform the cleaning staff.

Out of School Hours

Should we experience severe weather such as heavy snowfall overnight, the School will be open if access to the site is/can be made safe and every attempt (with sensible safety considerations) should be made to come in. This decision will be made by the Head Master or, in his absence, the Deputy Head.

If the Head Master decides it is not safe to open the school the following procedures will be followed by the Head Master (or his proxy) in the order below:

1. The Isle of Wight radio hotline will be informed by 6.15am.
2. The decision will be posted on the website by 6.30am
3. All parents will receive a clarion call message; all staff and pupils an email message by 6.30 a.m.
4. A recorded message will be left on the school telephone.
5. The Housemaster at the Bembridge Boarding Campus (and Housemistress at Spinnaker) will be informed and any additional assistance arranged.
6. If the School seems likely to be closed for more than one day then heads of department will be contacted to ensure that they co-ordinate academic work to be available online.
7. In the event that public examinations are being held when the School has been affected by severe weather, every attempt will be made to allow the School to open to those pupils taking the exams.
8. In the event that the fast catamaran service and the Hovercraft are cancelled, the School will, if needed, endeavour to make arrangements to collect and take pupils and staff to/from the car ferry terminal at Fishbourne.

Severe Weather Conditions

This table gives an indication of the types of conditions and the severity that would potentially lead to a closure/part closure or lock in of the school.

Conditions	Characteristics	Severity
High winds	Gale force 8 and above. Potential structural damage. Fallen trees. Flying debris. Vehicles overturned. Ferries are cancelled	Evidence of flying hazards. Risk of injury to people in the open. Posts and signs uprooted. Driving is difficult. Gusts exceeding 60mph.
Heavy Snow	Accumulations on roads not cleared by salt. Visibility reduced. Blizzard rates of fall with wind. Severe wind chill. Freezing temperatures.	Accumulations above 5cm Risk of freeze over at dusk. Attempts to clear paths etc. not effective. Accidents occurring on site. Approach roads considered unsafe
Ice	Sub-zero temperatures. Black Ice. Unable to control vehicles. Unable to walk safely. Salt ineffective.	Temperatures below -8°C . Salt less effective below -12°C . Diesel solidifies in filters at -9°C .
Freezing Rain	Rain turns instantly to ice. Walking is very dangerous. Driving is very dangerous. It appears as black ice everywhere.	Any indication should warrant partial closure. Keep people inside if already on site.
Severe Electrical Storms	Local flooding. Power failures. Lightning strikes. Strong winds. Large hail stones. People at risk in the open.	Damage to buildings. Lightning strikes to people in the open. Flooding, overflowing drains. Risk of explosion.
Flooding	Torrential rain. Fast flowing water. Landslides/mud slides. Basements filling up. Electrical installations exposed.	Water entering buildings. Water above floor level inside. External floods over 6 inches

JAFM, September 2018