

# Vernon Primary School



## Inclement Weather Policy

## **Critical Incidents Team**

Headteacher – Jo Carvell  
Business Manager/Health and Safety Coordinator – Louise Currall  
Deputy Headteacher – Sarah Kiely  
Assistant Headteachers – Stella McNeil and Sarah Tootell  
Chair of Governors – Ashley Hickson  
Site Manager – Chris Christoforou  
Care Taker – Keith Hadfield

### **In the event of severe weather conditions (snow, ice, wind, rain, fog, hail, storms, extreme heat):**

The Caretaker will carry out a daily assessment of whole site. The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will contact the Caretaker to determine the state of the school grounds. If necessary the Critical Incidents Team will discuss actions to be taken and information to be given to staff and pupils. Staff members will be informed of the conditions and the plan.

- Staff will be notified by SLT on the school Teams group messaging system.
- A message will be sent on School Spider by the Admin team to all Parents/Carers advising them of the closure.
- School website to have information clearly displayed regarding school closure.

### **In the event of severe weather conditions:**

#### Staff

All staff will be advised by SLT if they should attempt to travel to school.

If staff are travelling by car, the following is advised: keep a blanket, mobile phone, shovel, warm drinks and other sustenance in the vehicle.

If staff arrive at school they should keep to gritted paths when walking around outside.

If the school remains open staff should ensure that children are safe by following the school rules in regards to snow and ice (see below).

Follow all warnings given by members of the Critical incident team.

#### Pupils

If severe weather is expected, a message to be sent home to Parents/Carers informing them of any predicted conditions and what to do in the event of severe weather.

If children are in school, the staff will make sure they are appropriately dressed before leaving the building.

Staff will ensure that children have been informed of the snow/ice rules and understand them:

### **Snow/Ice rules:**

1. Keep to the gritted paths and areas when moving round the school from area to area
2. Stay off the playground markings and other play equipment during heavy snow and ice as the equipment can become very slippery and also the metal can give ice burns.
3. No throwing of snowballs.
4. No sliding.

### **Lightning Storms**

If thunderstorms are forecast, the school will decide if there is a requirement to postpone or cancel outdoor activities. In the event of an outdoor activity taking place, and an unexpected thunderstorm occurring. Staff will follow the procedures listed below:

- Count the seconds between seeing lightning and hearing thunder – if it is less than 30 seconds there is a potential risk and staff will therefore escort the pupils back inside the school building.
- If a thunderstorm occurs whilst pupils are participating in an outdoor sports event off-site, staff will

escort the children into a building on the site (if possible), or if this is not available, staff will escort the children to take cover in cars/coaches. Staff will ensure that the windows of the vehicle are closed.

- In the event of an approaching thunderstorm, all Reception children will be escorted back inside the Reception class and will not be allowed to remain in the EYFS outdoor area.
- Staff will unplug all non-essential appliances, to avoid the occurrence of power surges.
- In the event of lights going out, torches will be used instead (under no circumstances will candles be used).

In the event of pupils and staff being outdoors and not having sufficient time to reach a building for shelter. Staff will instruct the pupils to follow the procedure of:

Finding a low spot away from trees, fences and poles. Everyone will crouch down immediately, balancing on the balls of their feet, placing hands on knees with their head between their knees. The rationale for this procedure is that by making yourself into the smallest target possible, you can minimise your contact with the ground.

What to do if a pupil/ member of staff/ visitor is hit by lightning;

- call for help as they will need urgent medical attention.
- It is safe to touch them - people struck by lightning carry no electrical charge that can shock other people.
- Check for a pulse and for breathing - if you know first aid, begin artificial respiration and CPR if necessary.
- If they are breathing, check for other possible injuries. (Lightning strike victims have burns in two places - where the electric shock entered and then left the body, usually the soles of the feet. They may have broken bones or loss of hearing or sight).

After the thunderstorm

- Be wary of venturing out too soon - the BBC Weather Centre advises waiting 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning.
- Avoid downed power lines or broken cables.

#### **Instructions for maintaining the safety of the site during severe weather conditions:**

It is the responsibility of the Site Manager and Caretaker to clear, monitor and maintain cleared and gritted areas on the school site. This will be overseen by the Health and Safety Coordinator.

The Site manager/Caretaker will inspect the site, once gritted, at the beginning and end of the day, to ensure that it is safe and there is sufficient grit. The staff on duty at playtimes or the Midday Supervisors at Lunchtimes will do an inspection prior to playtimes and lunchtimes and will make a decision whether the conditions warrant the children having indoor playtime.

**Policy date: March 2025**

**Review Date: March 2027**

**Ratified by Governors: March 2025**