



## SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

This Policy was updated and approved at a meeting of the Governing Body on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Chair of Governors: Mr L Shilling  
Headteacher: Ms Y Nunn

Signed .....  .....

Chair of Governors

Signed .....  .....

Headteacher

Review Date: Autumn 2027

# HAMPTON COLLABORATIVE TRUST

## Severe Weather Policy

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 190 days per year** (380 sessions), but they may close “unavoidably” if certain conditions apply, which usually means health and safety reasons.

The decision to close or restrict attendance should be taken by the Headteacher, or in their absence by the most senior member of staff available, having discussed the reasons for closure, and the intention to close, with the Chair of the Governors. Any school closure will be notified to the Local Authority.

Before deciding whether to close, the school will consider a range of factors such as:

- Whether there are **on-site** hazardous conditions that cannot reasonably be mitigated (for example the pathway to the school entrance or where pupils have to move around the site during the school day)
- Will there be enough staff to supervise (but not necessarily teach) the number of children likely to be present?
- Can a reasonable temperature be maintained in the building or parts of the building where children and staff are likely to be? (Note: the recommended minimum is 16-18°C, although the Headteacher will make a judgement taking ambient conditions into consideration).
- Is water available and are sufficient toilets working satisfactorily?

### **Announcing school closure or partial closure**

Once a decision is taken to close (Site Manager to liaise with Headteacher asap), then the usual arrangements for making public announcements using [www.kentclosures.co.uk](http://www.kentclosures.co.uk) should be made. Kent radio stations will use this information to broadcast closures over the radio.

The SBM/school office will update information on the Kent Closures website with information about school closure or partial closure on each day of closure, and will remove the details from Kent Closures site once the school has reopened.

The school office will update the telephone voicemail message as soon as possible.

The IT Technician/SBM/HT will update the school website by 7.30 a.m.

If health and safety conditions are satisfied, then the school should remain open. During each day, the Headteacher will review whether or not the school should be closed early in the afternoon to enable pupils and staff to travel home in safety, or before the light fails. If in any doubt, the Headteacher or most senior member of staff available will get in touch with the Local Authority before taking a decision. It is also essential to let other agencies know of school closure, e.g. Club 4 Kids, school transport, catering and cleaning contractors, road crossing patrols, part-time support staff and volunteers. The school will **never** close completely unless the Headteacher is certain that no child will present his/herself. Arrangements must always be made for the security of children and parental agreement must be sought if sending them home. Staff should not be directed to drive in conditions they consider to be dangerous, but they should be able to demonstrate that they have considered all other travel options.

### **Local Authority Contact details**

The following contact details are subject to change depending on LA staffing structures and may be updated without the need to re-consult on the entire policy. Latest contact details can be found on [Kelsi.org.uk](http://Kelsi.org.uk).

Assistant Director Education (East Kent)	Robert Veale	03000 418575	Robert.veale@kent.gov.uk
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## SEVERE WEATHER PLANNING FOR STAFF

1. All staff will be informed of any school closure via text message through the Schoolcomms system. Staff should ensure that the school office is informed of any change of contact details as soon as a change occurs.
2. If staff cannot attend their usual place of work, they should contact their local school to see whether they can assist staff there. For security reasons, teaching staff should make themselves known to their local schools before any crisis arises so that they have time to do the necessary security checks.
3. The Site Manager will check weather forecasts regularly and clear paths for access into school and movement between buildings with salt/grit.
4. Any school closure or partial closure will be reported on [www.kentclosures.co.uk](http://www.kentclosures.co.uk) (the radio stations use this information to broadcast school closures) and the school website immediately.
5. In the event of school closure, all pupils must be supervised until the parent arrives. A register must be kept of how and when they left the school.
6. **If teaching staff are unable to get into school, they must telephone their Year Group Manager by 7.15 a.m. in order that levels of supervision can be assessed. The Year Group Manager should contact the DHT/Headteacher if they consider that their Year will have inadequate levels of supervision. Support Staff should telephone their Line Manager at least one hour before they are due to start work. The same contact arrangements should be followed if staff are likely to be late.**

The school will use the Winter Planning Guidance available on KELS I to help prepare for severe weather conditions.