Rook's Nest Academy

'Respect, Believe, Achieve'

SNOW POLICY

Date: Autumn 2024

To be reviewed: Autumn 2025

At Rook's Nest Academy we will do everything we can to remain open during snowy weather. The safety and well-being of our pupils and staff is of the upmost importance to us and any decision to close the Academy will be made once we have taken into consideration the following information:

- Are there enough staff to be able to provide a proper educational environment for our pupils; including the provision required for pupils with additional needs?
- Can the Academy provide lunch for pupils in all Key Stages?
- Can the Academy grounds be sufficiently cleared of snow/ice to allow safe access for staff, parents, and pupils?
- Does the Academy have heating enabling the entire site to be heated to the legally required temperature?
- Does the Academy have sufficient lighting and hot water across the entire site?

We will also take account of local and national weather forecasts and may base our decision to close (or remain closed) on their guidance.

Overnight snowfall

If there is heavy snowfall overnight, we will need to decide whether it is safe to open the Academy. We will do everything within our power to make this decision by 7.45 am. If we decide not to open, we will notify the following radio stations which broadcast school closures on air:

BBC Radio Leeds

Greatest Hits Radio (West Yorkshire)

Pulse (West Yorkshire)

We will also notify parents through the Academy Texting Service and put a message on the Academy web site. We will aim to update the web site by 8.00am.

Alternatively check the WMDC website for school closures.

https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/schools/school-closures

Staff procedures.

Contact between the Headteacher and Site manager will generate the initial decisions about the opening/closure of the Academy. The Headteacher will contact key members of staff to ascertain their ability to reach the Academy. A decision will then be made and communicated to all staff in the same way as parents.

Snowfall during the school day

If there is heavy snowfall during the school day, we will endeavour to keep the Academy open for pupils until they can be collected at the end of the school day.

If Parents/Carers want their children to leave the Academy early, they will need to inform the Academy Office either by telephone or on their arrival at the Academy.

However, we will not allow any pupil to leave early without a parent, carer or named person to collect them.

Where any children have not been collected at the end of the Academy day members of staff living close to the Academy will remain with those pupils until a parent/career arrives.

Members of the Academy staff who live in vulnerable geographical areas will be invited to go home at the safest opportunity, furthest distances to travel leaving first.

Safety on the Academy grounds

In the event of heavy snow, the Site Manager will try to ensure a clear pathway into the Academy so we can keep the Academy open. We will endeavour to clear and grit footpaths and areas of the playground to allow direct access to Academy buildings. However, in this time of litigation, it is worth noting that it would be almost impossible to clear the whole school site and therefore, gritted areas must be used by anyone entering onto the Academy premises.

Snow Play

At Rook's Nest Academy we understand that the enjoyment that snow brings to children and believe that our pupils should be allowed to play outside during snowy conditions if safety guidelines are being followed. The Headteacher will decide whether to allow the pupils to play outside during the snowy weather and will arrange for extra supervision on the playgrounds where necessary. During snow play, we will allow the children to make snowballs, but they must not throw them at other pupils or members of staff. Children must not throw ice balls and must not make 'slides' in the snow or ice on the playground. Please send your children to the Academy dressed warmly with waterproof clothing, gloves, and wellington boots so that they can safely enjoy snow play.

Please clearly mark your child's name on all boots (as with all clothing brought into the Academy). Your child may bring a pair of black shoes to change into during the day if they are wearing wellington/snow boots.

Planning ahead

Please have the Academy telephone number with you. If you are having difficulty getting to the Academy to collect your child and you will be more than 15 minutes late, please call and let us know so that we can reassure your child that you are on your way.

If your child normally travels home alone after school, and because of the severe weather you want them to wait and be collected, please contact the Academy as soon as possible so that we can get a message to your child's Class Teacher before they release the class at home time.

S.Brooks Autumn2024