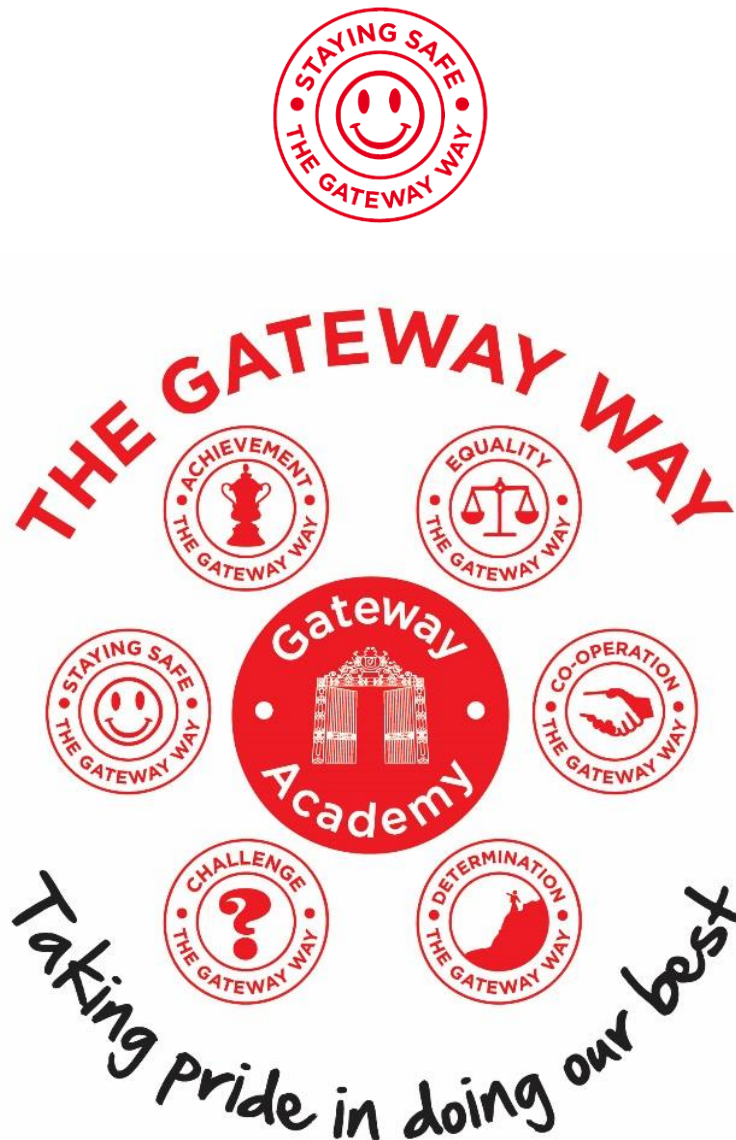


GATEWAY ACADEMY



Snow and Bad Weather Policy

Approved by: Lisa Breslin and Claire Cleary

Last reviewed on: October 2026

Next review due by: October 2027

INTRODUCTION

Gateway Academy will make every reasonable effort to remain open during snow, ice and other severe weather when it is safe to do so. The safety, safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors take priority. A decision to close, partially close, restrict access or reopen rests with the CoHeadteachers (or the nominated senior leader in their absence) following a documented assessment of risk.

Closure is exceptional and may be necessary where unsafe site conditions, unavailable essential staff, fire or evacuation risks, loss of critical utilities, unsafe access or forecast deterioration cannot be adequately controlled. The Academy will reopen fully as soon as it is safe and practicable.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- CoHeadteachers: authorise opening/closure decisions, record reasons, inform the trust/board and relevant agencies as appropriate, and approve reopening.
- Site team: inspect and treat paths, entrances, exits and outdoor areas; maintain a dated inspection/gritting log; report unresolved hazards immediately.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT): verify safe staffing, supervise altered routines, ensure pupil accountability and coordinate parent communication.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy: coordinate safeguarding/welfare actions and record concerns and contacts.
- Attendance Lead/office: record attendance with current statutory codes, maintain parent contact records and monitor uncollected pupils.
- All staff, contractors and visitors: follow approved routes, report hazards promptly and comply with restrictions.

ASSESSING WHETHER THE ACADEMY CAN OPEN

The CoHeadteachers will consider Met Office warnings and local conditions, the site inspection, cleared pedestrian and emergency routes, fire exits and assembly areas, safe entry/collection points, heating, water, toilets, power, communication systems, transport disruption and safe staffing across all phases including Nursery and Reception. The assessment will consider the needs of pupils with SEND, medical conditions and disabilities, as well as those who may be particularly vulnerable during closure.

Decisions may include: opening as normal; opening with restricted areas or altered routines; temporary partial closure of affected areas or groups where lawful and safe; or full closure. Where only restricted places can safely be offered, the Academy will consider DfE emergency prioritisation guidance and individual needs. A decision log will record date/time, assessment

evidence, restrictions, decision-maker, communications, review point and authority to reopen.

Academy closure and parent communications

- Closure, restrictions and reopening will be published promptly on www.gateway-academy.co.uk and communicated through the school app, text and/or email. Phone calls will be used for urgent or unreached families where practicable.
- Messages will state whether the whole Academy or specified provision is affected; collection or arrival instructions; provision for Nursery, breakfast club and after-school activities; and the next update.
- The office will use accessible, plain English communications and provide translated or interpreted support where necessary; arrangements will be made for families who may not access electronic messages.
- Parents must not assume closure without official Academy confirmation. Parents should advise the office where severe weather prevents or delays a child attending.
- The Academy will liaise with external childcare providers, contractors, transport providers and relevant agencies where arrangements are affected.

Attendance and learning during closure

Attendance will be recorded in line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE statutory guidance. The appropriate code will reflect the actual circumstances (for example, unexpected whole-site closure, closure of part of the premises, widespread travel disruption or individual absence). The Academy will not assume a particular code applies solely because of snowfall. Attendance decisions and supporting evidence will be recorded by the Attendance Lead.

When pupils cannot attend because the Academy is closed or attendance is restricted, remote education will be considered and provided where practicable under the Remote Learning Policy. The Academy will consider access to devices/resources and support for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Appropriate free school meal arrangements will be considered in line with current DfE requirements and the circumstances of closure.

Safeguarding and vulnerable pupils

The DSL or deputy will identify pupils requiring additional welfare contact during disruption, including children with social workers, children in care, pupils with known safeguarding concerns and other children whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Contact and escalation arrangements will be proportionate to individual risk, with liaison with parents, social care or other professionals where necessary. All contacts, unsuccessful attempts and concerns must be recorded securely using the Academy's safeguarding system. No pupil will be released to an unauthorised person.

Closure during the school day

Early closure will be a last resort. Staff will maintain normal supervision and safeguarding arrangements until every pupil has been safely collected or an agreed individual arrangement is in place. Parents/carers will be contacted using established communication channels and given clear instructions. The Academy will verify authorised collectors, record releases and follow its Lost and Uncollected Children policy and safeguarding procedures where an adult cannot attend. Emergency contacts will be used where necessary; no child will be sent home without the required consent and risk assessment.

SNOW AND ICE RISK ASSESSMENT AND SITE CONTROL

The site team, overseen by SLT, will complete a documented dynamic site inspection before opening and reassess as conditions change. Safe routes will be cleared/treated in priority order, including accessible routes, building entrances, fire exits, assembly points and emergency vehicle access. Unsafe areas will be physically restricted and communicated to staff, pupils, visitors and contractors. Site inspections, gritting, closures, incidents and remedial actions will be logged.

PLAYGROUND, BREAKS AND LUNCHTIMES

SLT may restrict playground use, change access routes or require indoor break/lunchtime where surfaces, wind, temperatures or supervision present unacceptable risks. Indoor arrangements must maintain suitable supervision, safe capacities, pupil-specific support and access to toilets. Decisions for Nursery and Reception must consider the EYFS statutory framework, staffing and paediatric first-aid cover.

WET PICK UP

Where severe weather makes normal dismissal unsafe, the Academy will notify parents/carers of wet pick-up arrangements, normally by 3:00 pm where conditions allow. Large numbers of adults, young children and buggies cannot safely be accommodated inside the buildings; parents will therefore be directed to the designated collection points. Staff retain responsibility for individual handovers and will check each adult against the Academy's authorised collection arrangements. Calling a child's name is a way of requesting collection and does not constitute authorisation to collect.

Collection by Year Group

- Nursery and Reception: collect as normal from classroom doors; an authorised adult must collect.
- Years 1–3: pupils wait in supervised lines in the Dining Hall; parents/carers wait outside and request their child by name. Staff check authorisation and release pupils individually.

- Year 4: pupils wait in the designated pupil kitchen area and under the shelter near the library; parents/carers request collection and staff verify authorisation before handover.
- Year 5: pupils wait in the supervised corridor by the playground doors; staff check collectors and release individually.
- Year 6: pupils wait in the designated area and are released via the double atrium doors into the courtyard, subject to site safety and individual permissions.
- Independent dismissal: pupils with current written permission (including eligible Year 4 pupils under the Academy's End-of-Day Safety Policy) follow individually agreed arrangements. SLT may temporarily suspend independent dismissal or use an alternative safe exit where routes are hazardous. A nominated member of staff will oversee dismissal and the car park exit where used.
- Uncollected pupils remain supervised in a designated safe area; staff contact parents and emergency contacts and follow the Uncollected Child Policy. A register of pupils remaining and released will be maintained.

Adults must follow the Academy's safety instructions and behave respectfully. Threatening or aggressive behaviour will be dealt with under the Parents' Code of Conduct and other relevant policies.

REOPENING AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Before reopening or lifting restrictions, the CoHeadteachers will confirm that a fresh site inspection has been completed; fire, accessible and pedestrian routes are safe; critical utilities and toilets are operational; essential staffing and first-aid cover are available; and any ongoing hazards are controlled. Decisions and notices to parents, staff and affected providers will be recorded. Significant loss of utilities, building damage or other disruption will also be managed under the Academy's Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

- Snow and Ice Risk Assessment; Academy Health and Safety Policy and site risk assessments; Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Uncollected Child Policy; End-of-Day Safety Policy; SEND, Medical Conditions and Fire Evacuation arrangements.
- Attendance Policy; Remote Learning Policy; Parents' Code of Conduct; Anti-Aggression and Violence Policy; Complaints Policy; Sun Safety Policy.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992; Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; Equality Act 2010; Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 and 1984.

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance; DfE Emergency Planning and Response; current EYFS statutory framework; Keeping Children Safe in Education.