

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



Snow and Extreme Weather Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Widford Lodge School including those in the EYFS

Reviewed: January 2026
Review date: December 2026

Snow & Extreme Weather Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the procedures the school will follow in the event of snow or extreme winter weather, and explains how decisions will be communicated to parents. The overriding priority at all times is the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff and the wider school community.

2. Responsibilities

The school will assess whether it can open and operate safely during adverse weather conditions. This decision will take into account, but is not limited to:

- The availability of sufficient staff to supervise pupils safely
- The safety of the school site, including access routes and outdoor areas
- The availability of heating, lighting and hot water
- The ability to provide lunches
- Weather forecasts and local conditions
- Advice from external agencies such as local authorities, police or transport organisations

While the school will make every effort to remain open, parents and carers are responsible for deciding whether it is safe for their child to travel to school, based on local conditions and individual circumstances.

3. Communication With Parents

3.1 Primary Communication Channel

The school website is the school's primary and definitive source of information during periods of extreme weather.

Information will also be reinforced by email and the parents' Instagram page, but these should be regarded as supporting channels.

3.2 Decision Time

By 7:15am, the school will publish a clear update confirming one of the following:

School open (extreme weather conditions)

School closed (extreme weather)

If no closure notice is published by 7:15am, parents should assume that the school is open.

Parents are advised to refresh the website (Ctrl + F5) to ensure the most up-to-date information is visible.

4. School Open During Snow Conditions

If the school opens during snowy or icy conditions:

- A normal timetable may not be possible
- Children may arrive at any time during the morning
- All pupils must sign in at the school office on arrival

Once attendance numbers are known, staff will organise a safe and appropriate programme for the day. This may include academic work, particularly for examination groups, alongside suitable indoor and outdoor activities.

5. School Closure

If the school is unable to open safely:

- The school will be closed for the day
- No pupils should be sent to school
- Parents will be informed via the school website, email and Instagram as soon as reasonably practicable

6. Early Closure

If the school opens but weather conditions deteriorate during the day, the school may decide to close early.

- Parents will be informed as soon as a decision is made
- Early closure will normally be at 3:00pm
- Parents may collect children earlier if they wish, but pupils must be signed out
- If parents are delayed in collecting their child due to weather or transport issues, they must contact the school office to inform staff of the expected collection time.

7. Attendance

Absence due to snow or extreme weather, on days deemed as extreme weather days, including school closure or parental decision not to travel, will not be recorded as unauthorised.

8. Clothing and Footwear

On days affected by snow:

- Pupils are encouraged to wear PE kit rather than standard uniform
- Suitable snow footwear (e.g. boots or wellies) must be worn
- Pupils must bring indoor shoes and socks to change into
- Warm, waterproof outdoor clothing (coats, hats and gloves) should be provided and does not need to be in school colours
- Pupils without appropriate footwear/outerwear will not be permitted to play in snowy conditions.

9. After-School Provision

On days affected by snow or extreme weather:

- All after-school activities, clubs, games and late stay are cancelled

- If parents are delayed in collecting their child, the school will continue to supervise pupils until collection is possible. However, parents are asked to be mindful that staff may also be affected by adverse travel conditions.

10. Contacting the School

Parents are asked not to telephone the school to explain decisions regarding travel to school, as this helps keep phone lines free for urgent operational matters.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to reflect operational experience and best practice.