

**Policy**                      Emergency School Closures

**Author:**                      Paul Shanks/Rosy Lord

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**Approved by:**              Board

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## **1. The scope of the policy**

1.1 This policy applies to all academies within the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust; namely Eastgate Academy, King's Lynn Academy, Nelson Academy, King Edward VII Academy, Southery Academy, Upwell Academy, North Wootton Academy, Emneth Academy, Diamond Academy, Norwich Road Academy, Admirals Academy, West Row Academy and Glade Academy.

## **2. Policy outline**

2.1 A decision to close any of the EMAT academies must only be made as a last resort and following a thorough review of each academy's ability to ensure that in staying open the health and safety of the children/students and staff is not compromised.

2.2 Prior to making a decision to close the Principal should, where practicable, assess the situation on the ground for themselves. This can be delegated to another senior member of staff or the site manager if needed but the Principal must take all reasonable measures to make this assessment for themselves.

2.3 The Principal or delegated person(s) should assess the risks and whether these can be mitigated against. Where it is possible to mitigate against risk, eg: clear paths, indoor break etc then the academy should remain open. No EMAT academy should close simply because other local schools have decided to do so.

2.4 **A decision to close an academy should be made as soon as possible and certainly no later than 7.15am unless there are extenuating circumstances.** Where possible each academy should pre-warn parents/carers the evening before that a school closure could be possible and to listen out to the local radio and follow updates on the school's social media pages. Academies who have access to a texting system must also use this to inform parents of closures.

2.6 Should an academy decide to close then the Principal must follow the local procedures as prescribed by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils. This will usually mean logging onto the LA intranet and reporting the academy as closed. The relevant council will then update its school closure website and inform the local media. Academies should also make every effort to contact parents using the usual means of communication.

### **3. Staff travelling to work**

3.1 As a Trust we recognise that we are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of staff as well as the children/students. During periods of inclement weather, all members of staff have to make their own decision as to whether or not it is safe to travel to work. If a member of staff does not feel that it is safe to travel, then they must follow the usual academy absence reporting procedures.

3.2 The terms of the Leave of Absence policy will apply to any member of staff who does not attend work due to inclement weather. Absence will be unpaid unless there is a decision to close the Academy when all staff will receive full pay.

### **4. Informing the Trust**

4.1 The Principal must make every effort to inform the Regional Director for their Academy via email that the academy will be closed. The Principal should provide where possible:

- The full reason(s) for the Emergency Closure
- Confirmation that the LA has been notified using the agreed procedure and that parents have been informed using the academy's normal messaging system
- Estimate of how long the academy will be closed for

### **5. Who is responsible for compliance with this policy?**

The Local Governing Body/Interim Executive Board and Principal are responsible for compliance with this policy.