

29th November 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

As we move into the time of year when the weather may cause problems, I am writing to you regarding our procedures in the event of temporary Academy closure. The safety of students at the Academy is our primary concern and in adverse weather situations all decisions will be based on this priority. We will make every effort to remain open as normal and it is only when safety is at risk that a judgement to close the Academy will be made.

At Bishop Young we are partially reliant on the providers of the buses serving the Academy and we do not have any authority over the bus providers. However, decisions about closure may be made after consultation with the various agencies which organise the bus service. In the event of closure, please do not telephone the Academy unless it is an emergency as this prevents bus companies from being able to get through and update us about any changes to student collection arrangements. Instead, follow arrangements set out in this letter.

The following guidelines should be observed in the case of snowfall:

1. On Day 1 of snowfall overnight we will try to be open if the health and safety of students and staff is not compromised. A decision about closure will be made by 7.00am
2. By 7.00am we will post a notice on our website www.bishopyoungacademy.co.uk, on the Leeds City Council website www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/School-closures.aspx, by notice on BBC Radio Leeds and with a text message to the first emergency contact number supplied to school. It is therefore, very important that we have up to date contact details. If these notices have not been posted then you should assume that the Academy is open.
3. If snow falls during the school day, bus companies will make every effort to honour their normal contracts, even if they arrive very late. However, if they have to advise during the day that local roads are about to close, then there is no safe alternative to early closure of the Academy so that both students and staff can get home. Where this happens, as before, we will use the local radio snow lines, our website, and texts to parents to advise you that we have to close, and I and/or senior staff will remain on the premises until the last child has left safely. We will endeavour to get buses to the Academy as quickly as possible and for them to meet students on Bishops Way. However, you need to be aware that access to Bishops Way is particularly difficult for large vehicles in poor conditions and we may need to escort students to meet the buses at the bottom of North Parkway. If the weather deteriorates rapidly buses may take some time to arrive, or may not arrive at all, and contingency plans may need to be made with your child.

4. If the Academy is to be closed on Day 2 or 3 then a decision will be made as early as possible so that parents can make arrangements. Notification will be made in the same way as point 1 & 2. Please be aware that one of the particular difficulties with the Bishop Young site is that the car parking areas need to be as clear of snow as possible in order to ensure the site is safe and that consideration of this will form part of the decision making process about closure.

5. When considering the point at which to make a decision about closure, we will need to balance the benefits of an early decision (parents having time to plan childcare, avoiding wasted journeys) against the risk of closing and finding next day that there is only a minimal problem. If forecasts make it very likely that there will be heavy snow the next day, then a decision the previous evening may be appropriate. If the Academy closes early, students will be supervised until arrangements have been made for them to go home safely.

6. If the Academy remains open but conditions are poor, we understand that some students may arrive late because conditions are difficult and we prefer lateness to absence.

7. If travel organisations recommend only essential travel in poor weather then you should be aware that in the Department for Education's view, essential travel includes students going to school to keep learning, and school staff going to work.

8. All students should have contingency plans in case of closure. These may include:

- Going to a friend's house if they live nearer to the Academy until parents can safely pick them up
- Walk home if necessary – please make sure the route is known
- Pay bus fares if necessary
- Meet parents at a pre-arranged venue
-

Thank you for your support with these arrangements. Please be assured that during adverse weather conditions safety is the number one priority and we will do our utmost to minimise the impact on learning.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Cooper', written in a cursive style.

Paul Cooper
Principal