Blackfen School for Girls

Short Term Closure Policy

Headteacher: Ms C Senior

Chair of Governors: Mr W Stone

	Date	Name	Signature
Policy Date	February 2026		
Review Date	February 2027		
Review Period	Annually		
Lead Person	Business Manager	Gary Morgan	
Prepared by	Business Manager	Gary Morgan	
Verified by	Headteacher	Carrie Senior	
Approved by	Chair of Governors	William Stone	

1 Background

Blackfen School for Girls

1.1 This short-term closure procedure document replaces the adverse weather guidance previously in place.

1.2 The policy has been updated to reflect the most up to date guidance.

2 Statement of Intent

2.1 The school will make every effort, subject to health and safety requirements, to keep the school open so students can continue to learn.

2.3 The school will always be open for any external examinations.

3 Decision to close

3.1 The decision to close the school is made by the Headteacher in discussion with the Chair of Governors, the Business Manager and the Site Manager.

3.2 The possible reasons for closure are: (please note that this list is not exhaustive).

- A severe weather forecast.
- Disruption to transport routes.
- Insufficient numbers of staff to supervise students.
- Safety of the school site for staff and students.
- Plant breakdown e.g., running water, gas leak, chemical leak or heating.
- Small fire or fire in the local area.

4 Procedures if the decision is taken to close the school

4.1 Closure 1: School in session

4.11 The Headteacher will notify all staff that the school will be closing.

4.12 Parents will be notified that the school is to be closed (see below).

4.13 Students will be sent to Community registration rooms and will be notified of the closure or will be registered by their subject teacher. This will depend on circumstances.

4.14 The office staff will provide a list of students (to the Tutor/Teacher) who do not have permission to be sent home and the Tutor should escort these students to the Canteen.

4.15 The Deputy Head (Culture, Behaviour and Inclusion) and an Assistant Head should be

at the Canteen to receive the students from the Tutor. These students should be supervised until 2.45 or until contact is made with home.

4.16 Staff should not leave the school site until the Headteacher has sent a message to all staff informing them that they can leave the site. This will be soon after the site is clear of most students.

4.17 It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to supervise any students remaining on site.

4.18 If a decision is made to keep the school open individual parents have the right to collect their child from school if they feel that it is in the interest of their child's safety to go home. We will respect their wish to come to school to collect that student. The student must sign out at Room 2.

4.2 Closure 2: School in session and students evacuated

4.21 If the school has been evacuated students will be registered and dismissed from the evacuation point.

4.22 Parents will be notified that the school is to be closed (see below) and where students will be dismissed from and at what time.

4.23 As far as possible the school will aim to continue to run external examinations. If, due to safety reasons, this is not possible, parents will be contacted and the examination boards will be notified. This decision will be taken by the Headteacher with the Deputy Headteacher.

4.23 Any remaining students will be taken inside until 2.45 subject to the area being deemed safe.

4.3 Closure 3: School not in session

4.31 If a decision to close the school is taken before the start of the school day staff and parents will be notified (see below).

4.32 In most cases the decision to close the school will be taken on the day of the closure.

4.4 Closure 4: Partial closure

4.41 On some occasions it may be possible to open the school late or close early due to adverse weather or other short-term circumstances. In these instances, staff should be in school for the time that the school is open.

4.42 It may also be possible to open for specific groups of students e.g., examination groups. In these instances, staff should be in school for the time that the students are in school.

5 Information to Staff and Parents regarding the closure or reopening of the school after a closure and responsibilities of staff

5.1 Staff

	Primary responsibility	**Back up responsibility**
Notification of decision on the school website	PA (NRO)	Office Manager (JCL/AST)
Notification of decision on open check (LGFL)	HT (CSE)	DHT (RMA)
Text alert/email alert – School in session	Office Manager (JCL/AST)	Administrative Assistant (AST)
Text alert/email alert – School not in session	Office Manager (JCL/AST)	PA (NRO)
Twitter alert	Marketing (LED)	Marketing (LED)
Telephone answerphone message changed	CSE Support	CSE Support
Whole staff email message and text message or email to personal email address	Generated by HT (CSE)	Generated by DHT (Sent by CSE Support)

5.2 Parents and Students

	Primary responsibility	Back up responsibility
Notification of decision on the school website	Office Manager (JCL/AST)	AHT (NHO)
Notification of decision on open check (LGFL)	HT (CSE)	DHT (RMA)
Text alert/email alert – School in session	Office Manager (JCL/AST)	PA (NRO)
Text alert/email alert – School not in session	Office Manager (JCL/AST)	Administrative Assistant (AST)
Twitter alert	Marketing (LED)	Marketing (LED)
Telephone answerphone message changed	CSE Support	CSE Support
Remote learning will take place. Information to website.	AHT (NHO)	DHT (FMI)

5.3 Staff specific roles during a closure

5.31 Organisation and utilisation of Site Staff – Site Manager and /Business Manager.

5.32 Organisation of at least one person in the Office during school open hours – HT.

5.33 Information to Lettings about closure of the school – Business Manager /Finance team.

6 Expectations of staff

6.1 In the event of adverse weather or other circumstances leading to a short-term closure the onus is on employees to get to work.

6.2 Employees should not be expected to put their health and safety at risk getting to work.

6.3 If the school is closed and staff are unable to attend due to travel disruption or health and safety this will be an approved absence (paid).

6.4 If the school is fully or partially open to students there is a high expectation that all staff will report to work.

6.5 If staff are unable to attend due to travel disruption or health and safety the following may happen:

- Staff take this time as unpaid leave.
- The leave is paid but staff are expected to make up the time in lieu (this only applies to Associate staff).
- Staff take this time as paid annual leave (this only applies to Associate staff).

6.6 If any member of staff, who is fit to work, does not report to work at all during the day when the school is open or partially open the Headteacher will inform the member of staff in writing that the matter will be reported to The Chair of Governors.

6.7 An adverse weather committee/short term closure committee (made up of members from the Staffing Committee) will consider recommendations from the Headteacher and any written representation from the staff member concerned before deciding on what appropriate action to take (see above).

7 Guidance

DfE – Advice on severe weather – 7 February 2013.
Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings. DfE March 2014.
DfE Guidance - Emergency planning and response – December 2015.