



### Snow/Inclement weather Procedure

The school aims to remain open in the event of snow or inclement weather, whilst ensuring the safety of our children and staff. In the event that bad weather is warned via news or weather reports, your responsibilities are as follows. To be read in conjunction with Snow and Ice Risk Assessment.

#### **Staff**

- The Premises Manager will advise the Principal of the status of the school site in the event of snow or inclement weather by 6.45am.
- The Principal will send an email to your FVA or NEST email address to confirm the status of the school site. Please ensure that you check your work email as soon as possible and before departing for work.
- If for some reason you are unable to access your emails, the Principal will also post a message regarding the status of the school on the FVA website by 7am. Please check the website before departing for work.
- It is expected that you will attend school (even if it is closed to pupils) providing it is safe for you to do so. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff may not be able to arrive before the normal start of the school day.
- In the event that you are unable to travel to school due to weather in your specific location, you must telephone the Principal by 7am to advise.
- In the event that the weather turns bad during the school day. Consideration will be given to those staff whose journey's may be affected.
- Due to delayed arrivals and some staff being unable to travel to school, it may be necessary to amalgamate some classes together.

#### **Families**

- There should be no assumption that the school will be closed in the event of bad weather or snow. It is always the intention of the school to remain open.
- The Principal will update the school website regularly and by no later than 7am and send a Whats App message to FVA staff
- If the school is closed, as well as this information being detailed on the school website, it will also be broadcast on the local BBC radio station.
- If the school is open, there may be no breakfast club (to be communicated by way of the school website) or after school clubs, please contact the school office to check after school club status. In addition, a text (if you are registered for this service) will be sent regarding the status of after school clubs
- When ice or snow hamper the movement into school, in order to minimise the risk of injury to staff or pupils and parents, we will grit the main paths to the children and staff entrances as far as is practicable.

- Children should not ride their bikes or scooters to school on icy or snowy days in order to minimise the risks to themselves and others.
- Children may be kept inside during the school day if the playgrounds are deemed to be too unsafe for external play.
- If the school is open, but during the school day the weather deteriorates, it may be felt that in the interests of children and staff safety, that the school and site be closed early. Parents will be contacted and asked to collect the children from school. In the event you are unable to collect your child due to work commitments, we may ask if an alternative collection arrangement can be made (for example a friend or neighbour).

## **Considerations for staff and families**

### **Vehicle Maintenance**

If you are using a vehicle in cold/icy conditions it is important that you consider the following:

· If you must travel, make sure you have certain items in the vehicle, e.g. shovel, de-icer, warm clothing and blankets, food, hot drinks and a fully charged mobile phone.

· Adapt your driving style to the conditions. Be smooth and gentle with steering and brakes and allow much longer braking distances than you would normally. Always try and use the highest possible gear to avoid sudden acceleration on icy roads or in snow conditions.

· When warming your vehicle up - don't leave it unattended with the keys in the ignition - there is no cover for this on any Motor insurance policy.

· Have your Antifreeze checked in the Autumn to ensure that you avoid engine damage caused by frozen cooling systems, check your car handbook to ensure you use the right type of fluid as there are different types required for certain engines.

· Ensure that windscreens and all windows are defrosted and clear before driving.

· If snow has settled on the roof of the car- also clear this as when you brake it can fall forward obscuring your vision

· Check that wipers are not frozen to screens and water jets are not frozen before being used. To do so may blow a fuse or damage the wiper motor and blades.

- For vehicles equipped with Air conditioning or Climate control the quickest way to demist or defrost the vehicle is to put the system on re-circulation, maximum heat and run for 5 minutes.
- Follow national guidance - only set out if your journey is absolutely necessary.

### **Driving in the snow**

- Wear comfortable and dry footwear
- Accelerate gently, use low revs and change up to a higher gear as quickly as possible
- Move off in second gear as this will help reduce wheel slip - some cars have a winter mode, which does the same job – so to check whether your car has this function in the vehicle’s handbook
- Get your speed right and maintain safe stopping distances between you and the car in front, leaving as much as 10 times the normal recommended gap
- Prepare for an uphill by leaving plenty of room in front so you can maintain a constant speed without the need for changing gear
- Use a low gear for going downhill and try to avoid braking unless necessary, make sure you leave plenty of space between you and the car in front
- When approaching a bend, brake before you actually start to turn the steering wheel. If your car does lose grip try not to panic; the key thing is to take your foot off the accelerator and make sure that your wheels are pointing in the direction you want to go in
- If you do encounter a skid, steer gently into it - for example, if the rear of the car is sliding to the right, steer to the right. Do not take your hands off the steering wheel or stamp your foot on the brakes
- When driving in heavy snow, make sure that you use your dipped headlights. Relying on daytime running lights is not enough, because they don’t always put lights on the back of your car.
- If visibility drops below a 100m, put your fog lights on. But remember to turn them off when the visibility improves.
- If the road has not been gritted, be wary of driving in the wheel tracks or other vehicles as compressed snow is likely to be more icy than fresh snow
- Controls such as the brakes, as well as the steering, accelerator and even gear changing should be operated smoothly and slowly
- Sunglasses can help to reduce the glare of low winter sun on the snow
- Keep your speed down and allow more time to stop and steer
- Finally, it’s important to think about the environment that you’re driving in, especially microclimates that might appear on the road. These are areas that perhaps the sun hasn’t got to, which could stay icy when the rest of the road has thawed. Bridges are a good example. They’re normally the first to freeze and the last to thaw. So be aware of that when you’re driving in open spaces.
- For further advice on driving, please see the following link “ A complete guide to driving in snow” RAC · <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/winter-driving/driving-in-snow/>