



Adverse Weather Policy

For the Academies within TAMAT

This Adverse Weather Policy was approved and adopted by the Trust Board in Sum 2025
It will be reviewed in Sum 2028
Version 25.0

Unless notified in advance that the school will be closed for the day, all members of staff should endeavour to travel to work as normal. Where usual travel arrangements are disrupted, individuals are expected to explore all possible alternatives. This might include:

- Using alternative means of transport, such as public transport instead of travelling by car, or walking if the distance is reasonable.
- Where public transport is affected, travelling later than normal, using a different operator or an alternative rail/tube station or bus stop if the disruption is localised.
- Taking an alternative route (such as main roads which have been cleared and gritted instead of back roads) and allowing extra time to travel.

In assessing alternatives, members of staff should give due regard to health and safety considerations and not take unwarranted risks that might jeopardise their safety or that of others. Staff should consider information on the prevailing weather conditions and the advisability of travel available from local news services, the Met Office, motoring associations or public transport information services, as appropriate, as well as any advice provided by the school.

Extra care must be taken when travelling to and from work in severe weather conditions.

Members of staff who are attempting to travel into work but who know that they will not arrive by their normal start time should inform their line manager as soon as possible. Members of staff who have managed to get into work, albeit late because of travel disruption, will not normally be asked to make up any lost time or experience any loss of pay.

Where the individual has explored alternative travel arrangements but has judged that there is no reasonable and safe route into work, he/she should contact his/her line manager by telephone at the earliest opportunity, leaving a message if necessary, explaining the circumstances. The line manager will discuss and agree alternative working arrangements where these are feasible, such as working from home if this is appropriate to the individual's role. Where such alternatives are impractical, the manager should explain how the absence will be treated to ensure that the employee is clear about this from the outset. If the manager is unsure about this, he/she may need to seek clarification from the Headteacher and inform the member of staff subsequently. See also section 3 below about the treatment of absences.

2.2 Severe Weather during the Working Day

Where the weather deteriorates during the working day and conditions suggest that this may adversely affect travel home, the Headteacher will consider the information and advice available and make a decision on whether to close the school. If the school is closed and members of staff are sent home early as a result, no deduction from pay will be made and staff will not be required to make up the working time lost. In some cases it may be appropriate to allow some members of staff to leave early even if the school is not closing early, e.g. because of the distance they have to travel home or the mode of transport used. Individuals should raise any concerns they may have about getting home safely with their line

manager or Headteacher so that these can be taken into account when assessing operational needs and who may need to leave earlier than normal.

Wherever possible, staff will be informed in advance of arrangements for the following day. Unless the decision has already been taken to close the school, staff should endeavour to travel to work as normal or follow any other instructions given to them. If difficult travelling conditions prevail the next day, the arrangements outlined under 2.1 above for getting into work will apply.

2.3 Severe Weather Disrupting Care Arrangements

Where an employee with childcare responsibilities has to stay at home or leave early unexpectedly due to a breakdown in childcare arrangements or a school/nursery closure caused by adverse weather conditions, he/she will be eligible to take leave in accordance with the statutory right to take time off for dependants.

In such circumstances, it is expected that the member of staff will alert his/her line manager as soon as it is known that he/she will require time off and inform the line manager how long he/she expects to be absent. Usually in such circumstances, leave will only be required for long enough to make alternative care arrangements, bearing in mind that associated travel disruption may make this more difficult than normal.

The same principles will apply to employees with responsibilities for dependent adults when normal care arrangements fall through because of the impact of severe weather.

In line with the school's normal policy on time off for dependants, leave will usually be unpaid. In the context of absences resulting directly from adverse weather situations, however, the school will ensure that those who are absent as a result of caring responsibilities are treated consistently with comparable employees who are absent through travel disruption, even if this may result in a departure from normal policy. See section 3 for more information about treatment of absences.

3. Treatment of Absences

TAMAT reserves the right to retain a degree of flexibility over the treatment of absences caused by adverse weather conditions and other such disruptions, in recognition of the fact that exceptional circumstances can prevail. In general terms, however, TAMAT's policy will be as follows:

- Provided any absence due to weather conditions or other travel disruption has been notified at the earliest reasonable opportunity to the line manager, absence will be treated as authorised.
- Unless the line manager has authorised home working or some other arrangement whereby the employee can work remotely, the default position is that the day or days of absence will be classed as authorised unpaid leave.
- Employees who are engaged on a full-year basis will be able, on request, to use outstanding annual leave entitlement to cover the period of absence.

- The Headteacher may, at his/her sole discretion, authorise individuals to receive normal pay. This would usually be on the basis that such individuals will be expected to make up some or all of the working time lost on another date. Whilst such a decision will be made with a view to consistency of treatment across the staff affected, the decision will also take into account to what extent it is realistic for the time to be made up and whether working at another time is of any benefit to the School. Each individual's working hours, contract and role will therefore have some bearing on this judgement and may justify different outcomes.

In the latter case it may not be possible to reach a decision about the treatment of absence until after the disruption is over. In such cases, members of staff should be informed at the time of notifying absence what the default position will be, pending a review after the event.

Members of staff who are unhappy about how a period of absence has been treated should raise their concerns, initially informally, using TAMAT's Grievance Procedure.

4. Responsibilities of Line Managers

Line managers are expected to communicate proactively with their staff during periods of disruption to ensure that the Headteacher has up-to-date information about the numbers of staff who are likely to be absent and to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities and how any periods of absence will be treated.

All staff should be treated fairly and consistently, but with appropriate regard to individuals with particular conditions or vulnerabilities, such as those relating to a disability, pregnancy or age, whose circumstances may justify different consideration.

If a line manager is in any doubt about how to treat a particular case or how to advise an individual, he or she should seek guidance from the Headteacher.

5. Reference to Other Procedures

This policy and guidance should be read in conjunction with any more detailed arrangements or procedures which may apply to specific groups of staff or departments, such as absence reporting mechanisms, which can differ depending on role and working patterns.

6. Status of Policy and Review

The content and operation of this policy and guidance is reviewed as required by the Trust Board. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.