

PRENTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

Reviewed:	Summer 2026
Ratified:	Summer 2026
Next Review:	Summer 2027

POLICY FOR EMERGENCY CLOSURE

There may be occasions when we have to send students home during the school day. This can be due to a variety of reasons including (and not limited to) bad weather, power disruption, outbreaks of disease. Understandably, many parents/carers ring the school during periods of adverse weather or, as a result of information they have received via media. **We ask parents/carers to be patient in this event and use the school website where we will endeavour to have the latest updated information.** In extreme circumstances such as when very bad weather is predicted or has broken out, the school may allow students to call their parents/carers via a mobile phone if they have one. Such calls must always have prior approval of a teacher and must be made in a supervised environment.

Decisions about closing the school or sending students home early are always difficult to make. We need to gather reliable information before making a judgement. We check weather reports, get advice from the bus, rail and other relevant transport companies and try to assess what is happening elsewhere in the area. We may also take guidance from the Local Authority and Public Health teams. Some transport may not be available. Operators have to decide whether running vehicles on particular routes in snow and ice is too high a risk. Drivers are rarely available at times other than scheduled school runs. That is why schools often take their lead from the bus companies when deciding what to do.

Here is our advice to you on what to do:

- If there is an incident or severe weather overnight
- If there is an incident or the weather deteriorates during the day

1. IF THERE IS AN INCIDENT OR SEVERE WEATHER OVERNIGHT

The decision to close school will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with site staff and the Chair of Governors.

The Dalkia caretaker determines whether the school is accessible and communicates with the Operations Manager who will then inform the Senior Leadership Team of the local conditions.

Information relating to the closure will be communicated via:

- The school website www.prentonhighschool.co.uk.
- The school social media pages: X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn @TeamPrenton
- Text/email

The Operations Manager will liaise with our Communications Officer who will update the school website.

Staff will be contacted using the Emergency Contact chain of responsibility.

2. IF THERE IS AN INCIDENT OR THE WEATHER DETERIORATES DURING THE DAY

If an incident occurs during the day there are three possible decisions to be made by the Headteacher:

- Keep school open
- Send students and staff home early
- Close school the next day (staff to attend if possible)

The decision will be based on the risks involved to students in travelling home and the probability of large numbers of staff (in particular) and students not being able to reach school safely the next day. The decision will be communicated via text message and/or email. The school website and social media will be updated as necessary.

We will collect consent for students to leave school early during Year 7. This consent will be valid until the end of Year 11 although parents will be given an opportunity to make changes to this consent at any time.

The decision to close the school will be taken in consultation with the Chair of Governors (if available) and the Senior Leadership Team. The students will be informed that school will close. **A text message and/or email will be issued to parents/carers.**

2 Advice to staff

All staff should not assume they can leave school with the students should we decide to close. In some cases you may be directed to stay in school. This decision can only be made by the Headteacher. Individuals should not seek permission from the Headteacher during the process of evacuating students from school. The Headteacher is able to use her discretion in releasing staff and may allow staff who travel long distances to school to leave early. In any event a fair and transparent system will operate.

- Staff unable to travel to school must report this by a phone call to the absence line. You may be required to report to school even when students have been sent home.
- Staff may well be asked to undertake appropriate alternative duties to teaching in the event that the students are sent home. These duties will be in line with current role duties.
- Staff may well be asked to report to their nearest school/other venue if they are unable to make it to school.