

Emergency Closure Policy

Approved: November 2015

Review Date: Autumn 2017

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible.

School closure is rare but may be required in cases of severe weather or in other emergency situations such as significant failure of heating systems, etc.

We are quite unusual in that there are a number of sites which make up the school and so it may be the case that the closure does not affect all sites. In addition many pupils attend a range of off-site provision which may not be affected by a closure of the school. It is therefore particularly important that we communicate very clearly with staff and pupils/parents to avoid any undue confusion.

The decision to close the school/site either before or during a school day will be made by the Executive Headteacher. The school/site will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- **Conditions on site are dangerous or do not comply with statutory health and safety regulations**
- **Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school/site running safely**
- **Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel**

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, consider the situation on site, get information from local bus companies and try to access what is happening elsewhere in the area.

In the absence of the Executive Headteacher the senior teacher on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to school/site closure.

Actions following any closure:

Where the school is officially closed all absence will be counted as authorised absence and is recorded on the register with a Y code. The only exception to this is where an absence has already been notified prior to the closure, for example a parent has already contacted us to inform us that a child is unable to attend school due to illness. This would be treated as an absence in the normal way.

The Chair of Governors will be informed of the closure and the reasons why the decision has been taken as soon as is practically possible. The Chair of Governors and the Executive Headteacher should ensure that the closure is reported at the next meeting of the full Governing Body. At this meeting the Governing Body should ensure that:

- The circumstances that gave rise to the closure have been resolved
- Arrangements made by the school in the event of unavoidable closures are reasonable and satisfactory in the respect of pupils, parents/carers and staff

If the school/site is to close:

1. The local media will be informed and they will broadcast details.

BBC Radio Derby on 104.5, 95.3 and 96 fm and 1116am

Capital fm on 102.6fm

2. Parents are advised to check local radio regularly for updated information about arrangements for the following day.
3. If in any doubt parents/pupils should assume that vocational provision with another provider is also closed unless they are contacted by school staff with different information.
4. Where it is possible to do so the school will ensure that the schools office is manned to respond to calls and queries from parents.

In the event of a decision to close the school/site early/during the school day:

- No pupil will be allowed to leave school early until a parent/carer has been informed. School staff will contact all parents prior to releasing any pupil from school. Where contact with a responsible adult has not been made then this pupil will remain the responsibility of the school until the end of the school day.
- If we believe that any student is at risk of being unable to travel home safely we will contact the parent/carer.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions or where closure is required for other reasons as we appreciate that such conditions and any uncertainty can cause considerable difficulty for parents. We do expect parents to listen to the local radio where it is clear that a closure is possible.

Information for Staff:

In the event of the school/site being closed to students then staff are still expected to report for work unless advised otherwise.

You should make every reasonable effort to attend work, for example by using public transport where this is operating, allowing additional time for your journey etc.

Information about any closure will be broadcast on local radio. In addition information will be cascaded down by phone call and text through staff teams following agreed procedures. Where it is possible to do so this will be backed up with

an all staff email and individual staff must take responsibility for checking for updated information.

In the event of the school/site being closed early the Executive Headteacher is able to use their discretion in releasing staff and may allow staff who travel long distances to school to leave early

In the event of the school being closed to pupils due to adverse weather conditions then

- Staff unable to travel to school must report this by a phone call to their line manager. Text messages can be used to update the situation.
- SLT, Base coordinators and Pastoral Leads should ensure the Executive Headteacher is kept updated about the potential staffing levels for this and subsequent days.
- Staff may well be asked to undertake appropriate alternative duties in the event that the pupils are sent home. These duties will be in line with current role duties and within agreed working practices such as 'rarely cover'.
- Staff may be asked to report to another school site/venue if they are unable to make it to their normal place of work, or in order to maintain provision at another site.
- Leave of absence is at the Executive Headteacher's discretion if requested by staff and a fair and transparent system will operate however the option remains for pay to be deducted where an individual may have abused the process.