



Silverhill Primary School
Policy for Emergency School Closure

Policy No.

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1. Introduction

It may be necessary to close school for a variety of reasons including:

- Severe weather including snow, flooding or storms
- Disruption to transport, for example through petrol or diesel shortages
- Accommodation problems, for example loss of power supply, heating failures or fire damage

School should, however, endeavour to remain open where possible. School contingency plans should be passed on to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Closure due to severe weather

The decision to close a school will normally rest with the Headteacher or in her absence the Assistant Headteacher and be confirmed with the Chair of Governors or if he is unavailable the Vice Chair. The decision should be made where possible before 7.00 am and on the basis of information received from the media about weather, supplemented by on the spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such observations and through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office.

Factors involved in reaching the decision to close the school are likely to be:

- Access to the school, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc).
- Breakdown of school essential services (heating, electrical services, water, storm damage etc).

The Headteacher will advise staff and Governors through the information pyramid, and advise parents and pupils to check the school website (www.silverhill.co.uk), listen to local radio stations and monitor their websites details of any closures will be published:

- * http://www.bbc.co.uk/derby/local_radio/
Radio Derby - 104.5 fm
- * <http://www.ramfm.co.uk>
Ram FM - 102.8

The whole school community, including the After School Service, should be made regularly aware of this procedure as incidents can occur with little or no warning.

3. During School Day Closure Guidance

On occasions it may be necessary for school to close during the school day i.e. if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether children can be returned home later in the day. In such cases schools need to ensure that children are collected from school. The school emergency management plan may also apply.

4. Staff attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, unless advised to the contrary by the Headteacher, then the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work.

Contract Staff (Catering and Cleaning Services) also need to be advised of any emergency requirements.

5. Clearance of Snow

Within the school site, the school is responsible for snow clearance and the clearing of approach paths is the specific task of the caretaker. When severe weather is forecast, the caretaker should be tasked to lay salt and grit on arrival.

The clearance of public roads is the responsibility of the Highways Department.

If there is any question of children's safety being at risk, for instance if they are let out at break time and the playground area is unsafe, school has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the children indoors.

6. In the Event of School Being Closed

If school is closed it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that the following events happen

- The decision is ratified with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors
- The school website is updated
- The information pyramid is activated
- The information is passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible
- The school office answer phone is amended to as short closure message.
- Notices are placed on both school entrances advising visitors, parents and pupils that school is closed
- School is appropriately staffed by teachers/teaching assistants and Governors to deal with any pupils who arrive at school unescorted until parents or emergency contacts can collect the pupils.
- Inform C&YPS of closure.

These tasks do not all have to be completed by the Headteacher, although they have the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out.