



Inclement Weather and Unexpected School Closure Policy 2018

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Prepared by:	Head Teacher
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This Policy will be reviewed in 2020

Inclement Weather/ Unexpected School Closure

Although it is highly unlikely that the school would need to be closed, we must be prepared to deal with such an eventuality should it arise. School closure can occur as a consequence of unforeseen problems such as boiler or electrical failure, burst pipes, damage due to wind etc. In addition, the school can be closed on Health and Safety grounds should the Head Teacher not be able to guarantee that sufficient staff are able to be provided to manage the needs of the children during the day. The Head Teacher might need to arrange a partial or full closure of the school.

The school will make every effort to remain open whenever possible. Any decision to close the school will be made by the Head Teacher.

The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply.

- Advice issues against travel;
- Insufficient staff members can reach the school to ensure its safe running;
- Risk of injury to pupils, staff or visitors due to the weather conditions;
- A failure of the school's heating systems.

Who will be informed if the school is closed?

- Local Authority - The local Authority operates a 'Tell Us Once system'. If there is a need for a school closure the Head Teacher or an Assistant Head Teacher will contact the Local Authority via the webpage www.stockton.gov/tellusonce. Upon receipt of the password protected electronic form, the Local Authority will then contact the local media to pass on the information to all interested parties.
- The Chair of Governors
- Site Manager
- Parents
- Senior Leadership Team
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants
- Kitchen Staff
- Midday Supervisors
- Cleaning Staff
- After School Club Providers
- Thornaby Cluster Head Teachers

School Closure – notification for Parents

Parents will be notified by the following information streams:

- The Local Authority Website <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/schools/find-a-school-stockton-borough-and-school-closure-details/>
- School text messages to the nominated number
- Messages sent via Mavellous Me!
- Twitter
- School website

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Parents should assume school is open unless they are notified in the above ways.

If adverse weather continues the Head Teacher will make a decision about continued closure by 6.00pm each day and parents will be informed via the above information streams.

Attendance

If the school is formally closed by the Head Teacher pupil attendance will not be adversely affected. If it is decided that the school will open, but the road conditions are difficult, parents should ring the school to advise that they are likely to be late. The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances

The School recognises that there may be cases where families are “cut off” due to particular difficulties in the area in which they live. In such cases parents should advise the Head Teacher of their particular circumstances so they can justify to the Local Authority why the absence should be authorised.

Heavy snowfall during the school day

- If there is heavy snowfall during the school day the Head Teacher will decide whether it is necessary to close the school.
- The Office will contact parents and ask that they pick their child/children up from school as soon as possible.
- The Staff that live furthest from the school will be permitted to leave at the earliest opportunity.
- A skeleton staff will remain in school until all of the children have been collected.
- If a parent rings requesting they pick their child up early due to the weather, and the decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher.

School Closure – Notification for Staff

When there is a problem caused by poor weather e.g. very heavy snowfalls, flooding or widespread freezing caused by extremely low temperature all staff are required to make every effort to report for work. In most cases the main routes within the region will be open allowing for travel between towns with problems arising locally if estate roads are impassable or jammed.

Staff should be prepared to be able to walk particularly where they live locally. Should staff find that this is impossible they should then phone the Head Teacher who will collate this information and then make decisions as necessary. It is important that this information is passed on quickly.

Staff must continue to attempt to get to work unless they are informed by the Head Teacher that the school has been closed. Staff who do not report for work will be in breach of contract and will not be paid on that day.

Clearly it is a member of staff's responsibility to be aware of inclement weather and make arrangements to be able to travel to work.

In order to support the passing of information in these circumstances a cascade model will be used.

- The Head Teacher will contact the LA, Senior Administrator, Senior Leadership Team, Site Manager and Chair of Governors.
- The Senior Leadership Team will contact their Teaching Team members.
- Teachers will contact their Teaching Assistants.
- The Head Teacher will contact all other involved parties such as midday supervisors, cleaning staff, catering staff and onsite providers. They will cascade information as necessary to colleagues/employees.

All staff must keep contact numbers up to date and any changes should therefore be passed on to the school office and Head Teacher promptly.