

Hayfield Primary School

Policy for

**Emergency
School Closure**

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Emergency School Closure Policy

1. Taking the decision to close the school

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors and other members of staff, will take the decision to make an emergency closure when the state of the weather or any other exceptional circumstance make it absolutely necessary in the best interests of the safety of all pupils and staff.

This decision will be supported by the latest and most accurate information available. The presumption should be in favour of keeping the school open unless, in the Headteacher's view, to do so would put the health, safety or welfare of pupils and/or staff at risk. In reaching this decision, the Headteacher will take full account of local circumstances and, in particular, the following considerations:

(a) Weather information, which will be sought from local weather reports on websites such as:

http://www.yr.no/place/United_Kingdom/England/Hayfield/

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/2647260>

<http://www.buxtonweather.co.uk>

(b) Advice from staff living locally regarding the safety of local roads if the decision is whether or not to open the school in the morning;

(c) Whether buses and trains are running, and whether it is safe to drive on local roads;

(d) Whether staff living out of the village can get to and from school safely;

(e) Whether there can be enough staff on the premises to keep all pupils safe and provide supervision if parents find themselves unable to collect their children on time;

(f) Whether the school is accessible, and has working heating/electrics/water.

The closure or opening of other schools in the local area will not be the key factor in taking such decisions but will be taken into account. It is the responsibility of all teachers to make every effort to attend for duty.

Staff are asked to ensure they can gain access to the school IT network system at home (password protected through secure.logmein.com) and take work home with them when they know it is possible that the school will have to close the following day due to bad weather.

2. Communication arrangements

It is essential that, when there is potential for school closures due to severe weather conditions, we are in a position to communicate quickly and clearly with parents.

Any decision to close will be taken as early in the day as possible, or if feasible, notification will be provided the evening before. The Emergency School Closure procedure will be used to communicate the decision. This will involve:

- putting an announcement on the school website
- texting all parents, staff and other adults due to work in the school, e.g. Breakfast Club staff, peripatetic teachers, parent helpers/volunteers, students, workmen etc
- announcing closure on High Peak Radio, Peak FM Radio and the Buxton Advertiser
- notifying Derbyshire County Council

Should the Internet fail, staff will use the 'Snow List' in order to ensure that everyone has been contacted (see Appendix 1).

3. Closure during the school day

Emergency Contacts

Safe and speedy dismissal of pupils in the event of an emergency closure depends on the school and parents working in partnership.

Parents should provide the school with any specific instructions in respect of their child should the school require to close during the day. Parents are required to give the school an emergency contact.

NB: It is imperative that school has up-to-date emergency contact details for every child. A form will be sent to parents on an annual basis to check that details are current and accurate, and returned to school (please see 'Pink Cards' kept in school office).

Precautions

It may be that a parent who collects his/her children offers to give shelter to other children whose parents cannot get to school. The agreement of the parents of these children should be sought before school releasing pupils in this way.

The provision of adequate supervision by members of teaching staff will be made for those pupils who cannot go home immediately and need to remain at school until they can be collected.

Please see our Critical Incident Plan for detailed information with regard to emergency closure of the school in circumstances such as gas leak, fire, explosion, epidemics, a violent intrusion etc.