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**School Closure Policy**

In caring about excellence and each other, and in promoting enjoyment and happiness through fulfilment, the members of Longton Primary School community believe in

**CARE through respect, support and togetherness**

**GROW through choice, opportunity and imagination**

**SHINE through challenge, achievement and celebration**

**School Closure Policy**

The aims of this Policy are to:

- Provide a learning environment that is safe during adverse conditions and to take

appropriate actions when it is not.

- Ensure that the decision to close the School is understood by and communicated to pupils,

staff, parents and carers.

- Keep to a minimum the amount of time the school is closed during adverse conditions.

Introduction

Primarily, it may be necessary to close the School during extreme weather conditions for a

variety of reasons including:

• Severe weather including snow, flooding or storms

• Disruption to transport, for example through petrol or diesel shortages

• Accommodation and utility problems, for example loss of power supply, heating failures or fire

damage

The School will, however, endeavour to remain open where possible. School Contingency Plans

will be passed on to staff, parents/carers and pupils when appropriate. In rarer circumstances

(eg. during a national pandemic, civil unrest, major industrial action etc) a specific Closure

Contingency Plan will be prepared and published based on National, Government or Local

Authority guidelines issued at the time.

**Closure before the start of the School Day**

The decision to close the School will normally rest with the Headteacher, or in her absence the

Deputy Head, in consultation with the Site Manager. The decision shall be made where possible

before 7.15 am and on the basis of information received from:

• The Media about the weather, condition of the roads and paths and public transport.

• On the spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such

observations.

• Through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office.

• Consultation with the Lancashire Education Authority about the closure of local state schools.

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).

• Specific advice received from the Police, Fire Service, etc…

**Notification of school closure**

• Staff, Parents/carers and pupils are recommended to check the School Website.

• A text message will be sent via parentmail to staff/parents’ mobile phones. (please ensure we

have an up-to-date mobile number)

• Parents/carers can also listen to the local radio for announcements or check the website http://www.rockfm.co.uk/pages/school-closures/

The whole school community, including any contractors, should be aware of these procedures.

Where the school is closed, the Headteacher does not expect staff to attend. However, staff are

expected to complete administrative tasks, and to set pupil work as required, during the working

day.

**During School Day**

Closure Guidance In exceptional circumstances the school may have to close during the school day

i.e. if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether pupils can be returned home

later in the day. In such cases the School will ensure that:

• The School uses the Scopay texting service to contact parents/carers, advises local radio and

uses the school website to inform of early closure.

• Pupils who have no access to home will remain in School or a safe place such as the church hall or

St Oswalds Primary School. Arrangements will be made to ensure the safety and security of all

pupils until either collected or until parents contact the School with alternative arrangements.

Should the weather deteriorate during the school day, parents themselves may wish to collect pupils

earlier than the official end of the school day. Parents should notify the school office on telephone

number 01772 612495 of their intention to collect a pupil. All parents must report to the School

Office if collecting a pupil before the end of the school day. Where parents experience difficulty in

collecting pupils at the end of the school day, or on the closure of the school during the day, a

member of staff will be placed on duty at the school gates and pupils will be retained inside the main

school building.

**Staff Attendance**

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for some staff to get to and

from work, the expectation is that staff will make every effort to present themselves for work unless

advised to the contrary by the Headteacher. All staff must report to the Heateacher or Deputy Head.

**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 Site Manager. When severe weather is forecast, the Site Manager will 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 pupils’ safety being at risk the school will ensure

that pupils are restricted to indoors.

The "Critical Incident Management Plan" includes the emergency details needed to cover this type of business interruption in the running of the school. The following key points should be covered: The Headteacher must ensure that a risk assessment is in place in advance, which covers the hazards

associated with snow and ice on their premises, including the following actions:

• Nominate a member, (or members, if required) of staff to monitor weather conditions to

anticipate when the snow and ice action plan will need to be implemented. It may be necessary for

them to start work earlier to implement procedures.

• Ensure staff who are responsible for gritting / clearing paths have adequate equipment and

clothing to carry out the work

• Prioritise areas for clearing of snow and gritting of paths and slopes. If slopes remain in a

dangerous condition, it may be necessary to prevent access to the affected area and mark

accordingly with cones/signs or tape.

Ensure direct access to the main entrance from the site access point is created by clearing a one

metre wide path. Identify areas, particularly areas such as slopes that may not be safe even when

cleared, where “no access” is permitted due to snow and ice and continue to treat cleared paths

with salt and grit if freezing temperatures continue.

• All staff should be aware of the risk assessment in place for snow and ice and take responsibility

for following the designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist as well as enforcing

this with pupils/visitors and other staff members. Where playgrounds remain excessively slippery

due to compacted snow and ice, it may be necessary for pupils to be accommodated indoors at

break times. If playgrounds remain in use, supervision levels may need to be increased.

• The school may wish to advise parents of arrangements in place for snow and ice earlier on in the

school year.

Where the closure of school is likely to be prolonged, appropriate work will be set for all pupils in the school. This will be communicated via the website. Actions in the event of the school being closed:

• The decision should be ratified with the Governing Body and Lancashire Council

• The School Website will be updated

• The information will be passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible

• The School office telephones manned where possible.

• Notices will be placed on school entrances advising visitors, parents/carers and pupils that the

school is closed

• The Headteacher should be kept updated during the day of the condition of the site and the likely

consequences for the next School Day. NB: These tasks do not all have to be completed by the

Headteacher, although she has the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out. The

decision for the school to remain closed will be reviewed by the Headteacher on a daily basis and

agreed and communicated as advised above. Also the following links to website information may be

agreed and communicated as advised above. Also the following links to website information may be

of use: www.metoffice.gov.uk

www.teachernet.gov.uk/educationoverview/briefing/news/severeweather/

www.hse.gov.uk/risk/principlespoints.htm

Contact Details:

Lancashire LEA - http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/education/school\_closures/

Radio: Rock Fm - http://www.rockfm.co.uk/pages/school-closures/

Responsible staff are expected to have contact details for all members of staff and ability to use

Parentmail. Emergency details for services etc. can be found in the school emergency plan which is

in the office grab bag.

J Brown

Headteacher

Review Sept 2022