



ST. HILD'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

School Closure Policy (Emergency)

At St. Hild's Church of England School we aim to provide all of our pupils with a world class education in a Christian context. We expect to find God at work in our school.

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

"I have come that they may have life in all its fullness (John 10:10)"

Preface

St Hild's Church of England School, in accordance with Christian principles and values, aims to serve our community by providing an education of the highest quality. We strive to promote the growth of wisdom and learning. As a Church of England School, we aim to develop Christian values, of Care, Respect, Responsibility, Honesty & Equality.. We value the uniqueness of each individual and support the development of a rich and fulfilling spiritual life for all of our community.

We aim to develop self-esteem, model conflict resolution, and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central to our community, and we expect high standards in all aspects of School life.

This policy and its associated procedures are based on these key principles and values.

Introduction

There may be occasions when it is necessary for the School to close temporarily in the interests of health and safety to pupils, staff and those accessing the School site. In most cases this will be as a result of unforeseen problems relating to the building or heating, or because of severe weather conditions. Any temporary, unavoidable closures will be kept to a minimum in order to reduce the number of days lost to pupils' learning.

Responsibility for closure

The decision to close the School for emergency reasons is made by the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher) in consultation with the Chair of Governors (or Vice Chair of

Governors in the event that the Chair is unavailable). A decision to close the School should be made as early as possible, in order to inform staff and parents/carers. The Headteacher will remain in daily contact with Chair of Governors (or Vice-Chair) until such time as the School is fully reopened.

Procedures to be followed

The School will operate normally wherever possible and only resort to closure in exceptional circumstances when conditions are such that the health and safety of pupils and staff are at risk. A decision to close the School in the case of severe weather will be made following consideration of reports/warnings from the appropriate authorities. The Headteacher will also make a judgement whether children and staff can travel safely to and from the School and if the site will remain safe throughout the day. The Headteacher may seek advice from other members of the Senior Leadership Team as to local weather conditions and safety of travel.

A risk assessment will be conducted taking into account a range of factors including:

- State of pathways, steps and slopes around the school (particularly exits and entrances, especially emergency exits)
- Condition of roads and pathways in the local area (especially essential walkways, traffic routes and routes used by pupils with special mobility needs)
- Internal floors, especially those in entrance ways and corridors
- If the School's heating, lighting and water is working correctly
- Whether catering can be provided
- Availability of public transport, taxis and coaches
- Weather forecast
- Decision taken by other local schools
- Pupil's age/s
- How the decision could impact on pupils with particular learning, behavioural or social needs

Where possible parents/carers will be notified of any unplanned closures via the School Cal Twitter, School website and, where feasible, information on local radio stations (BBC Tees and TFM).

In the case of building matters or a heating problem which have health and safety implications, consideration will be given to whether a part closure rather than a full closure can be achieved in order to minimise disruption to education. Further contingency measures (in line with the Business Continuity Plan) will be considered if the closure is likely to be lengthy.

In the event of closure the School will make every effort to provide work for pupils to do at home unless other arrangements have been made. Pupils should have access to appropriate learning opportunities and resources wherever possible through Office 365, and any internet based resources.

When pupils cannot get in because of adverse weather, the School will apply special attendance code 'Y' in accordance with DfE guidance issued in September 2010. This will ensure that neither the School nor individual pupils' records are adversely affected because of closure.

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The Headteacher will ensure in advance that parents/carers know how any decision of closure will be notified to them. Parents/Carers will be reminded annually of the policy and procedures for closure.

If the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors feel it is necessary, after due consideration, not to open the School or to close a session early, every effort will be made to inform parents/ carers and other agencies of the decision at the earliest opportunity. Bus and taxi operators used to transport pupils will be informed of the closure.

In the event of a closure occurring without prior warning during a normal morning or afternoon session, the School will make appropriate arrangements for the supervision of pupils who cannot safely return home. This will include alternative arrangements e.g. contacting the named person on the child's emergency contact details or a relative. A message will be issued by School Cal explaining the reasons for closure and any action parents/carers should take in the event that the School might remain closed beyond the first day.

The School will prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of the general emergency planning, and ensure that the relevant staff are familiar with these plans. In readiness for the onset of adverse weather conditions and as part of the annual maintenance cycle of the School, the Business Manager will ensure that appropriate checks and preparations are made, including:

- The heating system
- Visual check of plumbing and water storage facilities to avoid the risk of floods
- Appropriate stocks of grit/salt for external pathways, shovels and torches are ordered
- Non-slip mats for entrances are available to prevent mud and water being tramped into the building
- Cordoning for wet/flooded areas is in store
- Emergency contact telephone numbers for electricity, gas and water supplies are immediately to hand
- A plan is in place, which is periodically updated, that details the responsibilities and duties of key staff and rooms available for use.

Staff attendance

Staff should make all reasonable efforts to attend for work in the normal way during adverse weather conditions. Staff who arrive late will not normally lose pay or be required to make up lost time. In agreement with the Headteacher, disabled employees with mobility problems should not attempt to come to work and will not normally lose pay or be required to make up lost time.

Where the School is totally closed to both pupils and staff, time off will normally be with pay. Staff will be expected to work from home using this time for assessment, planning and preparation purposes.

In the case of severe weather, where possible, the most senior staff available will assume responsibility for supervision if a number of teaching staff fail to arrive on time for the start of the day. Teachers on site should inform parents/carers and children who arrive at the School of the situation and supervise any pupils who arrive unaccompanied until such times as they can be collected or returned home safely to a responsible adult.

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The Headteacher, or in his/her absence the most senior member of staff, will determine the minimum ratio of staff required to adequately supervise the pupils and must balance risk against continuity of education and the needs of working parents.

Staff are expected to attend in other closure circumstances and, where necessary, work offsite as directed.

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School Closures (Emergency) Procedure	
Linked to	

Signed.....Headteacher	Next Review Date: Sept 120
Signed.....Chair of Governors	

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