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Adverse Weather Conditions

Weather Warnings

The LA will notify schools, by use of the school portal as soon as possible and within about 6 hours of any expected onset of severe weather where it is thought that the assessment of risk warrants it.

The Decision to Close

If for any reason, it is impossible for any teaching staff to reach the school, a cascade system of communication needs to be put into practice to ensure that children are not left at the school by parents who are unaware of the staff situation.

The cascade system should include the use of Governors, some of whom may live close to the school. In the absence of any member of the teaching staff, a governor can take charge of the situation and ought to make his/her way to school as soon as possible to ensure that parents are informed of the fact that the school is to be closed. The communication system should include the availability of Governors or other members of staff who would be able to assist locally. Even if a closure has been authorised by the Headteacher, unsupervised pupils who arrive at school must be accepted onto the premises and sent home only if it is known to be safe to do so. See appendix 4.

The Position of Staff

In adverse weather conditions staff are expected to make all reasonable efforts to get to school, even if their arrival is delayed. Even if the school is wholly or partly closed to pupils, staff are expected to report to work and undertake appropriate preparation or other duties as directed by the Headteacher. Staff unable to reach their own school should contact a school more readily accessible to see whether their attendance would be of benefit.

In-School Measures

Parents should be advised to keep a check on local radio broadcasts during emergency conditions in case closures or changes to normal school arrangements are made. Those parents who have provided an email address will be emailed asking for acknowledgement of receipt. The remainder of parents, together with those who did not respond to email will be contacted by telephone. Depending on the number of outgoing lines, (a fax line if different from the main number can also be used with a spare telephone handset), the use of mobiles and use of the cascade system will be used. See appendix 4.

Staff should –

- check immediately at the onset of the emergency that the telephone is in working order and check it repeatedly, ensure availability of mobile telephone if necessary.
- try to keep a check on radio broadcasts. If possible keep a battery radio in school.
- it is the responsibility of Mrs Dixon to inspect the safety and accessibility of the school premises at the beginning of every day. If a closure is imminent they should contact the Headteacher, Senior Teacher, Chair of Governors, vice-Chair of Governors, in that order to establish authority to close the school.
- in the event of adverse weather conditions staff should move the pupils from any portacabin classrooms as they can become unsafe during excessively high winds.
- if the school buildings become unsafe it is the Headteacher's responsibility to decide if the school needs to be evacuated to another building.
- if excessively high winds or heavy snow occur during the day schools may find that they have to feed and possibly accommodate pupils overnight. Obviously every attempt should be made to get the pupils home by making contact with parents.
- staff should be effectively deployed in school to deal with the emergency, duties would typically include –
 - o Moving children to a safe area at first sign of emergency in easily contacted groups for support and reassurance. Any adult helpers should stay with

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the class they are with.

- o Headteacher to make a check of the school to ascertain all staff and pupils are clear of dangerous area.

- o Cut off electricity/gas/water, if necessary, by caretaker or Headteacher. Check damage. Report situation to Property & Transport Services Unit (01228 606026).

- o Keep all staff up to date on the developing situation. Re-assure the children re. brothers and sisters and provide games, videos etc, if possible.

- o Liaise with the LA whether/when to contact local radio stations to broadcast school closure message.

- o When situation allows, check the affected area (only if safe to do so). Spare staff to salvage belongings.

- o Keep the LA informed.

- o If/when parents collect, limit entry/exit points in order to ensure safe collection of children. Staff to be posted at all entry points to ensure parents report to the office and "sign out" their children before taking them home.

- o When all the children have been taken home hold a short staff meeting to assess the situation and plan for the next day.

- o Ensure governors are notified of details of the emergency.

- o A letter to parents should be sent home as soon as possible to give them the latest information.