

Ebor Gardens and Victoria Primary Academies



Adverse Weather/ Emergency School Closure Policy

Policy updated:	November 2019
Adopted:	November 2019
Review date:	October 2020

Guidance on responding to adverse weather conditions.

Introduction

The Head of School/Executive Principal is responsible for decisions on school closure days, delayed start times and early finish times. These decisions should be taken as soon as practicable and the decision will be informed by:

- Discussion with senior staff
- Weather forecast
- Accessibility of the site(s)
- Likely road conditions
- Likely traffic congestion

In the event of bad weather, the Head of School will consult with Executive Principal and Estates Manager to determine the risk assessment on a daily basis throughout the bad weather period. Either at the end of each school day or early next morning a decision will be taken about the action needed. This will be communicated accordingly.

The possible actions are:

- The whole Academy will be closed to all staff and pupils.
- The start time of the Academy / specific sites will be delayed
- An early closure of the Academy

Communication of closure

The Head of School and Executive Principal will liaise and make a decision as to the status of the Academy for that day. On a morning, that decision will be made where possible by 7.00 am. The decision will then be communicated to all staff.

Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that each site prepare an appropriate plan for the closure information to all staff and parents.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the Academy has up to date emergency contact details for use in this process.

The Office Manager will send a text message to all staff and parents through Arbor and will inform contractors working on site.

The Office Manager/Head of School will contact Leeds Education Hub to inform Leeds City Council of the school closure. (See Appendix 1)

The Head of School will contact local media to inform them of the decision.

The Academy website should be updated by the Office Manager as soon as possible.

In the event of early closure during the school day the Head of School will be responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place for contacting parents/carers of students to advise of the early closure and collection of their child. A senior member of staff will remain on site until every child has been collected from the school.

In the event of early closure, staff will be allowed to leave only when safe student supervision levels allow.

Information for Staff

This policy is a guide to attendance at work during adverse weather conditions. **All staff should make every effort to attend school if it is safe to do so.** If staff are unable to drive to school, then they should consider whether public transport or walking is an option.

If the school is open but you are unable to attend due to adverse weather conditions, you should contact your Head of School immediately.

The DFE says *"It is for individual schools to make any decision to close, but we expect headteachers to take a common sense approach based on conditions at the school and also the safety of any pupils travelling. We will be monitoring the situation day by day and we would hope that headteachers can keep schools open while it is safe for them to do so, but decisions about closure have to be taken locally by those who know the local conditions."*

Staff members who are unable to attend school due to the closure for their children's schools or care providers should contact their Head of School as soon as possible. Normal Leave of Absence procedures will apply in these circumstances.

Appendix 1

Unplanned School Closures

Reporting procedure for all schools and academies

This is the procedure for schools to follow in the event of an **unplanned** school closure e.g. due to severe weather, industrial action or electrical/heating failure

This is a simple procedure on the Leeds Education Hub (LEH)
It applies to all schools and academies whatever their IT provider

If you need access to the Hub or your previous invitation has timed out, please email leedseducationhub@leeds.gov.uk and we will send you an invitation *N.B tokens are no longer required for this process*

The Hub automatically sends closure information to local radio stations, the Leeds city council website, transport team, attendance team, health safety and wellbeing teams, governor support team and Leeds city council's passenger transport team *This does not replace the local notification arrangements you already have in place e.g. texting parents, updating your school website*

Checklist for Headteachers/Schools:

- Familiarise yourself with the procedure (see LEH screen-shots overleaf)
- Add the procedure to your severe weather emergency plan
- Keep a copy of these instructions in school and at home
- Check relevant colleagues in school have received instructions, understand the process and can access the Hub
- You can access the Hub from any computer, tablet or smartphone (as long as you know your log in details)

Schools have provided Children's Services with names and school email addresses of colleagues who may need to log a closure. If any of these details change please notify Children's Services on SchoolClosures@leeds.gov.uk.

N.B. Invitations do time out so if you need us to re-send the invitation, please email leedseducationhub@leeds.gov.uk and we can easily set you up again.

Should you experience difficulties with the system and are unable to log your own closure you can:

- Email SchoolClosures@leeds.gov.uk and include the name of the school, contact telephone number, date of closure and whether it is a full, partial, or student-only closure along with a brief description of the reasoning. We will then add this information to the school closure system
- Contact the Children's Services Governance & Partnership team (24 hours) on **07891 277245**