

Severe Weather Policy

Debden CE Primary Academy

Reviewed by: Matt Hawley	April 2022
Shared with staff:	April 2022
Shared with Governors:	April 2022
Review date:	April 2024

In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow or severe weather the prime concern of the school must always be the safety of pupils and staff. The decision to close the school will take account of the safety of all our pupils and staff, some of whom travel a notable distance to school each day. We will always endeavour to open the school in the event of bad weather as long as it is safe to do so.

Staff will always make every reasonable effort to undertake the journey to school. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff may not be able to arrive before the normal start of the school day.

In making a decision to close the school, the Head of School (Matt Hawley) will consider:

- The number of staff who are able to come in to keep the school running safely;
- The conditions on site;
- The conditions of local roads and routes;
- The anticipated weather for the remainder of the day.

If the school is open in snow or bad weather, the decision as to whether or not to send a pupil to school must be at the discretion of the parent, taking into account factors such as local road conditions and the availability of child care.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed.

The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances, parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence.

In preparation for expected inclement weather

- Parents will be informed of the expected poor weather via email, in order to make the most suitable travel arrangements, and to enable them to remain vigilant for further school updates;
 - The Head of School will arrange for potentially hazardous outdoor areas to be gritted (salt is located in the outdoor store area). In his absence, the senior teachers would carry out this role.
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-The admin team will ensure that there is an adequate amount of rock salt available.

In the event of bad weather before the school day starts

The Head of School will decide whether the school will open, taking into account the conditions at the school and the ability of staff to get there. The Head of School will endeavour to make this decision as soon as possible, by 7:45am, and parents will be updated by the admin team in the following ways:

- Email to parents
- Update on the school Facebook page
- Notification on the home page of the school website
- A board will be placed outside the school, advising of the closure.

This decision will be made in coordination with (and based on information from) the following colleagues:

-Mrs Sarah Bailey – Senior Teacher
-Miss Holly Matthews – Senior Teacher
-Mrs Sarah Cameron – lives in Debden village;
-Miss Heather Rowe – lives close to Debden village;
-Mrs Jo Arundell/ Mrs Sally Dale – the administration staff, who assist with communication to parents and also live in relatively close proximity to the school.

We will also make Essex County Council aware of the closure. Parents will be able to visit Essex County Council's homepage at www.essex.gov.uk and search for Emergency School Closures or click into the Education and Schools area, click Schools, click Dates and click Emergency Closures.

All staff will be made aware via the staff messaging group. A collective email will also be sent to all staff. Should it appear that a teacher, admin or catering member of staff has not seen the correspondence, the Head of School will call them to confirm. Should it appear that a learning support assistant has not seen the correspondence, the teacher in the class in which they are supporting will call them to confirm.

Should the Head of School be unavailable to coordinate the above response, then his responsibilities are transferred to Mrs Sarah Bailey - Senior Teacher.

In the event of extreme weather during the school day

-If the school does open, but extreme weather develops during the day, we will aim to remain open until the end of the normal school day. However, this is not always possible when roads are becoming treacherous. In which case, parents will be contacted via email and asked to collect their children as soon as possible.

Under these conditions, we will take verbal permission for their child/children to be collected by a nominated adult.

-Transport for Barracks pupils will be arranged with the relevant bus company. Children of Barracks parents who are not able to be contacted will not be put on the

school bus but will remain in school until contact is made and other arrangements for collection are agreed

-Verbal or written permission will be required from any parent whose child is to be collected by another adult. We cannot release children into the care of another adult without direct permission from the parent

-Staff that live the furthest from the school will be permitted to leave at the earliest opportunity.

-Normal lessons may be curtailed and the remaining pupils assembled in groups under the supervision of authorised members of staff to await collection. A skeleton staff will remain in school until all of the children have been collected.

-If a parent contacts the school requesting that they may pick their child up early due to the weather, and the decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis.

-Should the Head of School be unavailable to coordinate the above response, then his responsibilities are transferred to Mrs Sarah Bailey - Senior Teacher.

Review

-This policy will be reviewed once every two years by the Head of School.
