



Severe Weather Policy and Procedure

Leigh Beck Junior School and Maple Grove Primary School

Rationale and policy

The school will make every effort to remain open where possible.

As a school with high expectations around school attendance and clear view on the impact of attendance on a child's learning, we recognise the impact on our core purpose of closure.

As a core service, we recognise that decisions to close schools can impact on the ability of parents and carers to attend their place of work and the potential impact of this on the running of core services within the UK.

The decision to close a school is a significant one and follows a carefully considered process.

We will endeavour to keep our school open and operating as normal. However, in the event of severe adverse weather it may be necessary to make a decision to close the school for the safety of the children and staff.

The decision to close will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Lion Academy Trust Exec considering the following:

- Health and safety – will remaining open constitute a significant risk to pupils and/or staff as conditions on site are dangerous?
- Availability of staff – has the severe weather meant that a significant number of staff have been unable to attend making it impossible to open and to keep the school running safely?
- Are conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel for children, parents and staff.

Our first priority will always be to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, parents and families.

Where practical, we will consider opening later in order to enable staff and children to have additional time to travel to school safely.

We will clear paths within school to make access as safe as possible, and will keep supplies of grit to support this.

Staff attendance during bad weather

Employees are expected to make "all reasonable efforts" to reach their workplace.

Procedure

The Designated Senior Leader (the Head Teacher or nominated Senior Leader in the absence of the Head Teacher) is to carry out a Risk Assessment between 5.30 a.m. and 6.30 a.m. This is completed in consultation with the Site Manager and nominated local Admin Team member.

Ahead of this process, the Senior Team has overview of the profile of staff who live locally and who commute to the school site, to determine possibilities of supervising children safely if the school is able to open, even with some staff absence.

This takes full account of:

- Site conditions;

- Local roads giving access to the school;
- Local roads;
- Water availability;
- Heating;
- Hot dinner provision.

In addition, the risk assessment takes account of where staff live and the travel conditions to enter to the school's local area. This may occur through AA travel information, Met office area updates, local reporting, emergency or public service updates and public travel sites.

<http://www.theaa.com/traffic-news/index.jsp>

<https://www.c2c-online.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/warnings>

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/mobile/warnings#?date=2018-03-01>

Staff are required to inform, through usual absence reporting procedures, if they are able to travel in to work. Staff are encouraged to attend work, if they can travel safely by their usual or through an alternative means of travel. The staffing level picture will be communicated by

Once a full and factual picture is established, a risk assessment is carried out by the Designated Senior Leader, using a common sense approach.

The Designated Senior Leader then phones the Lion Academy Trust Deputy CEO/CEO to inform of the picture and Risk Assessment view.

Once decision made in consultation with the Trust Deputy CEO/CEO:

- Designated Senior Leader to email 'all staff' (Extended Schools Provision leaders communicated with first).
- Designated Admin Team member to notify parents, carers and staff through 'CallParents'/Teachers2Parents (or usual text/email communication system);
- Designated Senior Leader to notify Essex LA via <https://schools-secure.essex.gov.uk/> (each School Leader and School Admin Team member has a login to this site and can access the function to report under 'My school').

The Designated Senior Leader is able to direct tasks that can be carried out by staff from their homes. These will be communicated by email.

Parent and carers:

Parent and Carers will be informed by the school via the school's communication system. Parents can also access information on Essex Council's website:

<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>

Path: Visit Essex County Council's homepage at www.essex.gov.uk, and search for Emergency School Closures or click in to the Education and Schools area, click Schools, click Dates and click Emergency Closures.

If the school is open in adverse conditions:

If it is decided that the school will open, but the road conditions are difficult, parents should ring the school to advise that they are likely to be late.

If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

The School recognises that there may be cases where families are "cut off" due to particular difficulties in the area in which they live. In such cases parents should advise the Head Teacher of

their particular circumstances so s/he can justify to the Educational Welfare Service why the absence should be authorised.

In the event of heavy snowfall during the school day

If there is heavy snowfall during the school day, the Head Teacher will decide whether it is necessary to close the school.

The Office will contact parents and ask that they pick their child/children up from school as soon as possible.

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

A skeleton staff will remain in school until all of the children have been collected, led by at least one member of the SLT.

If a parent rings requesting they 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 by the Head Teacher.

Wet Morning Breaks

The Head Teacher will decide if the weather is bad enough for a 'wet' break.

If a wet break is declared no children must be left unsupervised. One member of staff (Teacher or Teaching Assistant) should remain in the classroom to supervise break with all children remaining in their own classes.

Lunchtimes

The Head Teacher will decide if the weather is bad enough for a 'wet' lunchtime.

If a 'wet' lunchtime is declared the Midday Supervisory Assistants will supervise the children with the support of other school staff. No children must be left unsupervised.

Equality Implications

There are none associated with this policy.

Appendix:

Essex contacts for emergency use (school team use only- not for published policy):
-Not on published version.