

Bredenbury Primary School

SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

September 2020

Signed and dated:

Chair of Governors

Headteacher

INTRODUCTION

It may be necessary to close school for a variety of reasons including:

- Severe weather including snow, flooding or storms;
- Disruption to transport, for example through petrol or diesel shortages;
- Accommodation problems, for example loss of power supply, heating failures or fire damage.

CLOSURE DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER

The decision to close a school normally rests with the Executive Head. The school caretaker and school administrator with consultation with the Executive Head will jointly make the decision whether to close the school.

The decision should be made where possible before 7.00 am and on the basis of information received from the media about weather, supplemented by on the spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such observations and through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office.

Policy amended/updated in:	September 2018
Reviewed by Governors and parents in :	September 2018
Ratified by Governors on:	19.09.2018
To be reviewed by Governors:	Every year September 2021

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Copies of all staff and pupil addresses and telephone numbers are located with the school's Major Incident Policy and Plan. Two copies of this are kept in school.

DECISION TO CLOSE

Factors involved in reaching the decision to close the school are likely to be:

- Access to the school, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc.).
- Breakdown of school essential services (heating, electrical services, water, storm damage etc.).

The administrator will advise staff and governors through the **information pyramid/PS Connect**, and advise parents and pupils to **check the school website, Herefordshire Council website, school Facebook page** and **listen to local radio stations** and monitor their details of any closures will be published. The school will also use PS Connect text messages, therefore it is important to keep the school informed of up to date mobile phone numbers.

The whole school community, including the After School Service, should be made regularly aware of this procedure as incidents can occur with little or no warning.

STAFF ATTENDANCE

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, unless advised to the contrary by the Headteacher, then the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work.

Contract Staff (Catering and Cleaning Services) also need to be advised of any emergency requirements.

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DURING SCHOOL DAY CLOSURE GUIDANCE

On occasions it may be necessary for school to close during the school day i.e. if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether children can be returned home later in the day.

In such cases schools need to ensure that children are collected from school. The School's Critical Incident Plan emergency management plan may also apply.

Where it becomes necessary to close school during the school day, e.g. due to a sudden emergency or unexpected inclement weather:

- parents will be contacted by telephone/text message and an up-to-date list of those parents that have been informed will be maintained;
- a register of children will be kept, indicating those pupils who have been collected by a parent/carer;
- every child will be personally handed over to the parent/carer or nominated adult (18 years old and above) - no child will be allowed to leave the premises unless escorted by an adult who has permission to do so;
- where parents have chosen to delegate this responsibility to another responsible adult, the school will only hand over the child if verbal or written permission to do so has been received.

If Queen Elizabeth High School closes, it is agreed that Bredenbury Primary School does likewise. Hot meals are also supplied by Black Pepper based at the QE.

SCHOOL CLOSURE PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Where school is closed for FORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES, (e.g. on advice from the local authority due to inclement weather, or unavoidable planned maintenance work, e.g. a broken boiler,) the school administrator will contact the local authority using the procedure as agreed below in Appendix 1.

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- In addition to this, where possible, notice will also be posted on the school Facebook page and at the school gates.
- If the closure can be planned in advance, letters informing parents/carers will be sent out as soon as possible, to enable them to make alternative arrangements.

Where school is closed due to UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES (e.g. due to sudden snowfall,)

- The caretaker and school administrator in consultation with the Headteacher will be jointly responsible for assessing the need to close the school outside the school day. The headteacher will make the decision during the school day.
- As she is the staff member living closest to school, the caretaker will open up school. The administrator will ascertain how many other members of staff are likely to be able to get into school.
- Any decision to close the school will be on the basis that supervision numbers fall below the minimum requirement. In the event that some teachers and support staff are unable to reach school, the governors have set the safe level to be two teachers per 50 pupils. There MUST be a minimum of two teachers onsite at all times.
- **Support staff should not assume responsibility for a class.**

Every member of staff has the individual responsibility of phoning the school

- As soon as they become aware that they will not be able to reach school they should contact school.
- This is to allow the caretaker and school administrator to make a decision about whether or not school can remain open.
- The school has a message recording service, and staff should use this to inform those who are able to reach it.
- Staff must attempt to reach school but should not endanger themselves in doing so.
- The school administrator in consultation with the Head of School and Executive Head will make a decision as early as possible about whether

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there are sufficient staff to supervise, and therefore whether or not the school will open.

- In the event of school closure early morning, the administrator will contact the breakfast club supervisor as a priority to advise that school is closed.

Clearance of Snow

Within the school site, the school is responsible for snow clearance:

- The clearing of approach paths is the specific task of the caretaker.
- When severe weather is forecast, the caretaker will lay salt and grit on arrival.

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Appendix 1

Enforced School Closure

Automated Notification System

1. From your school's main admin address email: admin@bredenbury.hereford.sch.uk or any other email address that you have already registered, address an email to:
send-UKHEREF.HCC2011@request.govdelivery.com
 2. In the subject box, type your school's name, followed by a brief description e.g. [Bredenbury Primary - closed/partially closed/reopening/open](#). **It is important to put the school name first.**
 3. Any further information should be given in the main body of the email, e.g. [Closed to Years 4, 5 and 6 due to flooding from burst pipe](#), or [Closed due to snow - Tonight's parents' evening is cancelled](#), or [Reopening tomorrow - no hot meals, please provide your child with a packed lunch](#).
- N.B. whatever text you enter in the subject/main body of the email will appear automatically on the website and will also be forwarded to anyone registered with us to get text updates for your school - parents/public/press.**
4. **PLEASE!** Remove any email signatures, logos and/or disclaimers that are generated at the end of your email, or these will be published too.
 5. Click on 'send'
 6. You will then receive a confirmation email and upon clicking the link, or replying with the word APPROVE, the information you have provided will be updated on the website, twitter and sent by email to anyone registered with us to get updates for your school. The website address to view your updates and those of other schools is: <http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures>
 8. Don't forget to follow the same process to show that your school is opening/open again!

There is an alternative 24 hour telephone notification system. **This must only be used as a last resort, if you cannot access email for any reason.** The telephone number is the general Herefordshire Council enquiry line 01432 260000.

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It may be necessary to close the school for a variety of reasons. We would like to draw to your attention our procedures for managing such closures.

Where it becomes necessary to CLOSE SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, e.g. due to a sudden emergency or unexpected inclement weather:

- Parents will be contacted by telephone/text.
- Every child will be personally handed over to a responsible adult (18 years and above) - no child will be allowed to leave the premises unless escorted by an adult who has permission to do so.
- Where parents have chosen to delegate this responsibility to another responsible adult, the school will only hand over the child if verbal or written permission to do so has been received.

Where school is closed for FORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES, (e.g. on advice from the local authority due to inclement weather, or unavoidable planned maintenance work, e.g. a broken boiler).

- Parents will be contacted by telephone/text.
- In addition to this, where possible, notice will also be posted on the school Facebook page and at the school gates.
- If the closure can be planned in advance, letters informing parents/carers will be sent out as soon as possible, to enable them to make alternative arrangements.

Where school is closed due to UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES (e.g. due to sudden snowfall,)

- The caretaker and school administrator in consultation with the Executive Head and Head of School will be responsible for assessing the need to close the school.
- As they are the staff members living closest to school, they will open up school and ascertain how many other members of staff are likely to be able to get into school.
- Any decision to close the school will be on the basis that supervision numbers fall below the minimum requirement.

If Queen Elizabeth High School closes due to bad weather conditions, it has been agreed that Bredenbury Primary School does likewise.