



Policy:	School Closure Policy
Owner:	Strategy Team
Approval Date:	February 2018
Review Frequency:	Annually
Review Date:	February 2019
Signed:	
Notes:	

Rationale

Every effort will be made to keep the school open at all times, providing there is no threat to the health and well being of any individual in doing so, and even if the facilities and resources available will only allow for the supervision of the pupils and are not sufficient to provide the normal level of education. The school must be mindful of the effect which closure has on the ability of parents to attend their own places of work and the effect which school closure consequently has on other areas of society.

Reasons for School Closure

At St Peter's Church of England Primary, the school is more likely to face closure for four specific reasons, flooding, loss of water, lack of heating, or bad weather. In all four instances, and any other less likely situations which may occur, the school, or parts of the school will close if:

- normal hygiene levels can not be maintained. This will include if the school has no running water, or has no use of toilets or washing facilities for any other reason.
- it is impossible to ensure that all individuals can move around the site safely.
- it is impossible to maintain an acceptable temperature within the buildings.
- insufficient staff can attend the school to ensure the health and safety of the pupils, particularly in the event of an emergency such as a fire.
- Industrial action means that there is insufficient staff to operate the school safely.

It is possible that part of the school may remain open in some circumstances, such as flooding in one particular area, or loss of water in one building. In every situation, all possible steps will be taken for all or part of the school to remain operational.

Bad Weather

- The school may have to close during periods of bad weather, if insufficient numbers of staff can attend the school.
- We must assume that most of the 170 pupils will be able to attend the school on any given day, as a vast majority of them live within walking distance of the school.
- We must then set a minimum number of staff required to manage 170 pupils for a day and deal with any emergency which may subsequently occur, such as an evacuation for a fire.
- Thus we have set the critical number of staff required to keep the school open at 8 teachers or TAs, in addition to 1 further member of staff to cover the office. Office staff will not be expected to supervise classes of children for a day.
- Eighteen members of staff live less than 3.5 miles from the school. Of these, 8 have reported that they would feel sufficiently confident to travel to the school after a snowfall. Obviously, the severity of the snowfall will affect this number. However, we can assume that under mild snow conditions, 8 members of staff could be present for the school day.



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- However, of the 8 members of staff, only one, Mrs Cooper is on SLT, and only one has QTS. None of the remaining SLT/teachers either live sufficiently close to school or have a journey which would predictably allow them to travel to school after snowfall. Of the 10 qualified teachers who are employed on a full or part time basis at the school, only 3 live 5 miles or less from the school.

In the event of predicted bad weather, the following process will take place:

- The headteacher will contact all parents informing them of the closure process and warning them that there is a possibility of closure.
- On the morning of a day of severe weather, the Head will telephone Mr Battel to determine the local conditions in Aylesford. He will also review all sources of information regarding road conditions across the county.
- He will estimate the number of staff likely to be able to attend the school. If the Head believes that it is unlikely that the critical number of staff will be able to access the site, he will close the school.
- He will contact Mrs Atkinson, who will use the teacher/parent communication system to inform all parents, school staff, the nursery staff and the providers of the school dinners, that the school will not open.
- During the afternoon, the Headteacher will again contact Mr Battel and make a decision on whether to close the school for the following day, or whether to delay any decision until the morning. He will inform Mrs Atkinson of the situation, and she will use the communication system to let parents and staff know. If the decision has been to wait until morning to assess whether the school can open, the process will recommence.

Flooding/Loss of Water

If the school suffers an overnight flood, or a loss of water, the caretaker will inform the Headteacher straight away. The Headteacher will attend the school and decide on whether closure is required. If it is, the closure procedure will be initiated.

Closure Procedure

Once the Headteacher has taken the decision to close the school, the following process will be initiated:

- The school caretaker will be informed.
- The Teacher/Parents service will be used to inform parents, staff, the nursery and breakfast clubs.
- The school website will also be updated to publicise the closure.
- The Chair of Governors will be informed.
- The Local Authority will be informed.
- The Diocese will be informed.
- The radio stations will be informed and asked to broadcast the information.

Staff Transport

In the event of bad weather, staff are expected to make every effort to attend the school, by any means of transport, without endangering their own safety. Staff must decide whether their journey is safe and if it is not, they must inform the Headteacher or office that they will not be attending the school and they must complete work at home.



Industrial Action

In the event of proposed industrial action, the Headteacher will complete a risk assessment. This will clarify whether sufficient staff will be in school in order for the school to operate safely. Dependent on the results of the risk assessment the school may be required to close or only open to specific classes of children. In the event of this, the Headteacher will take appropriate steps to ensure that parents are fully informed about any closures. The risk assessment will also outline steps to be taken on the day of industrial action in order to ensure that children are adequately supervised and that health and safety requirements (such as first aid provision) are met.