



Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School

Adverse Weather Policy

February 2018

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| Date of Policy | February 2018 |
| Review Date | February 2020 |

Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding the Health and Safety of its pupils, parents and employees, and as such, may have to close the School during exceptional circumstances. In doing so, we will ensure that any disruption to the normal functioning of the School will remain minimal, whilst not compromising the safety and well-being of all who enter the premises.

What is an Exceptional Closure?

An Exceptional Closure is unplanned and is due to unforeseen circumstances such as adverse weather conditions, power failure or situations which affect the safety of pupils and staff.

How will Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School decide if we need to close?

Although it may not always be possible to make such a decision, where feasible, and in order to facilitate early communication with parents and staff, the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Governors, will endeavour to plan for an exceptional closure as far in advance of the actual closure as possible i.e. the afternoon/ night before the closure if circumstances allow.

Decisions the afternoon/ night before can only be taken when all the indications are that the conditions affecting the School will continue overnight. If there are doubts, the Headteacher will defer decisions until early morning.

Refer to Criteria to be considered for Closure.

Extreme Weather conditions such as snow, wind and rain.

We will take in to account local conditions and in consultation with the Chair of Governors and Caretaker, will conduct a risk assessment of the grounds and premises of Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School.

Criteria to be considered for closure

- Can parents, pupils and staff access the school building safely?
- Are pedestrian routes in to school safe and accessible- has grit been applied?
- Can pupils and staff be evacuated in an emergency?
- Lack of parking facilities is already an issue for the School and as such, is parking at all possible within the vicinity of both school grounds, until remedial action has been taken to make the area passable?
- In an emergency, could the Emergency Services access the school?
- Have local weather forecasts and road conditions, including those for areas from which staff will be travelling, been considered?
- Are there any areas within the school locality particularly impassable or dangerous in times of extreme bad weather?
- Can the school premises be heated?
- Is there provision of water for sanitary use or drinking?
- Can enough Teaching Staff and Classroom Assistants attend school to ensure the adequate supervision of pupils?
- Is the severe weather likely to clear quickly and allow safe access to the school building?
- Are conditions considered to be, or are anticipated to later become, too hazardous for travel

The above questions will form part of our Risk Assessment.

Closure before Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School opens

Henham And Ugley Primary and Nursery School has contact details for all parents/guardians, pupils and staff. We also make use of our email communication system and website. Parents are requested and reminded to update any changes to contact details on a regular basis. This is their responsibility which they are made aware of this frequently throughout the year.

- Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School Caretaker, will have visited the school site prior to 7:00 a.m. to assess the viability of the School opening, taking account of the factors as detailed previously in this policy.
- The caretaker will then contact the Headteacher immediately by telephone call in order that she may make an informed decision and agree a way forward with the Chair of Governors.
- The Headteacher will then inform the School Administration Personnel by telephone as a matter of urgency.
- School Administration Personnel will then inform Parents of an exceptional closure via the Schools email service.
- The Headteacher will inform Staff of the school as a matter of urgency (via the group Whats app page).
- Those staff with access to Class Facebook pages, will be requested to update these to further the communication.
- The Headteacher will update the website as well as reporting the closure on the Essex online reporting system www.essex.gov.uk
- Regular communication with the Caretaker is central to this plan/ policy- this is the responsibility of both parties.
- If possible, parents/staff will also be updated at a later time in the day with a view to the "next day" so that all have time to make suitable family arrangements.

Closure during School hours

- Parents will be informed, again through the email system within the School. (Office Administration Staff will take responsibility for this – in their absence – The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher).
- Should the Internet not be working – all parents will be contacted by mobile phone using the hard copy Home contact details available in the School Office.
- Should a parent not be able to be contacted or a child cannot be picked up by parent/carer, additional contacts provided by parents for collection purposes throughout the year will be used as the next means of communication.
- Senior staff and the Class Teacher will not leave the premises for home until all children have been collected by a person nominated by the parent.
- Those staff with access to Class Facebook pages, will be asked to update these to further the communication.
- If possible, parents/staff will be updated at a later time in the day with a view to the "next day" so that all have time to make suitable family arrangements.

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 there is a likelihood of them being 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.

The school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case and has to be able to formally authorise the absence to the Local Authority.

Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risks their child being registered as an un-authorised absence.

When the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.

Further strategies in place

- Heating, lighting and water services will be regularly maintained as per the maintenance schedule.
- During severe weather conditions or when they are predicted, the heating system will run for periods of time during the night and during periods of closure or holidays by setting the timer appropriately (Caretakers responsibility).
- The Caretaker will be responsible for the laying down of salt at the beginning/ end of the school day, should conditions require this approach to be taken. Sufficient supplies of salt for application to footpaths and the car park area will be maintained.
- Safety Signs will be available in school for cordoning off hazardous areas.
- The Caretaker will make regular checks of the premises, both inside and out to ensure that the School is safe and fit for purpose at all times. Any perceived hazards (such as fallen down branches etc. in snowy or windy circumstances) will be removed by the Caretaker, where physically practicable and with Essex Health and Safety requirements being adhered to at all times.

Any such incidents and those of a more serious matter, will be reported by the Caretaker to the Headteacher, who may then, on some occasions, make a decision on any possible further course of action required e.g. reporting to Education Authority for response/ support/ guidance.

- Local contact details for other services will be held on computer and a written copy will also be maintained e.g. emergency call out companies.

In the Headteachers absence, the Senior Teacher on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.