



Scholes (Holmfirth) Junior and Infant School

School Closure Policy

Approved by:	Date Approved:	Due for review no later than:
Headteacher	October 2022	October 2023

THE DECISION TO CLOSE SCHOOLS IS NEVER TAKE LIGHTLY AND ONLY DONE IN EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES AND BASED ON THE CONDITIONS AND FORECAST AT THE TIME OF MAKING ANY DECISION.

We ask parents to support school's decision when a closure has had to take place.

A core value within our school is that children have the right to be children, so in the event of a closure due to snow, it is entirely acceptable to take pupils to walk/play in the snow as part of their childhood experiences. – work will be set for pupils to access if needed but there will be no expectation of full remote learning procedures being enacted in the first instance.

Emergency procedures - School Closure

Rationale

This information details the procedures for late opening or closing the school due to severe weather or other emergency situations. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to decide if the school will be open, closed or a late opening. The decision will be made as early as possible on the day based on information from BBC weather forecasts, LA guidance and local information as to the conditions at school regarding the safety of pupils, parents and staff. It is essential that there is a responsible person in each classroom, not necessarily the class teacher, who can be in charge of the children in class. This person can be a school class teacher, a cover supervisor, a cover teacher employed at the school or the Headteacher. Classes can also be grouped together in the event of lower numbers up to agreed ratios.

Decision to close the school

The decision to close a school is based on the safety of children in the school and will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Accessibility to the school including heating/cooling in school;
- Number of teachers/cover supervisors/ETAs/catering staff/First Aiders who can get into school to take responsibility for the children in classes/school meals – taking into account the distance from home to school;
- When and if the staff can get into school;
- For how long the extreme weather conditions are forecast to remain or to get worse.

Procedures following decision to close, to open the school later than normal or early 'closure' of the school – 'closure' means that parents can collect early, however school will remain open whilst any children are still to be collected.

- Between 6.00am and 6.30am the Head Teacher will contact members of the SLT (via group text system) and local members of staff and ask them to text back information on their immediate travel situation. Staff need to contact their line managers immediately if they are having difficulties getting to work. All staff in school are aware of this procedure. All staff are expected to make every attempt to get to school safely.
- If the outcome is not clear, the Headteacher will Ping and Dojo parents and staff to inform them of a late opening to give staff time to get to school safely.
- Once at school, the Headteacher will assess the situation to decide to go ahead with the late opening or to close the school (see criteria above).
- If the decision is to close the school the Headteacher will update the LA via the school login self-notification system.
- The head will also post a message on the school website homepage.
- The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors, all staff including lunchtime staff, Catering supervisor and parents of the closure using the group text as soon as possible but before 8.15am.
- Class teachers need to inform students / volunteers within their class of the school closure. Lynsey Firth (Senior Bursar) will inform outside agencies eg Project Sport
- If the extreme weather conditions arrive during the school day and the decision is made to close the school early then parents will be texted and be given the option to collect their children. **THE SCHOOL WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL ALL PUPILS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED.**
- Parents will be informed of the road conditions in the immediate vicinity of the school (Wadman and Marsh Road)

Communication to Parents/Pupils

- If the school is closed, teachers are encouraged to communicate with pupils, parents via the Ping and Dojo systems.
- Parents will be kept informed of the intention to open on the next day. This decision has to be made as close to the start of the next school day as possible. However, the Headteacher will assess the situation, following BBC Weather forecasts, and make every effort to inform parents of the decision to open/close as quickly as possible. It would be unreasonable to make a decision to open/close the school too soon as the weather conditions can vary from one day to the next.

Additional information

- The Headteacher will keep in contact with the Chair of Governors and SLT throughout the day to discuss future actions.
- The Headteacher will liaise with the School Caretaker to ensure there will be safe pathways into school for pupils on their return to school. Staff / parents are encouraged to voluntarily assist the Caretaker in clearing snow from the car park/pathways. This help is much appreciated.
- Teachers are asked to complete school improvement, class activities from their home. This work is usually shared at the next staff meeting.
- The Headteacher will communicate with other local Headteachers to share decisions made.