

# OAKWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

## School Closure Policy

Review Date	Spring 2017
Reviewed by	SBM
Review Cycle	Every 3 years
Next review due	Spring 2020

Signed :.....

Name :.....  
on behalf of the Governing Body of Oakwood Junior School

# School Closure Policy

## 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

School should, however, endeavour to remain open where possible. School contingency plans should be passed on to staff, parents and pupils.

## Closure due to severe weather

The decision to close a school will normally rest with the Headteacher or in their absence the Deputy Head and be confirmed with the Chair of Governors or if they are unavailable the Vice Chair. 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.

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 Headteacher will advise staff and Governors and advise parents to check their mobile phones, listen to local radio stations and monitor school and radio websites, where details of any closures will be published:

**[www.bbc.co.uk/radioderby](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radioderby)                      104.5fm**

**[www.capitalfm.com](http://www.capitalfm.com)                              95 – 106fm**

## 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.

## 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 make every effort to present themselves for work.

## Clearance of Snow

Within the school site, the school is responsible for snow clearance and the clearing of approach paths is the specific task of the Caretaker. When severe weather is forecast, the Caretaker should be tasked to lay salt and grit on arrival. The clearance of public roads is the responsibility of the Highways Department. If there is any question of children's safety being at risk, for instance if they are let out at break time and the playground area is unsafe, school has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the children indoors.

## In the Event of School Being Closed

If school is closed it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that the following events happen:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors
- The school website is updated
- The information is passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible
- A text message is sent to all parents and staff.

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- Notices are placed on both school entrances advising visitors, parents and pupils that school is closed (if at all possible)
- School is appropriately staffed by teachers/teaching assistants and Governors to deal with any pupils who arrive at school unescorted until parents or emergency contacts can collect the pupils.
- Inform LA of closure.

These tasks do not all have to be completed by the Headteacher, although they have the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out.

## **School closure procedure for events with prior warning**

### The Decision

The Head and Deputy Head make decision to close school (either to staff and pupils OR just pupils) with appropriate consultation with surveyors, engineers etc. This would probably take effect from the following day except in extreme circumstances.

### The Action

- Parents informed by text, closure information put on school website, Local radio stations informed and a closure notice put on school gates if possible.
- Staff will be informed of the decision as soon as practicable of the decision and their expectations for the closure day/s will be outlined. These could be in the form of:
  - Working from home on planning, marking, preparation, etc. OR
  - Coming into school and working on planning, marking, preparation etc. or any other priority as directed.
- School Business Manager to inform Caterers.

## **School closure procedure for events occurring without prior warning** **(also refer to the Critical Incident Plan)**

### The Decision

Headteacher and Deputy Head to make the decision to close the school (either to staff and pupils OR just pupils) in consultation with the Caretaker, local forecasts and assessment of weather conditions. The Health and Safety of pupils and staff being the main consideration in any such decision. This decision will unavoidably be at short notice but every effort will be made to make it as early as practicable.

### The Action

- Headteacher to contact local radio stations, Chair of Governors and Headteacher of the Infants School.
- Deputy Head to ring Caretaker, ICT Technician and School Business Manager, who sends text message to staff, parents and agencies.
- **Closure notices to be put on school gates if possible. Closure information to be put on school website by ICT Technician.**
- Chartwells to contact Catering staff.
- Those staff who work within walking distance of school, i.e. within a 1 mile radius, and are reasonably able to get to work should come into school, if possible, to deal with any children that have come to school by themselves, take telephone calls relating to the closure, make arrangements with parents/carers for the collection of children etc. This is in accordance with Derby City Council policy.
- Staff would be expected to stay in school until all the children have been collected (SLT would be contacted in this case for advice as regards to lunch provisions etc.)

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- Those staff who are unable to get to school should take the opportunity to work from home as far as this is possible.
- If staff are sent home due to unforeseen circumstances it is expected that they will focus on activities normally undertaken during their PPA time. As a consequence this may affect timetabled PPA time in school.