

Whingate Primary School



Severe Weather Policy

January 2025

Ratified by the School Council on _____

Ratified by the Governing Body on _____

Signature _____ Chair of Governors

Next Review Date: January 2028

Severe Weather

Severe weather is defined as heavy snowfalls, flooding, ice or fog, which render travel extremely hazardous.

The co-headteachers priority will be to keep the school open in severe weather and other emergency situations.

Safety on the site

In snow and ice, we will make every attempt to make a gritted pathway in the school grounds, to provide a safe walkway. This cannot always be possible if staff themselves are late to school. We cannot grit beyond the school gates.

Everyone is expected to use caution and common sense in looking after their own safety.

Introduction

The school will make every effort to remain open whenever possible.

The decision to close the school will be made by the co-headteachers. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply.

- Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep school running safely.
- Conditions on site are dangerous.
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel.

In the absence of the co-headteachers decisions regarding opening and closure will be made by the Assistant head teacher.

In the event of heavy snow before the school day starts

If it is decided that the school will open but the road conditions are difficult, parents should call the school to advise that they are likely to be late.

If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

You must keep the school office informed of your contact details / phone numbers. If you do not have access to a mobile phone, you must keep in contact with a parent at school who does.

You should check the website or phone school if you are unsure at any stage. Please be aware that we have over 440 pupils and 70 staff, phone lines will be busy.

The school

The co-headteachers will decide whether the school will open taking into account the conditions at the school and the ability of staff to get there.

If the co-headteacher decides the school will close, a notice will go out on the Class Dojo app and on the school website. Leeds City Council would also be notified who in turn would notify local radio. The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school recognises that there may be some families that are unable to “get to school” due to location or particular difficulties in the area in which they live.

In such cases parents should advise the co-headteachers of their particular circumstances so that she can make a decision on whether the absence should be authorised.

In the event of a heavy snowfall during the school day

If there is a heavy snowfall during the school day the co-headteachers will decide whether it is necessary to close the school.

The office will contact parents through our preferred communication method but text and if necessary telephone and ask parents to pick up their child/children from school as soon as possible.

The staff that live furthest from school will be permitted to leave at the earliest opportunity.

A skeleton staff will remain in school until all the children have been collected.

If a parent calls requesting, they pick up their child early due to the weather and the decision has been made not to close school, the co-headteachers will decide how the absence will be recorded.

Wet morning breaks

The co-headteachers will decide if the weather is bad enough for a wet break.

If a wet break is declared, no children must be left unsupervised. One member of staff should remain in their classroom to supervise break with all the children remaining in their own classes.

Wet lunchtimes

Wet lunchtimes are announced by the school bell being rang three times.

If a wet lunchtime is declared, the lunchtime assistants will supervise the children with the support of other school staff if necessary. No children must be left unsupervised.

Equality and Disability Access Implications

If there were to be any child in school with a disability or mobility impairment, consideration will be given to their specific needs and any potential impact of the weather conditions on their ability to get to school.

Unplanned School Closures

Reporting procedure for all schools and academies

This is the procedure for schools to follow in the event of an **unplanned** school closure
e.g. due to severe weather, industrial action or electrical/heating failure

This is a simple procedure on the Leeds Education Hub (LEH)
It applies to all schools and academies whatever their IT provider
<https://www.leedsforlearning.co.uk/Page/18914>

If you need access to the Hub or your previous invitation has timed out, please email
leedseducationhub@leeds.gov.uk and we will send you an invitation
N.B tokens are no longer required for this process

The Hub automatically sends closure information to local radio stations, the Leeds city council website, transport team, attendance team, health safety and wellbeing teams, governor support team and Leeds city council's passenger transport team
This does not replace the local notification arrangements you already have in place
e.g. texting parents, updating your school website

Checklist for Headteachers/Schools:

- Familiarise yourself with the procedure (see LEH screen-shots overleaf)
- Add the procedure to your severe weather emergency plan
- Keep a copy of these instructions in school and at home
- Check relevant colleagues in school have received instructions, understand the process and can access the Hub
- You can access the Hub from any computer, tablet or smartphone (as long as you know your log in details)

Schools have provided Children's Services with names and school email addresses of colleagues who may need to log a closure. If any of these details change please notify Children's Services on SchoolClosures@leeds.gov.uk.

N.B. Invitations do time out so if you need us to re-send the invitation, please email leedseducationhub@leeds.gov.uk and we can easily set you up again.

Should you experience difficulties with the system and are unable to log your own closure you can:

- Email SchoolClosures@leeds.gov.uk and include the name of the school, contact telephone number, date of closure and whether it is a full, partial, or student-only closure along with a brief description of the reasoning. We will then add this information to the school closure system
- Contact the Children's Services Governance & Partnership team (24 hours) on **07891 277245**

Once you have logged onto the Leeds Education Hub click on 'Leadership'

Leeds Education Hub

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Leadership

Unplanned School Closures



Logging your school closure here will automatically inform local radio stations, the Leeds city council website, and appropriate services.

Links

- 11-19 Off Site Learning
- BBC Education News
- Breeze

Welcome

Welcome to the Leadership area of Leeds Education Hub. This area aims to capture the documents, links and announcements that are most relevant for leaders working in schools, colleges, children's centres and other learning settings across Leeds. If you are a headteacher or a principal, a member of the senior leadership team, or a children's centre manager, you will find useful policies and guidance here to support you with your work.

Based on the model of the 4heads website, the design and content of this area will continue to be developed in response to your feedback. Please contact nicky.mamwell@leeds.gov.uk with your comments on what you'd like to see; and for technical and access issues contact leedseducationhub@leeds.gov.uk

News & Updates

Coffee shop at The Lighthouse School

Then click on 'Unplanned School Closures' (next to the snow cloud)

Leeds Education Hub

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Closure List

<input type="checkbox"/> School	Reason for Closure	Start Date	End Date	Comments
Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary School	Building Issue	04/01/2016 11:00	04/01/2016 11:00	entire school closed to pupils and staff
St Oswald's C of E Junior School	Building Issue	04/01/2016 09:00	05/01/2016 16:00	Partial closure - closed to years 4,5,6 un remain open for all other years.

+ Add new item

Click on
+ Add new item

Closure List - New Item



EDIT

Save	Cancel	Paste	Cut	Copy	Spelling
Commit		Clipboard			Spelling

School *

School or location to which closure applies.

Reason for Closure

What is the main reason for the closure.

Start Date *

End Date

Comments

Any additional notes relating to the closure.

The school closure form has five fields:

1. School name – select your school from the drop-down menu.
2. Reason for closure. Please choose from the drop-down menu:
 - Building issue
 - Incident
 - Industrial Action
 - Severe weather
 - Other
3. Date. It is now possible to show closures for a single day or a period of time. This information will appear on both the Hub and the Leeds city council website.
4. Open field for comments, for example partial closure, closed to everyone, closed to pupils, change to opening hours

Your information is automatically sent to local radio stations, the Leeds City Council website, transport team, attendance team, health safety and wellbeing teams, governor support team and Leeds city council's passenger transport team