



Emergency Closure Plan

1. Introduction

The decision to close is a local management one made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. Decisions should be based on a risk assessment, taking into consideration the conditions at the School and the health and safety of students and the staff.

An emergency is an unforeseen event, the effects of which could not reasonably have been anticipated, for example inclement weather, fire, flood, terrorist alert, gas leaks and fundamental services such as electricity, water and heating.

During School day closure

In the event of an **emergency closure** being necessary during the School day (i.e. if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether students can be returned home later in the day), the first action will be to ensure the safety of all those on the site by enacting the School evacuation procedures if appropriate.

The School will use the email the school website and Social Media Accounts to inform parents/carers; inform the Local Authority and local radio stations.

For emergency closures both during and outside of the school day the School will alert as many parents/carers as possible to prevent *students* arriving in School or to ensure that they are quickly and safely removed from the premises.

If students do arrive at the School they will be safely accommodated (assuming that the nature of the emergency makes this possible) until their parents/carers have been informed and arrangements have been made for the child's return to home or somewhere nominated by their parent/carer.

2. Sudden in school threat where evacuation is not possible

Imminent danger could come in many guises not just the most obvious such as a bomb threat. The possible dangers include:

- Bomb Threats – may be telephoned, written or directly spoken to staff
- Suspect Devices – found on premises – such as incendiary and explosive devices
- Explosion – e.g. gas main, boiler or some other external or internal cause
- Nearby major road or rail accident

- Chemical Cloud – e.g. an external explosion sends a cloud of poisonous gas into the air that drifts towards our building
- Flooding – inside the building or from outside sources – may be clean or foul water
- External Fire – may threaten our building from adjacent properties
- Invasion of premises – by unauthorised persons or those seeking to protest, etc. could give rise to danger of hostage taking for example

The information is most likely to come from the Police, but it may come from staff who have seen a potential danger through an office window (eg. a fire in an adjacent building, parent or local resident).

Assessing the threat

The Headteacher should:

- Receive and consider the available information
- Inform the Police / authorities if relevant. Assess the risk in conjunction with the Police, taking into account all known factors
- Follow Police instructions, or make our decisions where appropriate

The possible actions available will depend on the threat (as above). The choice depends on the assessment of the threat and the risk of injury which the situation presents. In exceptional circumstances, the police may insist that the premises are evacuated or that students and staff remain inside. Otherwise, the management of the situation and choice of action will rest with the Headteacher. Choices available are:

- To evacuate all people immediately. To warn and prepare staff for evacuation but wait until the situation is clearer. To do nothing (only when the risk is assessed as very low)

In all cases the need for evacuation and prompt action to safeguard students and staff must be weighed against the possibility that hasty, ill-considered action might actually have the opposite effect.

Managing and responding to the threat or danger

The response should be tailored to match the perceived threat. Rarely should immediate and wholesale evacuation be the answer. It is important that the reasons for this are understood because people may be led into danger, eg. directly past a suspect device or other danger.

Once the threat has been identified, a selective controlled evacuation may be necessary but not by use of the fire alarm because all control would then be lost.

The evacuation procedure and assembly points must remain flexible to allow the police and the Headteacher to decide the best way to evacuate the building. But suggested assembly point would be on the back field unless this area is at risk; in which case the alternative area would be the front field, opposite reception.

Where the police believe people to be in immediate and serious danger they will almost certainly order that the building is evacuated or that you stay inside until told otherwise.

Remember that risk assessment is a continuous and on-going process. Any significant changes, could introduce new hazards to affect your risk assessment. Real life incidents and planned drills may also identify hazards that are not adequately controlled. In any event it is good practice to review the risk assessment and supporting procedures at regular intervals – usually annually.

Recovering from the incident

After any serious incident people will be in shock and will need to be given time to recover. They may also need access to services via Hampshire County Council Children's Services and some counselling.

Most people find it helpful to talk to someone about any unusual event and to share experiences in order to return to normal again.

Whatever the circumstances, managers will need to carry out a de-brief when possible to determine what went well and what went wrong with planning and execution of the emergency evacuation.

Lessons learnt from the de-brief should help to inform revised risk assessments and any future emergency planning.

4. Staff Attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for some staff to get to and from work, the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work unless advised to the contrary by the Headteacher. The Headteacher, with the leadership team, will assess whether there are sufficient staff present in School for;

- School to be opened/remain open safely
- Curriculum delivery to priority groups (in order of priority Year 11, 10,9,8,7)

5. Clearance of Snow

Within the site, the School is responsible for snow clearance and the clearing of approach paths that it is able to keep clear. The site team will be tasked with laying salt and grit on arrival. The clearance of public roads is the responsibility of the Highways Department. If there is any question of students' safety being at risk, the School has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the students indoors. Paths will only be cleared if they can be kept clear.

6. Public Examinations

Public examinations will proceed in inclement weather if there are sufficient members of staff or invigilators present in the School to comply with the exam conditions as set out by the examination boards. If the conditions are such that to attempt to get into the School would be dangerous for the students and staff the exam session will not go ahead and the School will contact the appropriate examination board.

Any students who are unable to attend an examination session due to adverse weather conditions must contact the School at the earliest opportunity to inform them of their absence.

7. In the Event of a School Closure

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- The decision is ratified by the Chair of Governors or the Vice Chair
- The Local Authority is informed using the procedures as set out in "Emergency School Closures" (Hampshire County Council) and the information is passed to the local radio stations
- The website is updated
- The telephone tree is activated
- A closure message is available on the School answerphone
- Notices are placed at the entrances advising visitors, parents/carers, students that the School is closed
- The Headteacher is kept updated as to the condition on site.

The above tasks may be delegated by the Headteacher, although they have overall responsibility for ensuring that they are carried out.

The decision for the School to remain closed will be reviewed by the Headteacher on a daily basis and agreed and communicated as above.