

Severe Weather Procedures



1. RACI Responsible, Accountable, Cnsulted, Informed

21 November 2021		Policy - RACI Report	
Severe Weather Procedures			
ID:	L06	Area:	Health and Safety
Document Type:	Policy	Level:	School
Background:	Agreed protocols with Lyndhurst and Sprngfield		
Authorisation			
Authority:	Senior Leaders	Level:	Noted
Approval Level:	3	Date:	21/11/2021
Approval Guide:	No governor involvement – senior leaders will approve document – governor with responsibility for the area will be notified of the document and invited to read, as appropriate		
Life Span			
Live date:	21/11/2021	Days:	365
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RACI - Responsibility, Accountability, Consultation, Informed			
Governor lead oversight:	Darren Carroll		
Senior leader Accountability:	Andrew JOLLEY		
Leadership Accountability:	Catherine BROWN		
Operational Leadership:	Catherine BROWN		
Consulted:			
Consultation Details:			
Informed:	Academic Leaders, Academic Support, Administration, Families, Finance and HR, Governors, Midday Support, Pastoral Support, Premises, Senior Leadership, Teachers, Whole School Community, Wider Leadership Group		
Informed Details:	Leadership Report to Governors, School Newsletter, Staff Update, Website		
Storage and Communication			
System Location:	pl Level\Policies\Emergency Contingency Plan - Recommended\Severe		
Hard Copy Storage:	Head Teacher's Office, Reception Area, Staff Room		
Web Publication			
Web Site Location:	Website Requirement:	No	

<https://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Emergency+Closures&pid=196>

Additional Hyperlinks	
Hyperlink 1:	
Hyperlink 2:	
Hyperlink 3:	



2. School Vision

At Chesswood Junior School we inspire our whole school community to enjoy their learning adventure and have fun along the way. We ignite a passion for learning throughout the school community, securing excellence, empathy and equality in all that we do.

3. School Mission

We will strive to achieve the highest standards of academic achievement and behaviour within a vibrant, exciting learning environment so that all children leave this school with confidence and the ability to take advantage of future opportunities.

Policy Links

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies

Policy/Guidance / Poster	<u>System Link</u>
	<u>School Website Link or Weblink</u>

3.1. Core

3.2. General



Chesswood Junior School

Policy Master



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5. Introduction

During the winter – particularly January and February snowfall can disrupt school opening. We recognise this can cause uncertainties, difficulties and anxiety for many. Chesswood Junior school and Lyndhurst First School have developed the following guidance together to ensure the 'least worst' disruption to learning, families and employees, if and when we are faced with a decision to close our schools.

When snowfalls it can bring out the best and worst in people. Usually the school, particularly the head teacher is in a 'No Win' situation. We can assure all parents any decision will not be taken lightly and will be taken in the best interests of child and staff welfare. Please try to remember this when communicating with the school as we have in excess of 640 children and 90 staff to make arrangements for, usually when it is still dark outside; we are not on the school premises and we have to ensure we have sufficient staff in the right place at the right time.

Schools are some of the largest organisations in the country based on the number of people on the premises at one time. Unlike many other work places e.g. a shop, cinema, restaurant, small industrial unit or leisure centre if staff are delayed in their arrival, the business will open later without significant upset – if we do not have guaranteed sufficient staff here at 8:30a.m. for the number of children (something we also do not know on the day!) then children may not be properly supervised and at increased risk of harm – clearly this is not acceptable to any parent or professional. That said, we also take the view that children left at home alone on a snow day would typically be at higher risk than if they were on the school premises with fewer staff.

Ultimately, the Headteacher will take the decision regarding opening the school once conditions are known, not simply forecast – this would typically be on the morning of the school day. We will make every reasonable effort to remain open, because:

- Parents often need to get to work and some may be in specific frontline services i.e. police, ambulance, fire, hospital staff.
- Children are likely to be safer in a structured environment than some of the unstructured circumstances that may arise – roaring down a hill on a sledge with friends.

The decision to remain open will be largely underpinned by the Senior Leadership Team's ability to get into work safely and secure childcare for family, if required. If, in their opinion, they cannot then the school will remain closed. If one member of the team is able to open the school then it is highly likely a **limited community service** will be offered.



6. How can I help the school?

In the event that the school's open and running a limited community service, parents must note the following:

- Ensure we have your correct contact details – if they change make sure you write and tell us.
- We will be doing our best in uncertain, often complex and changing circumstances, please be positive and polite in any communication you have with staff.
- It is entirely the parents' responsibility to decide if it is safe for them to travel to school. We open as a community service therefore parents are not obliged to send their children and it will not affect their child's attendance record if they do not.
- Attendance registers will remain open until 10 a.m. to ensure punctuality does not lead to additional anxiety and risk during the school journey.
- Children should come to school with spare clothes – snowball throwing leads to wet clothes! (Children will, if they choose and it is considered safe to do so, be allowed outside to play in the snow – build snowmen, igloos and, maybe, if they are daft enough snow angels!)
- Where parents do keep their children at home for the day, they are asked to undertake one of the following:
 - Email to let us know: office@chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk or
 - Telephone the school between 10.30 and 12.00 noon – **Please DO NOT call before 10:30a.m.**
- If the snow starts whilst children are at school:
 - **Do not call to ask if we are closing early** as this will divert staff from other priorities – we will contact you, if required.
 - We will communicate using – schoolsbuddy, facebook, twitter and website



7. Picking Up and Dropping Off

	Drop Off	Pick Up
Open	Normal Arrangements	Normal Arrangements
Limited Community Service	Both entrances will be open – EXTRA CARE must be taken when walking from Ladydell road entrance as snow may not be cleared – if slippery walk on grass.	Both entrances will be open – EXTRA CARE must be taken when walking from Ladydell road entrance as snow may not be cleared – if slippery walk on grass.

8. In the case of a limited community service:

- Please provide your child with a packed lunch in case we have no cook!
- Normal lessons will be suspended for the day although the best possible learning activities will be secured with the staff available.
- Please provide warm clothes, hats, gloves and wellies (or suitable footwear) so those wishing to make snowmen and throw the odd snowball can do so!



9. Severe Weather Risk Assessment Process

1

- Severe Weather Warning received from Met Office - senior leaders confirm next steps with specific personnel, particularly for warning for the following day.

2

- Central Worthing based leader to contact head between 7 – 7.15am reporting weather conditions

3

- Head decision re:
- Open (Normal), Open (Community Service) or closed

4

- Head to instigate
- Telephone tree (Office manager - contact emergency team heads)
- Local schools alert – Lyndhurst & Springfield

5

- IT Manager to update website, telephone and social media
- Office Manager to send a message to whole school via SchoolsBuddy
- Office Manager Contact WSCC & Radio Stations
- Finance and HR Manager to contact Supply Agencies
- Site team to clear and grit main pathway to reception

6

- **If school closed:**
- Senior Leadership Team to consult to determine opening arrangements for following day by 3.00p.m.- Publish by 4p.m.; if uncertain then this will be reported to the school community and the decision will be made the following morning – as detailed above.



10. Closing the school during the school day

In the event that severe weather affects the school after the start of the school day the following procedure will be put in place:

- A decision will be taken on the severity of the weather both at the school site and in the locations staff actually live. The senior leadership team will determine whether, on the basis of the information available, the school should begin to close down.
- Staff will be consulted and sent home according to distance lived from the school site and the location of severe weather.
- Parents will be informed using website, email, facebook and twitter. The following message will be displayed:
 - Due to the weather conditions we request your child is collected prior to the end of the school day. Please go to your child's classroom so we can sign your child out. It is likely to be very busy and therefore we ask you to be patient with staff who will be doing their best under difficult circumstances. All clubs are cancelled for today. The school will remain open until the last child is collected – if you are unable to collect your child they will be warm, safe and well looked after until the end of the day - so don't panic, take your time!



11. Where Can I Find Out More?

Communication	Location	By When	Guidance Notes
Email – Schools buddy	N/A	8.00 a.m.	Email We will send an email via schools buddy to all parents registered for this service (if you receive the weekly communication you are registered for the email!) If it is or has been snowing and you do not get an email and are still concerned about opening please check the website, Twitter or Facebook
School Website	http://www.chesswood.w-sussex.sch.uk	7.45 a.m.	If the school is at risk of closing, the home page of the school website will be used to confirm opening status. 'SCHOOL IS OPEN – NORMAL PROCEDURES' . This message will only change if severe weather procedures are instigated and the school opening status alters to either: SCHOOL IS OPEN – LIMITED COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHOOL IS CLOSED
Telephone	01903 204141	7.45 a.m.	If lots of people call the school the phone lines will be busy. If you do not have access to email, or internet, please do not hesitate to call us.
Twitter	#@chesswoodschool	7.45 a.m.	
Facebook	facebook@chesswood.org.uk	7.45 a.m.	
West Sussex County Council	www.westsussex.gov.uk (Home › Living › Emergencies › Current incidents)	8:30 a.m.	Depending on the severity of the weather conditions and the speed of school closures notification on the West Sussex website may be delayed beyond 8:30 a.m.
BBC Sussex	http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcsussex	8:30 a.m.	Depending on the severity of the weather conditions and the speed of school closures notification on radio stations may be delayed beyond 8:30 a.m.

Staff Section – Not Public

12. Snow Protocol Letter to Parents

At the beginning of Autumn Term 2, the school will send the information below to parents to ensure they are fully aware of the procedure should inclement weather occur:

<Y:\School Level\Policies\Emergency Contingency Plan - Recommended\Severe Weather>

13. Snow protocol for staff

Initially, staff are guided to use the same information sources as parents for school closure.

Staff are placed into emergency contact groups. Typically, the line manager with responsibility for an individual member of staff will contact the staff member by 7:45a.m. to confirm school opening arrangements. Staff are provided with a document that share the contact details of the line manager in case of a severe weather emergency.



14. Communications

14.1. External contacts

You may wish to add in other important numbers specific to your establishment that you may need during an emergency, such as contact details to access your place of safety or those of key suppliers.

Organisation	Contact number
West Sussex County Council – to obtain emergency support from any of the following: Resilience and Emergencies Team Communications (Press office) Outdoor Educational Adviser Educational psychology / welfare service Human resources Occupational health School travel assistance Insurance & Risk Health and safety	In hours 8.00am–6.00pm Mon-Fri: 03330 142 903 01243-642104 Out of hours 6.00pm – 8.00am weekdays and all weekend: 01444 411738
School's usual bus company	Not Applicable
Off-site insurance emergency number Lifeline Plus (AIG)	+44 (0) 1273 552922
The Foreign Office (Links with British Consulates) www.fco.gov.uk	020 7008 1500
Local radio station	More radio 01903 221883
Met Office Weathercall (60p per minute from a UK landline) www.weathercall.co.uk	09068 500 400
The Samaritans www.samaritans.org	08457 909090
Teacher Support Network (Trained support and counsellors available 24hrs)	08000 562 561
Right Management Corecare (Independent counselling service subscribed to by WSCC)	0800 1116 387
Health Protection Agency	0844 967 0069
West Sussex County Council – to obtain day-to-day advice from any of the following: Resilience and Emergencies Team Communications (Press office) Outdoor Education Adviser Educational psychology / welfare service Human resources Occupational health School travel assistance Insurance & Risk Health and safety	03302-222400 03302-222002 03302-228344 01403-229591 01243-642666 01243-642666 03302-228344 03302-222721 01243-752025



14.2. *Radio Stations*

Station	Contact
Always quote DFE number 9382239	
BBC Sussex – Brighton base	01273 320428 (switchboard)

14.3. *Key telephone contact numbers.*

	Number
Main school number (answer message location).	01903 204141
Additional private line into school switchboard	01903 203115
Chesswood Absence Mobile (Diane Lycett)	07837 971769
WSCC Emergency contact number Daytime 8.00 – 6.00	01243 642104
WSCC Emergency contact number Out of hours	01444 411738



16. Policy Audit

Paste policy audit from school information database