

Headcorn Primary School

Severe Weather Plan For Parents & Staff



This plan was approved by the Head Teacher and supersedes any previous Severe Weather Policy. It has been developed by the School Business Manager, based on latest guidance from KCC. It will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier if needed, and any amendments will require the approval of the Head Teacher.

Approval Body	Head Teacher
Approval Date	9.10.17
Date for Review	October 2020 (3 years)
Signed - Head Teacher	S. Symonds

Headcorn Primary School

Severe Weather Plan

At Headcorn Primary School, our aim is always to ensure the health, safety and well being of the pupils and the staff, as well as any visitors on site.

Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service. As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.

We recognise that it is important that our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Headcorn Primary School will make every effort to prepare for severe weather and clearing access points whenever possible.

All staff are expected to make reasonable provision for arriving at school or showing they are doing appropriate work elsewhere. A staff planning form is completed annually. Staff should contact the Deputy Head Teacher (or School Business Manager in their absence) by 7.15 a.m. to enable informed decision making to take place.

There is an expectation that parents and staff will make their own decision as to whether it is safe to travel to school.

What are the decision criteria for closing the school?

Having completed a risk assessment, the Head Teacher will decide, with senior staff and in consultation with the Chair of Governors, whether it is safe to remain open in the event of extreme weather conditions. The Area Education Officer may be consulted for advice.

Account will be taken of the following:

- The safety of the site – can the site be reasonably made safe by clearing and salting? This may mean access by one entrance only.
- Is the heating sufficient?
- Is there drinking water and working toilet facilities?
- Are there sufficient staff able to get to school to keep the children safe? This does not necessarily mean that full teaching can take place.

As the day goes on the Head Teacher and senior staff will check the weather and decide if the school needs to close early to enable everyone to return home safely.

Should the school have to close after the start of the day then announcements will be made via the local radio stations, on the school website and by Parent Mail where available. A checklist will be kept in the office to ensure that all those who need to be contacted have been told of any closure.

The Head Teacher and/or senior staff will remain on site until all children have been collected or other arrangements have been made. All possible action will take place to try to remain open and to open again as soon as possible in the event of closure.

How will we let parents and staff know if the school is closed?

If the decision is made to close the school for health and safety reasons the Head or Deputy Head Teacher will update the status of the school on the Kent Closures website.

You can keep informed about closures or other information in the following ways:

- go online to see if the school is closed at the school's address (www.headcorn.kent.sch.uk) or at www.kentclosures.co.uk. You can also visit KMFM, BBC Radio Kent and Heart FM.
- listen to KMFM, BBC Radio Kent and Heart FM.
- receive a text and/or email by Parent Mail

What can parents do to help?

In the event of severe weather, it is unlikely that the catering company would be able to provide a cooked meal. Therefore all staff and pupils should bring a packed lunch.

Pupils should bring suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies etc. or even a change of clothing.

Parents who feel they may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up should put a backup plan in place.