

John Clare School
Policy for closure of school in adverse weather conditions.

This policy outlines the procedures that should be undertaken to ensure the Health and Safety of the children and staff of the school, in the event of extreme weather conditions. This policy is written in line with the LA/ DCSF guidance notes.

'All school staff should make every reasonable effort to reach school in adverse weather conditions,' however certain members of staff have substantial distances to travel from home to school and consideration is given to the nature of these journeys.'

If staff feel that it will be impossible or dangerous for them to attempt their journey, then they should inform the head teacher before 7.30am. Authorisation of any such absence is at the discretion of the head teacher. If no contact is made by this time, the head teacher will assume that individual members of staff are attempting to travel to school for the start of the school day.

'The head teacher and staff who have reached school should stay there if the physical conditions of the school are satisfactory, even if there are not many children in attendance. Any staff who are not required to teach, should use their time in preparatory work, in-service training etc.'

If the number of staff arriving at school is sufficient to cope with the number of pupils who have arrived then the school will remain open.

Closure of the school.

In the event of four or more teachers indicating their in-ability to arrive at school, then it will be impossible to ensure the Health & Safety of the children and it will be necessary to close the school. This is a decision, which will be made by the head teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. If the head teacher is unavailable, the decision will be made by the deputy head teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Parents have also been advised that in the event of the weather turning during the school day, they may come to collect the children from school. In such circumstances, individual parents / emergency contacts may also be approached to collect children. Sufficient staff will remain in school until all children have been safely returned to their homes / emergency contacts.

In cases of exceptional weather conditions, the LA may make a decision on whole school closure across the district. The information to close schools on an LA basis will be broadcast on local radio stations from 7.00am on the day concerned.

Communicating school closure

Once a decision has been made to close the school, the Head teacher should inform 'Heart FM (formerly Hereward FM) at the earliest possible opportunity, using prescribed code words. Parents have been advised to listen to these radio stations if they have any concerns over the possible closure of the school

Staff will be contacted via a telephone message.

The caretaker/ Headteacher will 'man' the school telephone to answer any calls made from parents who have not heard the radio announcements.

The head teacher will also inform the LA directly via email.