



Rich fields of learning



Butterknowle Primary School

Adverse Weather Conditions

Policy and Procedures

2020 – 2021

1.0 Introduction

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

1.2 The decision to close the school will be made by the Head Teacher and School Caretaker. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

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

2.0 In the event of heavy snow before school

2.1 Parents.

2.1.1 When school closure is a possibility parents should find out whether the school is open by:-

- Checking the school website, (see Appendix A for advice on the school website).
- Via text and email sent out by the school office before 8am.
- Check local authority website/facebook page for school closures to see if Butterknowle Primary School is in the list of the schools that are closed.

2.1.2 If parents assume that the school is closed, but it is actually open, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, (see paragraph. 2.3.2).

2.2 The School

2.2.1 The Head Teacher and School Caretaker will decide whether the school will open taking into account the conditions at the school and the ability of staff to get there.

2.2.2 If the Head Teacher decides the school will close she will:

- Contact all staff to officially inform them that school is closed and for how long,
- Contact the local authority and inform them of the school closure
- Update the school website accordingly
- Send an email message to staff and parents advising them of the closure. It is important for Parents to undertake the action at 2.1 above in case the text system is slow due to the number of schools trying to use it.

2.2.3 The school fully appreciates that in bad weather children may arrive later than usual.

2.2.5 If there are adverse weather conditions in the morning the Head Teacher can allow parents to bring their children into the main hall to wait for school to begin at 8.45am

2.3 Exceptional Circumstances

2.3.1 The School recognises that there may be cases where families are “cut off” due to particular difficulties in the area in which they live.

2.3.2 In such cases parents should advise the Head Teacher of their particular circumstances so he can justify to the Local Authority why the absence should be authorised.

2.4 Staff

2.4.1 In all circumstances, employees are expected to make a genuine and reasonable effort to get into work during periods of adverse weather, adapting their means of transport if necessary.

2.4.2 Employees must inform the Headteacher of their expected time of arrival to assist with internal arrangements and should keep the school informed as the situation develops.

2.4.3 If it is not possible for an employee to attend their normal place of work because of the adverse weather conditions, the employee must notify the Headteacher as soon as possible, and no later than an hour after their normal starting time. If the Headteacher is not available, then employees should contact the school office or Deputy Head.

2.4.4 It is important that the employee discusses and exhaust all alternative options with the Headteacher before agreeing actions for the day, for example:

- Reporting to the nearest DCC school and be available for work at that establishment as required by the Headteacher (where appropriate)
- Working from home (where appropriate)

If an employee is unable to attend work during periods of adverse weather due to childcare or caring responsibilities, they will be expected to take the time off as unpaid leave or any other agreed process as determined with the Headteacher on a case by case basis.

(See Appendix B for local authority guidance)

3.0 In the event of heavy snowfall during the school day

3.1 If there is heavy snowfall during the school day the Head Teacher will decide whether it is necessary to close the school.

3.2 The Office will contact parents and ask that they pick their child/children up from school as soon as possible.

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

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

3.5 If a parent rings requesting they pick their child up early due to the weather, and the decision has not been made to close the school, these requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher.

4.0 Equality Implications There are none associated with this policy.

Appendix A: Information on school website

If possible we will endeavour to keep the school open during adverse weather conditions. In the event of school closure the following procedures will be followed:

- At 7am – Mrs C Carr, Head teacher (or Deputy Headteacher) and Neil Widdas, school caretaker will assess the weather situation, school health and safety and travel conditions and make a decision.
- Between 7.30 am and 8.00am, if it is decided that the school will not open, the school closure will be posted on the 'News Feed' on the front page of our school website. We will send out emails and a text message to all parents. Parents are encouraged ***not to phone school*** unless there is no alternative as we only have one telephone line and this must be kept clear for emergency calls only.

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions during the school day, we will:

- Contact parents to collect pupils where possible.
- Send staff home if travel conditions deteriorate and staff may experience difficulties getting home.
- At least two members of staff will remain on school site until last child is collected.

Appendix B: Attached noted from Durham County Council on Adverse Weather Guidance