

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School

Policy for Emergency School Closures

(Revised January 2013)

Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School shares the LA commitment to ensuring that school is open to the public for the statutory 190 days per year. The following arrangements recognise that there are times when emergency closures may be necessary due to exceptional circumstances affecting health and safety:

- Loss of essential services – such as heating or prolonged cut in gas, electricity or water supply
- Severe weather conditions – affecting safety on site
- Additional guidance regarding a Human Influenza Pandemic

Procedure for Emergency Closures

The best interests of pupils are paramount at all times, followed by consideration of individual staff and public safety. Most children live locally and will not be subject to special transport difficulties. However, early closure may result due to:

- Local conditions, eg increasing dangers to children as pavement/road conditions deteriorate
- Public Interest – travel home before conditions become impossible. Care of employees family
- Family interest as staff wish to collect children
- Site conditions eg cold building, dangerous pathways, unsafe building

Early Closure

School will not formally close at other times unless there is immediate threat to personal safety eg gas leak. There will be teaching staff on the premises until normal school closing time.

However:

- Parents/carers are allowed to collect children early
- High School pupils are allowed to collect their younger siblings
- The headteacher will seek to release staff early in the interests of personal/public safety. Priorities will be decided on the basis of personal circumstances
- The headteacher and school administrator will encourage parents to spread the news of worsening conditions and early collection
- All parents with e-mail addresses will also be circulated with this information
- Information will be posted on the school website

Early Staff Release

Pupils remaining in school will assemble in the school hall in the care of the headteacher if the class teacher has left early.

- They will either stay in the hall if for not more than 45 minutes
- Be distributed among remaining staff if for more than 45 minutes
- Common sense shall prevail at all times!

Teachers leaving early will first:

- Ascertain any special circumstances the pupils may face and hand a record of these to the headteacher
- Ensure that the classroom is cleared and tidy before taking children to the hall

The school telephone should be permanently attended and all calls should be brief. The kitchen telephone should be used for outgoing calls if possible so that the main line remains free for incoming calls.

Monitoring Pupil Release

Class teachers and the administrator should keep a record of early leavers.

Emergency closures outside school session times

Contact round robin

- Headteacher to decide in consultation with others in Hinchliffe Mill eg Caretaker, Deputy Headteacher, School Business Manager if possible whether closure should take place
- At this point it will be on the school; website – from 07.30 at the latest
- All staff should use the website as their first point of reference
- In severe weather a message of likely intent will be posted in the evening for the following day but no decision made until that day
- Headteacher to inform Caretaker, Chair of Governors, Administrator, LA who will inform local radio and news services
- A group text call to be sent or
 - Headteacher to start chain of calls to all teaching staff
Rowan, Holly, Beech, Cherry, PPA staff if applicable
 - Administrator to start chain of calls to all support staff
Admin, Holly CSA, Cherry CSA, Beech CSA1 (DH), Beech CSA2 (LF),
Rowan CSA, Rowan SNA (JJ), CSA (HL)
If the next in the chain is unavailable go on to the next one on the list.
- Head also to inform the Kitchen and Senior Lunchtime Supervisor
- Teachers are also to inform any other person that they may have attached to their class at that time.
- A notice to be placed on the school gates
School closed – children come into school if no one is at home
- Gate to be manned by two staff as soon as possible

On arrival:

- Teachers to be deployed to pupil groups as needed
- Parents contacted if possible to collect the children
- Teachers to undertake duties as arranged to work on site/at home on school related work - planning, assessment, preparation etc.

Teachers should make their best efforts to attend with regard to personal and public safety.

This Policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis.

Additional – Human Influenza Pandemic

Guidelines regarding closure due to a Human Influenza Pandemic were issued in September 2006 and referred to procedures to be followed in Early Years settings should there be such an outbreak.

Points to consider related to Hinchliffe Mill Junior and Infant School are:

- Managers would make the final decision on whether to close a setting – this would be the decision of the Headteacher, who would consult with the Local Authority before making this decision
- Children are highly efficient spreaders of respiratory infections and closing school might reduce the number of children affected
- Any government advice given at the time of a specific outbreak would be followed
- If the staff:pupil ratio at the school was affected we would have to give serious consideration to closure as it is unlikely that supply teachers would be willing to cover in this situation
- Families may be reluctant to send their children to school if they fear that they will be infected in that situation
- If numbers reduce significantly because of this then it may be possible to continue to teach them in reorganised units
- Staff may not wish to risk carrying the infection to their own homes and families where members may be particularly vulnerable to the infection eg the elderly and babies
- Keep sick children separate from others until they can be collected
- Ensure that children are kept at home if they are showing signs of infection
- Measures to minimise the risk of infection will need to be in place
Hand washing disposal of tissues etc

All staff should be familiar with these guidelines.