

Lee Royd Nursery School



Unavoidable School closure 2019 - 2020

Circumstances may arise from time to time when it is necessary for the Head teacher to temporarily close or partly close the school. We will follow The Unavoidable School Closure Guidelines provided by Liaison and Compliance Team.

Legal Position

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 38, provides that the conduct of the school shall be under the direction of the Governing Body and that the Head teacher is responsible for the management of the school. The Local Authority (LA) also has certain responsibilities in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. The position is more complex in Voluntary Aided schools where the Governors, in consultation with the appropriate Diocesan/Church Authorities, have further specific responsibilities. There is, therefore, a shared responsibility between the Head teacher and the Governing Body.

For practical purposes, however, a decision to close or partly close the school lies with the Head teacher. The decision to close should take into account that this is a shared responsibility to be exercised wherever possible after consultation with the various parties. The Head teacher must secure the agreement of the Chairman of the Governors, or in their absence the Vice-Chairman, unless, owing to the emergency nature of the situation or for any other compelling reason, such agreement cannot be secured. If after due consideration the school is deemed to be unfit to receive pupils, then it would clearly not be possible for the school to meet as intended. Assuming the Head teacher acted reasonably, this should not place the Governors or the LA in any breach of their obligations.

What the Head teacher will do

- Establish the nature of the problem
- Consider whether the whole of, or part of, the school should close.
- Consult with the Chair/Vice Chair of Governors, Liaison and Compliance team.
- Take immediate necessary action upon closure
- Arrange necessary follow-up action

Establish the Nature of the Problem

Whatever the possible reason for unavoidable closure, the Head teacher should consult as quickly as possible with the appropriate County Council Officer, and, as appropriate, Diocesan/Church Authority representative. Advice should be sought to ascertain whether the problem can be resolved, avoiding closure, or to ensure that any closure is as brief as possible.

Where there is any doubt concerning the health and safety of pupils and staff, then the Head teacher will err on the side of caution.

In the event of a major incident, the LA should be contacted. A 24 hour facility is available and the LA Officer Contact telephone numbers are at the back of the policy

Possible Reasons for Closure

It is not the purpose of this policy guidelines to give a full and comprehensive list of possible reasons for closure but they fall into the following main and sometimes inter-related categories as recommended by the LA:

Premises Related Issues

- Breakdown of equipment
- No electricity
- Heating failure
- Fire
- Flood
- Major damage/vandalism
- Safety
- Moving
- Contractual delays

Environmental Health

- Epidemics
- Pollution
- No water

Emergencies

- Adverse weather
- Bomb alert
- Police action

Personnel

- Excessive staff absence
- Industrial action
- Funerals
- Post accident/Incident trauma

Possible Alternatives to Closure

- Premises breakdown, fire, flood or major damage
- Failure to complete maintenance work/capital building project
- Safety e.g. asbestos, gas leak, oil spillage
- Unplanned events

Immediate Necessary Action Upon Closure

Notification

- Contact Liaison and Compliance Team 01772 531 808 lct@lancashire.gov.uk
- Notice on school gates
- Local radio. Provide School name, district number, password
- Telephone calls if required
- Letter if advanced knowledge.

Who to inform

- Parents
- Chair of Governors
- Liaison and Compliance Team
- Police (if appropriate)

Necessary Follow up Action

Formal report to the Governing Body detailing the circumstances.
Complete **Form NUC1** and return via the Schools Portal to Liaison and Compliance team.

Staff Guidance

In the event of school closure, or it is unsafe to travel due to severe weather conditions, staff will be notified by telephone. If staff cannot safely get into school then they must notify school or Mrs Smith and can complete school work at home e.g. appropriate lesson planning, notes on the children etc.

Date policy reviewed 19/09/2019

to be reviewed September 2020