



Sutton Oak C.E Primary School

Goodban Street, Sutton, St Helens, WA9 3QD

Unavoidable Closure

September 2023



Believe, Achieve and Grow Together

Sutton Oak C.E Primary School

Unavoidable School Closure Guidance

Introduction

There may be occasions when it is necessary for the school to close temporarily in the interests of health and safety to pupils and staff. In most cases this will be as a result of problems relating to the school building or heating, or because of severe weather conditions. It is important to keep the necessity to close to a minimum in order to reduce the number of pupil days lost to education.

Responsibility for School Closure

The responsibility to close a school lies with the Head teacher (or most senior teacher if he is not available) in consultation, where possible, with the chair of governors.

Procedure to be followed

The school is to operate normally whenever possible and only resort to closure or early closure in exceptional circumstances when conditions are such that the health and safety of pupils and staff are at risk. Closure for any other purpose is not acceptable

A decision to close the school in the case of severe weather should be made following consideration of reports/ warnings from the appropriate authorities (eg travel warnings from police or met office warnings) In the case of a building matter or heating problem which has health and safety implications, consideration should be given to whether a partial closure rather than a full closure could be achieved in order to minimise disruption to education. Further contingencies may be required if the closure is to be lengthy (eg off-site education)

In considering closure for health and safety reasons, the head teacher should, where possible, seek guidance from the appropriate officer in the local authority. The role of the local authority is to give clear guidance; however the final decision rests with the head teacher and/ or the governing body.

Once a decision to close is made the head teacher should advise the local authority and keep in touch with the local authority until the school is fully re-opened.

In the event of extended closure the school will provide work for pupils to do at home. The head teacher will ensure that parents know how any decision relating to the closure will be notified to them.

Once a decision to not open or to close early is made every effort will be made to inform parents/ carers and other agencies of the decision at the earliest opportunity using the school's text service, email and school website. The local authority will be contacted to arrange contact with local radio stations.

Staff attendance

Staff are expected to attend for work in the normal way during severe weather conditions. If as a result of the conditions staff members are unable to get to work the head teacher must be informed and the staff member is then expected to work from home.

Staff who arrive late as a result of adverse conditions will not lose pay or be required to make up lost time Disabled employees with mobility problems should not attempt to come to work and will not lose pay or be required to make up lost time.

Where school is closed to both pupils and staff, time off will be with pay

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In the case of severe weather, where possible, the most senior teacher available should assume responsibility for supervision if a significant number of teaching staff fail to arrive in school on time. Teachers on site should inform parents and children who do arrive at the school of the situation and supervise any pupils who arrive unaccompanied until such time as they can be collected or returned home safely to a responsible adult.

Staff must attend in other closure circumstances and, where necessary, work off site. If staff are released by the head teacher to go home they are expected to work from home.

Telephone numbers

St Helens emergency out of hours 01744 676728 (Security)

St Helens Council press office 01744 676166

Property Services 01744 671867/9

St Helens Council Health & Safety Team 01744 671722

General telephone numbers

Fire and Rescue Service 999

Local police 0151 777 6052

Gas - 0800111999

Electricity - 08452727999

Water - 08457462200

Local radio: contact Press

Signed: Alice Edgerton (Chair of Governors)

Review Date: September 2025