

HELSEBY HIGH SCHOOL

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS PROCEDURE

START OF SCHOOL DAY

In the event of severe weather conditions, as indeed any other emergency, we may need to close the school. This is a decision that can often only be made early in the morning. In making this decision there is a need to balance the health and safety risks of pupils and staff making hazardous journeys against the loss of a school day and the fact that the bus companies often decide themselves not to undertake the services because of their own risk assessment.

The School understands that closure can inconvenience parents/carers in making alternative arrangements. It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible; however, the safety of all pupils, parents and staff remains paramount.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Headteacher. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. Insufficient staff are able to travel in to keep the school running safely.
2. Conditions on site are considered too dangerous for the safety of pupils and staff e.g.
 - approaches and pathways are icy and unsafe
 - heating systems fail to meet minimum requirements
 - water supply is cut off
3. Conditions are considered to be, or are anticipated to later become, too hazardous for travel.

If the school is to close, a decision will be made by 7:15 am and the following will apply:

1. Closure notice will be posted on the school website as soon as possible and, it is hoped, no later than 7:30 am.
2. We will ask for the closure will be reported on local radio (as early as possible in the morning).
 - Dee 106.3
 - Radio City 96.7
 - Radio Merseyside 95.8
3. A group text will be sent from school to all parents.
4. An all staff email will be sent.
5. Notification will be posted on the school's website.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to opening during adverse weather conditions as early as possible, as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty places considerable difficulties upon parents/carers. However, parents/carers are expected to check the website and or make

themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is clear that closure is a possibility.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal (parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed).

CLOSURE DURING SCHOOL DAY

The Headteacher may decide that early closure is necessary to safeguard the health and welfare of staff and pupils. Bus companies might trigger a partial early closure if they decide the buses must come early for health and safety reasons.

The Headteacher will make such a decision after consulting:

- The Highways Department
- Bus companies
- Weather forecasting office
- Senior Leadership Team
- Critical Incident procedure

Informing parents/carers of early closure:

- Notice will be posted on the school and Local Authority websites
- Local radio stations will be informed
- A general text will be sent to all parents
- Pupils with the means will be allowed to contact a responsible adult

Procedure

1. All pupils should remain in normal lessons until informed otherwise.
2. On instruction from the Senior Leadership Team, all pupils will return to form base with Form Tutors.
3. Pupils will be dismissed from school in groups by Form Tutors:
 - Pupils travelling by bus (when it is confirmed the bus has arrived)
 - Pupils able to walk home or to a relative/nominated friend
 - Pupils being collected (when it is confirmed pick up has arrived)
4. Pupils who have no transport or who cannot confirm they have the consent of a responsible adult should be sent to the Hall or other designated large space, e.g. Dining Hall, Break out space.

The Headteacher will authorise the early departure of staff on the following basis:

1. Staff with parental/carer responsibilities.
2. Staff with long or difficult journeys.
3. Staff who have to travel by car.
4. Staff who live locally and could walk.

Emergency Team

To supervise pupils in the Hall or other designated space, who have to wait until normal closing time for transport, or pupils who are stranded, the Headteacher will designate an Emergency Team from those staff who live close and could walk home. This team will be drawn from teaching, site, administrative and technical staff and be sufficient in number and expertise to supervise the pupils until they can be released.

The Emergency Team will have the means to:

- Contact parents/carers and the Emergency Services
- Supervise and engage the pupils until release
- Provide basic first aid and refreshments if necessary