

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 There may be occasions when it is necessary for Barnton Community Nursery and Primary 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.
- 1.2 Such a temporary, unavoidable closure does not currently count against the minimum requirement for a school to be open for a minimum number of sessions each year (190 days/380 sessions). However, it is important to keep the necessity to close to a minimum in order to reduce the number of pupil days lost to education.

2. Responsibility for School Closure

- 2.1 The power to close schools for emergency reasons rests with the Local Governing Body who delegate this function to the Headteacher.

3. Procedures

- 3.1 Barnton Community Nursery and Primary School will 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.
- 3.2 The decision whether or not to close the school to pupils is to be delegated to the Headteacher, and when possible to the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Local Governing Body.
- 3.3 A decision to close the school in the case of severe weather is made following consideration of reports/warnings from the appropriate authorities (e.g. travel warnings from local police).
- 3.4 In the case of a building matter or heating problem which has health and safety implications, consideration will be given to whether a part closure rather than a full closure could be achieved in order to minimise disruption to education. Further contingency measures may be required if the closure is to be lengthy (e.g. offsite education).
- 3.5 In considering closure for health and safety reasons, the Headteacher will, where possible, seek guidance from the appropriate external agencies. The role of the external agencies is to offer clear guidance. However, the final decision rests with the Headteacher. Once a decision is made to close, the Headteacher will advise the Local Governing Body and board of

Trustees. The Headteacher will remain in contact with the stakeholders until such time as the school is fully reopened.

- 3.6 If the Headteacher feels it necessary, after due consideration, not to open the school, or to close the school early, every effort will be made to inform parents/carers and other agencies of the decision at the earliest opportunity. The School will also ensure that all minibus and/or taxi operators to transport pupils to and from school are informed of the closure.
- 3.7 The Headteacher will notify parents and carers of School closure through ParentPay – a text messaging service, or by telephone calls, if ParentPay cannot be used. The Headteacher will also notify the Children’s Centre. Notification of closure will also be put on the School Website and when it is proposed to make use of local radio stations, parents will be given appropriate details.
- 3.8 If school continues to be closed after the first day then this information will be carried on local radio and a notification will be posted on the School Website.

4. Staff Attendance

- 4.1 Unless told otherwise by the Headteacher, staff are expected to attend work in the normal way during severe weather conditions. Staff who arrive late as a result of adverse weather conditions will not lose pay or be required to make up lost time.
- 4.2 If the School closure is due to exceptional circumstances when conditions are such that the health and safety of staff are at risk, then staff will be instructed by the Headteacher to work from home. Staff must remain contactable during this time and may be asked to attend school if necessary.

5. Policy Review

- 5.1 This policy was reviewed, after consulting relevant information and documentation from the DCFS and consultation with all stakeholders. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Local Governing Body, who will review it every year, in line with our Policy Review Cycle, unless there are significant changes and therefore a need to review it sooner.

Approved by:

**Julie Brandreth
Chair of LGB**

**Alison Lawson
Headteacher**

Date: **21/08/2020**