



Emergency planning during the winter months - reminder

27 Nov 2019

During severe weather conditions, such as flooding or snow, you should keep your school or early years setting open for as many children as possible.

However, it might be necessary to close temporarily due to inaccessibility or risk of injury. It is your **statutory duty** to report you school closure to Ealing LA.

You should do all you can to reopen as soon as possible.

If the weather conditions has significantly affected your school or early years setting, you should contact Steve Dunham (details below).

School attendance statistics

Where children are unable to get to school due to severe weather conditions, you can mark them in the register using absence code 'Y'. This means that their absence won't affect your school's attendance figures.

However, if you believe that a child could have got to school, their absence should be recorded as unauthorised using code 'O'.

Contact the attendance service (related services below) if you have any queries.

Staff absence

If some of your teachers can't get to work, you should be flexible by, for example:

- Bringing together groups and classes with teachers and support staff working together
- Using other school staff or volunteers to provide cover supervision or oversee alternative activities
- Re-arranging the curriculum.

Reception and other infant classes (children aged 5, 6 or 7) should normally be groups of 30 or fewer, but having more than 30 in one class due to temporary exceptional circumstances is not a reason to close the school or the class.

Report your school closure

It is a statutory requirement to inform the local authority, if you decide to close your school, e.g. due to severe weather conditions.

Report any school closures to schools incidents desk:

Mobile: 07940 546 263

Email: dunhams@ealing.gov.uk

And confirm:

- Your school's name
- Name of person leaving message
- Contact telephone number
- Reason for school's closure
- Expected date/time to re-open.

Practical guidance during the winter months

- Monitor the cold weather alerts and weather forecasts of the Met Office
- Have plenty of salt and sand on site and scatter sand and salt mixtures on snow, sleet or ice in busy areas
- When the weather improves, sweep up the mixture and dry the doormats
- Consider restricting access to essential areas during severe weather
- Put up temporary signs about the restrictions

- Wet and slippery indoor areas, especially entrances, should be mopped regularly
- Each school should have a bad weather plan with these main points:
 - Have plenty of bottled drinking water, in case drinking water pipes freeze
 - Make sure your electricity supply can cope with extra heating and other needs
 - Be able to provide hot drinks and food if the kitchen is out of action
 - Know where all gas, water and electricity shut-off points are
 - Contact the school support surveyor for help with preparations
 - Have clear written procedures for closing the school and informing parents and pupils/students
 - Have clear written procedures to protect the welfare and health of everyone likely to be in school, for example, schools may wish to tell all parents that children with flu should not attend school
 - Have cover arrangements for staff shortages
 - Set up emergency communications with parents (phone numbers, emails, website news, notice boards, and so on)
 - Arrange funding/budgeting for increased costs such as food, fuel, transport and supply staff.

Related content

[Emergency planning and response \(GOV.UK\)](#) - How schools and other educational settings should plan for and deal with emergencies, including severe weather and floods.

[Code of practice \(COPs\) and risk assessment - Thermal comfort](#)

[Further action by school in event of closure decision](#)

[Infection and contagious diseases and immunisation](#)

Related content

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Related Services

[Corporate health and safety SLA 2019/20](#)

[School attendance service 2019/20](#)

[Property services 2019/20](#)

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