

School Closure Alerts (particularly in ‘adverse weather’)

This guidance is written to clarify the school’s position in the event of adverse / severe weather so that you are clear about our expectations and routines.

As a general rule, you can assume that Lydgate Junior School will be open, and remain open, even during times of adverse weather. We have been able to do so continually for at least the last ten winters and so expect to do so this winter unless some significant degradation occurs to site, services or staffing.

We will do this in order to provide continuity of education for the children, and so parents can have confidence in being able to continue with their daily plans and work commitments.

We give the safety of our whole school community the greatest priority and accord it serious consideration at such times. We do not open without careful reflection and survey of site conditions, sufficient staffing and proper services.

The vast majority of our school staff live fairly close to school and so can and do get in on time even on days with poor or challenging weather conditions. It may be that some of our staff has difficulty in reaching us on time for the start of the school day: if this happens, it may result in some disruption to the normal timetable. Staff do, however, make every reasonable effort to be here on time (as parents and pupils do). We have never in the last ten years had a class without a member of staff with them at the beginning of the day. Our long experience tells us that we will almost certainly be able to open.

If there is a decision NOT to open, or to open later than normal, we will text parents, post on the school [website](#) and on the council website (opt in to receive alerts [here](#)) and use local radio. The city council website is the one central information point for school closures.

If there is no announcement of closure, parents / carers should assume school is open as normal.

Please do not telephone school to find out if we are open as it ties up a member of staff when we need to be planning and preparing for the day. You do not need to telephone to ask – we either will not have made a decision at that point (hence no announcement) or we have decided to open as normal. Be assured that we will inform you if we do have to close or not open as usual.

Many families have children at more than one school. The other school might make a different decision about opening to us – maybe they will open later. You might decide it is not practical to get to both schools for different start times and so only make one journey. A late arrival here will be understood (even though it will be marked as ‘late’).

We do understand that some parents, especially those who do not live within easy walking distance, may feel that it is unsafe to try to get children to school. In these situations, please make your own decision with the best interests of your child in mind. Whatever that decision is, we will be supportive. However, all pupil absence will be recorded as such. In line with the Attendance Policy a decision about authorising absence is made by the Headteacher.

Please ring (0114 2669500) or email enquiries@lydgate-jun.sheffield.sch.uk to let us know about absence.

Other than in highly exceptional circumstances school will not close during the course of the school day. There will always be supervision of children until the end of the normal school day. We would never allow children to go home without clear parental consent, which includes going with another parent / carer, unless we have specific agreement.

We would like all children to leave at the normal end of school time, where possible. Please only consider collecting them early if you are unable to ensure your child is collected safely at the normal time.

If you are going to be late, or are unable to make arrangements for someone else to collect, please telephone to let us know and we will obviously provide safe accommodation inside school until you arrive.

We will do our best to enable the children to play in the snow if it is safe. The children are asked not to make slides on snow or ice in the playground, but our intention will be to go outside, if only for a portion of the breaks. We ask, therefore, that you send your child appropriately dressed to play out in the snow (perhaps even provide a change of clothes) and that they have waterproof footwear and a coat.

We may let the children out when there is ice on the playground; we may cordon off areas deemed unfit to use, we will provide necessary additional supervision and we will ask the children to be extra careful.

We hope that the children can enjoy the snow while ensuring that their education is not disrupted.

SR Jones

December 2018