



School Closure Policy

Updated: May 2026
To be reviewed: May 2028
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Farndon Primary School

**EQUALITY SCHEME
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
FORCED SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY**

Staff / Committee involved in development:	Health Safety Committee in L + M; Headteacher	
For use by:	Staff, Governors and Parent/Carers	
This policy relates to statutory guidance:	Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014	
Key related Farndon Policies:	Bad Weather Policy Gritting policy / plan	
Equality Impact Assessment: Does this document impact on any of the following groups? If YES, state positive or negative impact, and complete an Equality Impact Assessment Form or action plan, and attach.		
Groups:	Yes/ No	Positive/Negative impact
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender	No	
Age	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religious and Belief	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	No	
Pregnancy & Maternity	No	
Other	No	
Reviewed by	Headteacher	
Agreed by	Health and Safety Link Gov	
Next Policy review date	May 2028	
A copy of this form, and any related impact assessment form or action plan must be sent to the school office		

Introduction

Any closure of our school is a most unusual occurrence and each closure is unique, making forward planning complex.

Possible reasons for why the school would need to close are:

- Adverse weather conditions
- Building defects (including heating / plumbing / electrical defects/ inadvertent exposure of asbestos/ positive Legionella sample)
- Critical Incidents
- Infectious disease or widespread illness (part of school, regional or national lockdown)

It will be the Headteacher that will take any decision to:

a) Close the school during the school day.

or

b) Not to open the school.

In the case of infectious illness/disease the Headteacher may be directed to close the school by the Health Authority.

Closure Due to Severe Weather

The decision to close a school will rest with the Headteacher and will be based on the following:

- 1) Local weather forecast of present conditions and the outlook for the rest of the day.
- 2) Observations of on-the-spot conditions from staff that live in the vicinity of the school.
- 3) Speak to teaching staff as to whether they are able to travel safely to school.
- 4) Check with other cluster schools to see what they are doing.

NB: When radio stations advise people to avoid non-essential travel; it is directed at travel that could quite easily be deferred or cancelled altogether. It does not mean that travel to school or work is unnecessary.

A decision will be made based on the above and the following put into effect:

- i. The Headteacher will close the school and inform the Local Authority. This information will be made available to parents via the Cheshire West website:
<http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=11614> The local radio stations monitor the website and will broadcast details of the closure. We advise staff and parents to listen out for school closure information on the local radio.
- ii. Staff are contacted via the staff telephone tree, informing them of the closure and that they are not required to attend and the expected duration of the closure. All staff should keep the school closure telephone tree with them and ensure they contact the people they are responsible for. Failure to contact a colleague should be reported back to the Headteacher. Contract staff that are due in will also be contacted.
- iii. The school will try and post notices on the entrances to the school to inform parents and pupils of the closure.
- iv. Information of the closure will be placed as an emergency message on the school's website,

giving details on the reason for the closure and when it may reopen.

- v. A written response in a newsletter will be provided for parents after re-opening providing full details of the reasons for the school closure and action taken.

Staff attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, all staff are expected to come in unless they have permission to be away from work for other reasons. Transport problems, which may be caused by snow or other factors, do not alter that obligation. This obligation applies equally to all staff and is not affected by where they live.

When adverse weather conditions make travelling difficult or dangerous, staff should conduct their own risk assessment and inform the headteacher. The headteacher may then authorise staff not to attend school.

Closure during the school day due to severe weather

Where the decision is taken to close the school during the day, pupils should not be sent home unless the Headteacher is confident of their ability to make the journey safely, gain access to their homes and be safe there. The school requires an adult to collect the child from school, unless the parent has given permission to us for their child to walk home and they will be waiting for them. Parents may nominate an adult to collect their child, but the school must be notified.

If parents have not previously been advised that the school is closing, pupils may be at risk. The school must ensure that all pupils will be safe if they are sent home early.

Staff will remain in school until the end of the school day, unless the Headteacher decides otherwise.

Closure For Buildings' Defects

There are a number of building issues that might result in consideration being given to closure of a school or part of it.

- Structural defects
- Mechanical services – heating issues, water supply
- Electrical services – interruption of supply
- Inadvertent exposure to asbestos
- Positive Legionella sample
- Fire damage
- Delay in completion of planned work

In all cases it is essential that the local authority and its appointed maintenance consultants are informed immediately of any such problem. Assistance will be available to help resolve such issues and advice offered about whether or not an establishment needs to close. It may be possible to implement temporary solutions or reduce the impact to limited areas of a building. The local authority would seek assurances that remedial work was completed as quickly as possible to keep disruption to a minimum.

Closure during the school day

In the case of closing the school during the school day, the decision will be taken only in the most exceptional of circumstances and then the following implemented:

- i. A letter will be provided for all parents briefly explaining the reasons for and time of closure together, if possible, with details of when the school will reopen.

ii. All pupils are only released to an adult who has permission to collect the child or they can walk home if the school has permission for them to do so by their parent. Pupils who cannot go home will remain in school (if possible) until they can be collected.

If parents have not previously been advised that the school is closing, pupils may be at risk. The school must ensure that all pupils will be safe if they are sent home early.

All parents are expected to have emergency plans in place so that children are not left in school and they will be reminded of this fact once a year giving details of the closure policy on the website.

iii. Staff will be informed as to whether they are required to stay on site or not, when they need to return by the Headteacher.

iv. Information will be left on the school's website regarding the duration of the closure and possible reopening.

Closure where not opening

In the case of not opening the school, the decision not to open will be taken with the following being addressed:

i. The Headteacher will close the school, informing the Local Authority.

ii. Staff are contacted via the staff telephone tree, informing them of the closure and that they are not required to attend and the expected duration of the closure. All staff should keep the school closure telephone tree with them and ensure they contact the people they are responsible for. Failure to contact a colleague should be reported back to the Headteacher.

iii. Text messages are sent to the phones of all stakeholders.

iv. Notices where possible will be posted on the entrances to the school to inform parents and pupils of the closure.

v. Information will be provided on the School Website about the closure and re-opening time once known.

vi. Written information will be provided for parents after re-opening providing full details of the reasons for the school closure and action taken.

Closure Due To Critical Incidents

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident may be defined as any event which threatens severely to disrupt, in whole or in part, the functioning of the school as a whole. Critical incidents would normally have the following features:

- There are substantial threats to the safety or well-being of individuals or to the fabric or reputation of the institution; and
- The incident is likely, or has the potential, to lead to the suspension of normal operations.

There are two types of Critical Incident likely to affect a school:

- The internally generated incident, about which there is some knowledge and action can be taken to improve or reduce the impact by the school's Critical Incident Management Team, and;
- The externally generated incident, where something beyond the limits of the school may impact upon it, resulting in the need to take immediate action.

Policy & Procedures

In the case of the externally generated Critical Incident, which may or may not be a major emergency, one of the emergency services will require the immediate evacuation of the school to a place of safety. Where there is an internally generated Critical Incident, the school's Critical Incident Management Team will deal with the forced closure.

The school will follow the procedures stated under **Closure For Buildings' Defects** for sending pupils home.

Staff attendance (all cases)

In all cases when the school is closed to pupils, staff are expected to present themselves for work unless told otherwise by the Headteacher. In the case of longer closures the Headteacher may decide to make arrangements for staff to work on an alternative site when appropriate health & safety arrangements have been put in place.

Supporting learning if the school is closed for extended periods

Our objective is that pupils in our care are provided with a reasonable degree of teaching and learning if the school is closed for an extended period of time, for example during a flu pandemic.

All guidance is subject to an 'as far as reasonably practical' provision.

Home Learning contingency plan

In the event of a local or national Covid outbreak or if a family needs to isolate due to having symptoms the Farndon Team will strive to work with our families to deliver a broad and ambitious and accessible curriculum which will allow children to keep learning while they are isolating at home.

Planning for groups or closure of the whole school:

This plan can be put into action immediately if:

- There's a local outbreak and Farndon is asked to close temporarily for most pupils like during the initial school closures during COVID; or
- Groups of pupils need to self-isolate, but the rest of the school is still open

REMEMBER

Whilst we are encouraging the use of the Internet to enhance children's learning, we remind parents about the importance of online safety. If you have any concerns or need advice, please visit our E-Safety page <http://www.farndon.cheshire.sch.uk/page/e-safety/3599>

Unexpected Closure <i>E.g snow / water / electricity</i>	Class bubble lockdown	Local or National lockdown
<p>What will school provide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the decision has been taken to close the school, parents will be contacted via text message and the website along with a sign at the front of the school. • If staff are able to get into work safely or if it is safe to be in the building, the expectation is for staff to be in school. If not, then staff are permitted to remain at home. • There is an expectation that work will be set from 9:30am on Google Classroom. All resources and teaching materials will be made available here. • Teachers will provide explanation via Loom video recordings. • Work set will include spelling, reading, writing and maths for the core subjects. There will be 1 wider curriculum subject. • Staff will monitor engagement with the tasks set through Google Classroom and will endeavour to respond to any queries or submission of work by the end of the school day • Each class teacher will hold a Google meet at the end of the day to review the days learning. 	<p>What will school provide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ask that parents give class teachers 24 hours from the point of a bubble's closure to gather the necessary resources needed for online learning. • Class teachers will also be subject to isolation and after this initial 24 hour period, will be able to upload work on a daily basis. • Work will be set via Google Classroom (your child has a login for this but these will be sent again in the event of a class isolation). Staff will offer a planned and sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with clarity about learning intentions and what's intended to be taught and practised in each subject. • Teachers will provide explanations of new content through videoing using Loom. • Staff will monitor engagement with the tasks set through Google Classroom and will endeavour to respond to any queries or submission of work by the end of the school day. 	<p>What will school provide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ask that parents give class teachers 24 hours from the point of a total closure to gather the necessary resources needed for online learning. • Class teachers will also be subject to isolation and after this initial 24 hour period, will be able to upload work on a daily basis. • Teachers will provide frequent explanations of new content. This will take the form of Loom video recordings which explain the resources and teaching content. • Staff will monitor engagement with the tasks set through Google Classroom and will endeavour to respond to any queries or submission of work by the end of the school day • Each class teacher will hold a Google Meet meeting at the start and the end of the school day. This will set out the learning for the day and a chance to review learning and address any misconceptions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff will be contactable via Google Classroom between usual school working hours. We ask that parents are considerate of staff's own family commitments when working from home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will endeavour to avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities as these can place a strain where technology is shared or has limited availability in some of our Farndon Primary School family households.• Staff will be contactable via Google Classroom between usual school working hours. We ask that parents are considerate of staff's own family commitments when working from home.• All expectations will vary in relation your pupils' age, stage of development and SEND.• We will endeavour to avoid making significant demands for parents' help or support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will endeavour to avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities as these can place a strain where technology is shared or has limited availability in some of our Farndon Primary School family households. We do have a leasing policy, allowing chrome books to be lent to families.• Staff will be contactable via Google Classroom between usual school working hours. We ask that parents are considerate of staff's own family commitments when working from home.• All expectations will vary in relation to your pupils' age, stage of development and SEND.• We will endeavour to avoid making significant demands for parents' help or support.
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Google Meet

All children will receive an email inviting them to join a class meeting using Google Meet. This is a video messaging App that is part of the Google Classrooms suite. If your child wishes to join the meeting, connecting with their class teacher and friends, all they need to do is accept the invitation and then join the meeting (using the link within the invite) at the time, on the right date. Your child is able to view the invite by logging in to their Google account and going to Gmail (their emails). All of the children know their login details as they use them regularly in school. We have put a reminder below just in case and we have set the password as a uniformed one for the purpose of these meetings...

User name:

, followed by... @farndon.co.uk

The 'Parents Guide' document below shows you how to access Google Meet should you need it. The class teacher will host the meeting and spend some time talking with the children and possibly doing a short activity with them. This is not a lesson and does not replace the usual Home Learning. Please make sure that your child has their microphone turned on for the meeting. It is up to yourselves if they have their video turned on. Please give consideration to what is in the background if using the video function.

In the circumstance of a school closure, there is no expectation for all children to attend this weekly Google Meet. Our aim is to give those children who need it the support and time whilst any lock down happens.



2020-Parents-Guide
-to-Google-Classroc

Appendix 1

Farndon Primary School **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Aims

The aims of this plan are:

- To ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken the moment that the school is made aware of a critical incident
- To always maintain, as far as possible, the normal routines of school life so as to offer a secure framework and to provide continuity to pupils and staff

Incidents and Reporting

There are many incidents which may arise during a school day and require immediate action and reporting. For example:

- A danger (loose tiles on the roof)
- A suspicious stranger on the site

Procedure should always be to stay calm, move away and to report to a senior member of staff. However, we need to be prepared in the event of a critical incident.

What is a Critical Incident?

An incident may be designated as critical where the result is likely to be serious disruption to the running of the school, or to have a major impact on students and staff or where there is likely to be significant public and/ or media attention on the school.

For example:

- A serious accident to a child or adult within school or out of school
- The death of a student or member of staff through natural causes
- Violence or assault within school
- A school fire or explosion
- Abduction of a student
- An illness such as meningitis or flu pandemic in the local community
- Injury or death on a school journey or visit
- Civil disturbances outside of school

Critical Incidents Team (CIT)

The role of the CIT is to review and direct the handling of a critical incident and the response and recovery process.

The Critical Incidents Team will comprise the following personnel:

- (Headteacher & Safeguarding Officer)
- (Deputy Head)
- (Site Maintenance Officer)
- (Bursar)
- (Chair of Governors)

Disaster Management Roles & Responsibilities

Name	Role	Responsibilities	Alternative
	Head teacher	Information gathering, overall coordination, communication with CWAC, written log of events Coordination of Emergency Services	
	Deputy Head	Deal with other pupils and staff on site, keeping disruption to a minimum	
	Site Maintenance Officer	Communication with support staff	
	Bursar	Communication with parents	
	Governor	Liaise with Mr Ian Callister CWAC Media Relations Officer 01244 972216	

Procedures

- The Headteacher (or in event of absence) the Deputy Head must be informed of a critical incident as soon as it is reported
- Headteacher will gather all factual information as soon as possible – what has happened, where, who, when, what help is needed
- The CIT will meet in the designated incident room to confirm strategies and procedures
- Inform the Chair of Governors and appropriate Officers at CWAC (See Contacts List)
- The rest of the staff will be informed as soon as possible, preferably at a specially convened staff meeting
- Pupils will be told of incident in small group situations
- Parents notified as required
- The school will try, as far as possible, to keep to the normal routine
- Should the need arise, the building will be evacuated and the children walked to ????? in a safe and orderly manner

Action Plan and Timings

Action	Timescale
Head to obtain all factual information	Within an hour
CIT convene	Within an hour
Contact affected families	Within an hour
Advise County Personnel	Within 2 hours
Staff Meeting to give information	Same day if possible
Inform students in small groups	Same day if possible
Make arrangements for informing other parents	Same day if possible
Debriefing for staff directly	Same day if possible
Debriefing for students directly involved	Same day if possible
Identify high risk pupils and staff following the incident	Following day
Promote discussions in class	Following days and weeks
Identify need for individual or group input	Over following days and weeks
Organise counselling	As required

Managing the Media

Good, clear communication is paramount as rumour and supposition will be treated as fact by the media. The member of the CIT assigned to the media will need to protect the children, parents, staff and Head from the glare of publicity. The Media Officer will contact the CWAC Media Relations Officer (See Contact List) prior to preparing an agreed text.

- DO – tell story quickly and accurately
- DO – respond to what and when questions
- DO – consider the needs of the audience
- DO – prepare and rehearse so that you always give the same story
- DO – choose your own time to speak to the media

- DON'T – reply to how and why questions
- DON'T – speculate, bluff or lie
- DON'T- make 'off the record' comments
- DON'T – make excuses or lay blame
- DON'T – respond to blind quotes
- DON'T – say no comment but explain why you cannot comment
- DON'T – allow words to be put in your mouth

Recovery Management

As far as is possible, the school will return to 'normal' routines quickly to restore a sense of security to the school, staff and pupils. Support systems will be set up for children and staff who wish to share their feelings and thoughts. The school will approach counselling services and specialist treatment for those at the heart of the incident or most affected by it.

CHSHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL CONTACT LIST

Name	Role	Office	Mobile	Home
A CRITICAL INCIDENT INVOLVING A PUPIL OR MEMBER OF STAFF SHOULD BE REPORTED TO:				
Duty Officer: Office Hours	Customer Services	01244 977818		
Out of Hours Officers <i>NB. When calling the out of hours number you will need to state key words "School Incident" as this is how Message Pad will be able to identify the query</i>	Customer Services	0300 123 7035		
Other contacts (on a selective basis):				
	Strategic Lead CIRT	01244 976778	079202 95078	07525 753938
	Head of Achievement & Wellbeing Service	01244 975923	0781 851 1810	
	H&S Manager	01244 972229	07732 468160	
	Transport	0300 1237039 01244976147	<i>Out of hours: 07702 119 642</i>	

	During Working Hours: 01606 275099	<i>Out of hours: 01244 977277</i>		
	Lead HR Business Partner	01244 972024		
	Media Relations Manager	01244 972216	07802582714	
	Attendance and Welfare	01244 976778	07920295078	
	Senior Education Welfare Officer	01606 275818	07920295208	
	Senior Education Welfare Officer	0151 337 6859	07920295706	
	Director of Children & Young People's Services	01244 972033		

FOR A PROPERTY RELATED CRITICAL INCIDENT CONTACT: CWAC helpdesk: 0300 123 7043

Local Police Contact: CWAC Police 01244 350222 or 0845 458 6377

Local Hospital Contact:

School Critical Incident Team Emergency Contacts

Name	Role	Home	Mobile
	Head/CIRT Coordinator		
	Deputy Head		
	Caretaker		
	Admin		
	Chair of Governors		

