Langham Village School

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Within the limitations set out by statutory guidance and health and safety legislation and wherever possible Langham Village School will remain open during the school day to deliver education to its pupils. This statement supports the school's aspiration to deliver the highest quality educational provision to its pupils. However, the Head teacher is authorised to make an emergency closure when exceptional circumstances make it absolutely necessary and in the best interests of the pupils.

CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL

The following will be considered in coming to any decision to close Langham Village School for exceptional reasons:

Health and Safety Requirements

- Can pupils and staff access the school building safely?
- Can pupils and staff be evacuated in an emergency?
- In an emergency, could the Emergency Services access the school?
- Is the area designated for disembarkation from transport safe for pupils?
- Is the school deemed to be a safe place to be for pupils and teachers?

Pupil/Teacher Ratios

- If a limited number of staff and pupils can attend, is the PTR acceptable? (1 teacher:30 pupils)

Weather and Road Conditions

- Have local weather forecasts and road conditions, including those for areas from which staff will be travelling, been considered?

The Head teacher will carry out a risk assessment, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, or if she is unavailable the Vice-Chair and members of staff. The decision will be made where possible before 8.00 am and, on the basis of information received from the media about weather, supplemented by on-the-spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such observations, and through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office.

CLOSURE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

On occasions it may be necessary for school to close during the school day, ie if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether children can return home safely later in the day, or due to health and safety considerations. In such cases the school will ensure that children are collected from school.

IN THE EVENT OF SCHOOL BEING CLOSED

If school is closed it is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure that the following events happen:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair or Vice-Chair of Governors;
- Parents are contacted using the school's text messaging service;
- The school website is updated;
- The information is passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible, ie BBC;
- Staff and/or a notice will be posted at the school gates to help prevent pupils from being left by parents at the start of the school day if possible. In instances of severe weather, parents should monitor the nominated phone for text contact;
- School is appropriately staffed by teachers/classroom assistants to deal with any pupils who arrive at school unescorted until parents or emergency contacts can collect the pupils;
- The LA and the Department of Education will be informed as soon as possible of the closure.

These tasks do not all have to be completed by the Head teacher, although she has the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out.

SAFEGUARDING PRECAUTIONS ON CLOSURE

No pupil will be allowed to leave school unless the school is aware that an identified adult will be available to supervise him/her at their destination. It may be that a parent who collects his/her children offers to give shelter to other children. The agreement of the parents of these children must be given before pupils are released in this way. We will ensure that adequate supervision by members of teaching staff will be made for those pupils who cannot go home or to their emergency destination immediately and therefore have to remain at school. Careful consideration will be given to those children with SEND who may be vulnerable due to other circumstances.

TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Parents should be aware that it is their responsibility to make sensible decisions on behalf of their children when weather conditions are severe. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children to and from the school.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents must give school an emergency contact point. Data Collection forms are sent out at least annually to all parents. Parents are required to complete and return the forms promptly. If the forms are not returned the previous year's form will be annotated as such and kept on file. Information on emergency contacts and instructions in respect of each pupil will be held centrally in the emergency contacts folder held in the school office.

It is essential that parents keep the school up-to-date with any change in their contact details.

STAFF ATTENDANCE

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, unless advised to the contrary by the Head teacher, then the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work. LA Contract Staff (Catering and Cleaning Services) also need to be advised of any emergency requirements.

CLEARANCE OF SNOW

Within the school site, the school is responsible for snow clearance and the clearing of approach paths is the specific task of the Caretaker. When severe weather is forecast, the Caretaker or Head teacher should be tasked to lay salt and grit on arrival. The clearance of public roads is the responsibility of the Roads Service.

CHILDREN'S PLAYTIMES

If there is any question of children's safety being at risk during break-time and lunch-time whereby the playground area is deemed unsafe, school has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the children indoors.

SERVICES

All of the service providers who will be affected by the closure will be informed as soon as possible, once families and staff have been contacted.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head teacher will monitor implementation of this policy. Langham Village School Emergency Closure Policy will be evaluated and reviewed in line with any new Department of Education Guidelines/Reports and in keeping with any additional practices and procedures.

Reviewed March 2026

To be reviewed March 2028

Mrs Polly Kossowicz - Head teacher

Ms Kate Jackson – Chair of Governors