

THE APOLLO EDUCATION PROJECT

The Apollo Education Project: Emergency Closure Policy

1. Taking the Decision to Close the Provision

The Director and Centre Manager in consultation with other members of staff will take the decision to make an emergency closure when the state of the weather or any other exceptional circumstances make it absolutely necessary in the best interests of the pupils and staff.

However this decision will be supported by the latest and most accurate information available. The presumption should be in favour of keeping the Provision open unless, in the Director's view, to do so would put the health, safety or welfare of pupils and/or staff at risk. In reaching this decision, the Director and Centre Manager will take full account of local circumstances and, in particular, the following considerations.

- (a) Both short and longer term weather information: further information on this will be sought from the Luton Borough Council website and BBC local weather updates. Attention should be paid to ascertaining what would be a safe and appropriate time to send pupils and staff home.
- (b) Advice regarding local transport and the safety of local roads whether buses and trains are running, and whether it is safe to drive on local roads.
- (c) Arrangements for pupil safety: the absolute priority is to ensure that provision is made for each and every child. Where children cannot be collected immediately, they will be kept at the Provision and supervised until collection can take place.
- (d) Whether the Provision is accessible, and has working heating/electrics/water.

The closure or opening of other schools in the proximity will not be the key factor in such taking decisions, although this may be taken into account. It is the responsibility of all staff to make every effort to attend for duty.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

It is recognised that parents have a key role to play in the event of severe weather. If they have concerns about bringing their children to and from the Provision, they should "play safe" and keep them at home, informing the Provision that they are doing so. The fact that several parents take this view does not, however, mean that the Provision will be closed, unless the considerations listed above indicate that this is the only sensible decision.

2. Communication Arrangements

It is essential that, when there is potential for Provision closures due to severe weather conditions, we are in a position to communicate quickly and clearly with parents.

The Apollo Education Project website is an important channel in these situations. Any decision to close should be taken as early in the day as possible, or if feasible notification should be

provided the evening before. The Emergency Closure procedure should be used to communicate the decision. This will involve putting an announcement on the website, leaving an appropriate message on the answer phone, and emailing/texting parents and staff.

3. Closure during the school day

Emergency Contacts

Safe and speedy dismissal of pupils in the event of an emergency closure depends on the Provision and parents working in partnership.

Parents should provide the Provision with any specific instructions in respect of their child should the Provision require to close during the day. Parents are required to give the Provision an emergency contact.

Precautions

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 should be sought before releasing pupils in this way.

The provision of adequate supervision by members of staff should be made for those pupils who cannot go home immediately and have therefore to remain at the Provision.

To be reviewed: September 2016