

School Closure Due To Bad Weather

The decision to close a school rests with the Head teacher and is based on many factors.

There are times when the decision to close is in direct response to L.A. advice following Met Office warnings. In the majority of cases however, school closure is based on prevailing circumstances within area.

The school has a 'Duty of Care' for both pupils and staff.

This duty does not extend to 'Childminding'.

Decisions to close are based on the following factors:

- L.A./Police guidance.
- Weather Forecasts, including Met Office Warnings.
- An accurate picture of the situation at school. *(Obtained by staff who live close to the school)*
- A picture of the general conditions in the catchment area. *(Obtained by ringing strategic and pre-arranged contacts.)*
- The position of school transport operators. *(30% of the children at Longnor School travel by bus.)*
- The availability of staff. *(Staff are briefed to make contact with the Headteacher before 7.00 am, if they are unable to get into school. It is feasible that, even though the majority of children can get into school, a school has to close due to staffing problems. Parents should always keep their children at home if they consider the situation to be dangerous. Once the decision has been made to keep a school open, staff will always endeavour to get through).*
- The availability of School Meals. *(If the cook cannot get into school this means children will be potentially without a meal. Discussion, before 7.00 a.m. with the cook.)*
- The possibility, if the school remains open, of the weather worsening and children being stranded. *(If a school, having opened, has to send children home early, direct contact has to be made with all parents and transport operators.)*

Once a decision to close has been made, the Head will contact Shropshire Council who will publish the school closure on the website - <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/school-closures/>. Shropshire Council has a website to enable parents and carers to quickly and easily find out if their child's school is closed due to bad weather. It will also be used by the county's radio stations as their primary source of information about which schools in the Shropshire Council area are closed – so parents, carers, teachers and pupils can also listen to their favourite local radio station from 7.00am during periods of bad weather to find out the latest school closure information. A post will also be put on the front page of the school website to inform parents of a decision to close the school.

There is also an obligation to inform the L.A., giving reasons for closure. At the end of the day, such a decision is not made lightly.