



Rossett School

Success for everyone

**Unavoidable School Closure
Policy
2025**

Approved by:	Governing Body
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1. Unavoidable school closure procedure

Due to extreme weather or other unforeseen circumstances, there may be occasions when the school has to close. Although these circumstances are rare, this document sets out important procedures to support efficient and safe closure.

2. Actions in the event of the school needing to close

Parents/Carers should always assume that school is open unless contact is made as detailed below:

- An email will be sent to all email addresses that currently receive communications from school.
- A message will be placed on the Rossett School website www.rossettschool.co.uk
- We will also place a message on our [Facebook](#) page

These actions will be taken as soon as the decision is taken that the school will close. No message means that the school will be open as usual.

Where possible, we ask that you avoid phoning school unless it is essential to do so. We try to keep the phone lines open so operational staff can take the actions above as quickly as possible.

3. Travel and Transport

If the regular bus your child uses to get to school is not running on any day because of snow, **please do not** bring your child to school, unless you are also able to collect them. In addition, if you live in one of the outlying villages around Harrogate, **please do not** send your child to school if there is a foreseeable possibility that they will have difficulty in getting home safely later in the day. Even if the school is still open, **do not** send your child if you feel there is a risk to their safety in making the journey. Bus services, however, will make every effort to honour their normal contracts, even if they arrive late.

4. Early Closure for Snow

If local disruption is so significant after school has opened, then sometimes there is no safe alternative to early closure of the school so that both students and staff can travel home. Where this happens, we will use the communication methods above to advise you that we have to close. Senior staff will remain on site until the last child has safely left. In the exceptional cases where the school has to be closed early and your child cannot travel home, or you cannot collect them, please have an arrangement in place with a relative or family friend so that your child has somewhere local and safe to go. **This is a vital arrangement to make for children who live in very rural areas.** Please ensure that your child knows what this arrangement is in advance.

Please be reassured that, if the school opens normally, we will do all we can to ensure that it remains so for the full length of the day. With variations in weather forecasts and contrasting road conditions in our catchment area, it will always be difficult to choose the right moment to close the school. However, we will try our best to keep you informed in as timely a way as possible.

5. In a situation where the school closes during the school day:

In exceptional circumstances the school may take the decision to close during the school day and any such decision will be taken following advice from the local bus companies. If the school has to close parents will be notified as above. The school will do all in its power to ensure that students are not released from school until we know that is safe for them to leave and there is parental awareness of what is happening. It would help the school greatly if parents did not continually ring the school for updates or simply turn up at the school asking for their children to be released. Parents should be

reassured that any decision taken will be mindful of the school's duty of care for each child and the school will remain open until the last child has got away safely.

6. Unavoidable School closure Action plan

Activity/ Situation	UNAVOIDABLE SCHOOL CLOSURE			
Location	Rossett School			
Persons at Risk	Pupils	Employees	Visitors	Contractors
STEP 1 –	Monitor the activity/situation and identify the hazards			
STEP 2 –	Decision made on who could be harmed and how			
STEP 3 –	Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures			
STEP 4 –	Record your findings and implement them, creating a working strategy that meets the risks identified.			
STEP 5 –	Review, revise and update as necessary			
HAZARD(S)	<p>In considering a response to an unavoidable school closure, it is important to identify those groups of people that may be at risk and then ensure that the school has a working strategy in place to mitigate those risks as far as is possible.</p> <p>Unavoidable school closures can result from adverse weather, utility issues, terrorism threat, unexplained items on school grounds or the potential of a personal attack.</p> <p>The affected groups are as follows and this is hierarchical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Staff Members • Visitors • Contractors • School / Trust <p><u>Working Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise Risk to Students and Maximise Safety • Minimise Risk to Staff Members and Maximise Safety • Minimise Risk to Visitors and Maximise Safety • Minimise Risk to Contractors and Maximise Safety • Minimise Reputational Risk to School / Trust • Return to Normality <p><u>Control Measures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full site safety assessment (BOM/SITE TEAM) • Full site security assessment (BOM/SITE TEAM) • Completion of relevant risk assessments that sit outside of an emergency service response (Slips/Trips/Falls) (Emergency Response Plans) 			

- Limit access to parts of school (Headteacher / BOM)
- Partial/Full Closure as appropriate (Headteacher)
- Sufficient Comms – School / Trust reputation (Headteacher / BOM)

CONSIDERATIONS	Yes	No	N/A
<p><u>Site</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the site have sufficient entry and exit points to allow business as usual in terms of student learning? 2. Regardless of circumstances, has a clear and safe route been identified to allow safe movement across the site to various buildings? 3. Is there a clear and safe route should there be he need to carry out an emergency evacuation? 4. Is the site safe for vehicles without obstruction? 5. Is the site safe for pedestrians without obstruction? 6. Is there a recent site visit to support any changes in risk? <p>Is the school safe to open?</p> <p><u>Journey to School</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has all student transport been contacted to establish their levels of service provision considering the circumstances? 2. Has NYCC been contacted to establish and up -to- date picture of surrounding roads and paths into the school? <p>Is the school safe to open?</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do we have sufficient staffing to support student learning, considering professional judgement on student numbers attending in the circumstances? 2. Has a contingency for teaching been considered if ratios are not met? <p>Is the school safe to open?</p> <p><u>Communication</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have communications gone to all staff? 2. Have communications gone to all parents/carers? 3. Have communications gone to Transport providers? 4. Have communications gone to NYCC? 5. Have Emergency Services been contacted? 			

What is the level of risk for this activity/situation	H	M	L
Is the risk adequately controlled with existing control measures	Yes		No
Have you identified any further control measures needed to control the risk and recorded them in the action plan	Yes		No
<p>ACTION PLAN:</p> <p>The above control measures ensure as far as is possible, the continued safety of students, staff, visitors and contractors alongside the continued personal responsibility to effectively identify risk and mitigate using professional judgement.</p> <p>Any such risk must be communicated to the Headteacher and Business and Operations Manager as soon as is possible so that an refreshed assessment can be carried out.</p>			
State overall risk level assigned to the task AFTER implementation of control and action plan measures taken as a result of this risk assessment	H	M	Low
Is such a risk level deemed to be as low as reasonably practical?	Yes		No
<p>FEEDBACK FROM EMPLOYEES: (for improving risk assessment or reducing risk further still)</p>			
Assessor(s):	Andy Colbourne	Signature(s):	Andy Colbourne
Position(s):	Business and Operations Manager		
Date:	21st January 2025	Review Date:	21 st January 2026
Distribution:			