

Leigh Academy Hugh Christie Severe Weather Procedure

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Revision Log

Date	Version	Brief detail of change

Education for a better world

Leigh Academy Hugh Christie

Adverse Weather Arrangements 2025-26

Please note that it is only in exceptional circumstances and severe weather conditions that the school will close.

MITIE, as the facilities management company, must make every effort to prepare the site for the safe running of a school day.

Therefore, the staff should expect for and plan for the school to remain open.

Staff, students, parents and other stakeholders can access the Kent School Closure site and set up alerts at <http://kentclosures.co.uk>

Information will also be available on the academy website and on Facebook.

The status of the school will be reviewed daily.

1. Introduction

On rare occasions, particularly in winter, the weather can be so severe that getting to and from Leigh Academy Hugh Christie becomes hazardous. The Academy's intention is to always remain open as we do not wish to disrupt students' learning; we also appreciate the difficulties school closure causes to working families. However, safety is our number one priority and we will always act in the best interests of students and staff. The decision to open or close the Academy will take into account the weather conditions at the time of making the decision, local forecasts, potential impact on public transport and accessibility of surrounding roads.

In the event of overnight extreme weather conditions affecting the opening of the Academy, the Principal and Premises staff will make a full assessment of the site and a notice will be posted as early as possible, on the Academy's website. In addition, all families will be contacted via MCAS about Academy closures. It is vital that we have the correct mobile number and email address of primary contacts for students. It is parents/carers responsibility to notify the Academy of any change of contact details. If any students arrive at the Academy unaware of the closure a member of staff will be here to help. Students will be able to contact their families to make arrangements to return home. The Academy will close only in extreme circumstances.

Please assume the Academy is open if the Academy website and social media do not announce otherwise.

2. Official Guidance

KCC advises schools to remain open to the maximum degree possible as is consistent with Health and Safety requirements. For a school to remain open during severe weather, the following conditions need to be met:

- Sufficient staff are available to supervise the number of students likely to be present;
- An alternative curriculum can be provided;
- A reasonable temperature can be maintained in the building;
- The school site is safe, e.g. a paths gritted from the front entrance and from the car parks;
- Food can be provided;
- Running water and toilet facilities are working.

If the conditions above are met, the school should remain open.

As a number of students and staff travel to school by car or bus, the school should investigate the conditions of the roads and whether it is safe to travel on the roads.

This position should be reviewed throughout the day. The school may need to take the decision to close early to enable staff and students to travel home in safety.

3. Decision Making Process and Procedure

3.1 Remaining Open

The decision to open will be made with the intention that the Academy could remain open all day and further weather forecasts will be taken into account.

Provision in place on each site to ensure safety:

- Salt/ grid
- Clearance equipment

It is acknowledged that it would not be practical to clear whole sites, so paths and access routes will be a priority.

- A consideration to the start time of the academy day may be taken to ensure all staff and parents can make safe journeys to the academy

3.2 School Procedure for Closing the Site

1. MITIE to confirm the safety and status of the school site with Palak Shah by 6:15am;
2. Palak Shah to inform SLT and email all staff from 6:30am and update academy website by 6:30am.
 - a. Palak Shah to update the Kent School Closure website;
 - b. Palak Shah to ask Kelly Ala (via college admins) to email /MCAS all parents;
 - c. Kathryn Harlin to coordinate the update Facebook;
 - d. Kelly Ala to contact the bus companies.
3. All staff to refer to school email and academy website for updates;
4. Staff who are unable to get to work due to severe weather, need to contact Kelly Ala and Matt Wright **by email** (not school telephone) by 7am at the latest. If staff have not made contact by 7am then it is assumed you are attempting to travel to work.

3.3 Closing the Site for a Further Day

A decision about the academy opening the following day will be made as early as possible and ideally the night before, so communication can take place in advance.

- It will be the responsibility of all teachers to set further work on Google Classrooms that students can complete at home.

3.4 Closing the Site for the Academy Day

In the event that the site is deemed unsafe to remain open due to health and safety concerns, all staff and students will be expected to evacuate the premises promptly and

safely, following the established procedures. Should a full site closure be necessary, all staff will also be required to leave and will be unable to remain on site to supervise students. As such, it is essential that all families ensure their children are aware of the appropriate arrangements, such as where to go and who to contact, in the event of an emergency closure.

- All parents will be immediately notified by MCAS that the site needs to be closed and that students will be asked to leave the site with immediate effect. In this communication we will make it clear if the pick up point is accessible or not for cars so that it is clear if children being collected will need to be collected off the premises. This will also be communicated on social media.
- Students will be safely escorted off site by staff in a staggered dismissal.
- As per the 'Site Closure Procedures' Parental consent on MCAS it is expected that all students will know where they are being collected from / walking to once escorted safely to the gates, this includes an agreed pickup point should the academy's collection point not be accessible to cars

4. Remote Learning

Although the physical site may be closed it is expected that students will continue to engage in their learning via their Chromebooks and Google Classroom. All teachers will ensure lessons are posted on Google Classroom, in line with the planned curriculum. Students will be expected to follow their normal timetable, access any live lessons and complete this work for any days that the Academy site is shut.

For attendance purposes, students will be marked as being educated offsite based on their engagement and completion of work set.

It is expected that parents / carers support the Academy in ensuring that their children have a place to work for the day and understand that they are expected to access their learning as normal.