

School closure procedures

**Version 5
January 2022**

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If you know more than one working day in advance that your school is to close (e.g. due to industrial action) please follow the actions in Appendix 1.

If your school is subject to an unplanned closure (e.g. due to severe weather) please follow the actions in Appendix 2.

Section 1: Introduction

Overview

This document includes information on who to notify and what actions to take in the event of a partial or full school closure for any reason. It contains sensitive information which is not for use by pupils, parents/ carers, the media or members of the public.

All schools within Nottinghamshire are encouraged to follow these procedures as this will enable an accurate list of closures to be maintained by the Council for the entire county.

After reading this guidance, schools are encouraged to:

1. Check that they are registered to use BBC Radio Nottingham's 'NG Alerts' system (please see section 5 for instructions)
2. Ensure that pupils, parents / carers, staff, governors and extended services are aware of how they will be notified of a school closure (e.g. via local radio, website, text message, social media).

Key Contacts

Colleagues are advised to use these key contacts if necessary after reading this document so that queries can be concisely directed to clarify any issue that might be unclear.

For more information on these procedures, please contact NCC's

Education Learning and Skills Service at

fairaccess@nottsc.gov.uk

Any school closures should be reported to NCC at

fairaccess@nottsc.gov.uk

HR desk 0115 9774433

hrdutydesk@nottsc.gov.uk

Transport & Travel Services 0115 9773520

chris.ward@nottsc.gov.uk

Team Manager Schools Catering 0115 9774794

shane.grayson@nottsc.gov.uk

County Supplies 0115 9656888

supplies@nottsc.gov.uk

Section 2: Potential causes of closure

Emergencies

A variety of emergencies (e.g. fires, flooding, structural damage) can force schools to close temporarily. The Education Learning and Skills Service has lead responsibility for such incidents and will work with your school, the emergency services, other relevant organisations and other internal County Council teams to help restore normal service as quickly as possible.

For more information on emergency procedures, please refer to NCC's 'Coping with a school emergency' guidance, which is available on the Schools Portal and the NCC public website at:

[Coping with a School Emergency | NCC Schools Portal \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-portal/coping-with-a-school-emergency) and at

[School emergencies | Nottinghamshire County Council](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/school-emergencies)

Severe weather

The geography of Nottinghamshire is such that there can be significant variations in local weather and road conditions. Careful attention should be paid to any travel warnings issued by the Met Office and the emergency services. Individual headteachers are best able to judge the severity of the journeys faced by pupils and staff but should always consider safety when making a decision to close or partially close the school.

In the past, parents / carers have mentioned that there has been nothing to stop their children going to school in severe weather because they only had to walk a short distance, yet the school

was closed. The County Council's view has been that whilst pupils could probably get to school, there was no guarantee that staff could do so safely.

During prolonged periods of severe weather some schools might experience a shortage of grit. Schools are able to make advanced purchases of grit via County Supplies.

See supplies@nottsccl.gov.uk or 0115 965 6888

Headteachers of schools with coal or oil-fired heating systems will need to liaise with their site managers / caretakers to ensure fuel stocks are sufficient to meet their needs until conditions return to normal.

The closure of special schools can cause particular difficulties. Many vulnerable pupils not only receive their education at school but also rely on the school to provide a complex range of essential medical interventions and therapies. During severe weather Nottinghamshire County Council undertakes to keep the primary road network running but is unable to salt / grit all minor roads. However, a road leading to each special school will be treated providing there is a turning space for a gritting vehicle. Where this is not the case, a gritting bin will be provided.

Further information on preparing for severe weather is available on the Schools Portal at [Information and Resources for Schools | NCC Schools Portal \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nccschoolsportal)

Please refer to:

- School winter guidance <http://home.nottsccl.gov.uk/media/122335/clearingsnowice.pdf>
- Using volunteers to clear snow from school grounds
- Clearing of snow and ice, salting and gritting
- Guidance for caretaker / site manager / cleaner in charge (clearing snow and ice).

An online map of gritting routes is available from:

<http://www3.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/travelling/roads/road-design-and-maintenance/winter-roads/>

Industrial action

Schools should plan to alleviate any potential disruption that industrial action could cause. Guidance on industrial action is provided on the Schools Portal [here](#) and supplementary advice will be issued to schools via the Schools Portal before any period of widespread industrial action commences.

Pandemic influenza – including Covid 19

The current Coronavirus pandemic has shown the severe and wide-ranging implications for schools and educational provision.

In extreme circumstances, central, regional or local decisions will be taken that deem it necessary for schools to close in order to limit the spread of the pandemic. Nottinghamshire County Council will liaise with the Department for Education and other relevant organisations to assess the need for such a course of action.

School leaders have access to a wide range of measures and support to manage and reduce and or mitigate the risk of in school transmission. Schools should continue to seek specific advice on circumstances in their school as required working with colleagues within the Council and public

health, where required so that up to date guidance is followed before considering school closures due to the impact of pandemics.

Schools will be kept fully informed of any important developments and should take due regard of guidance from the DfE, UK Health Security Agency (formerly PHE) and the local Health Protection Team.

Please follow the latest guidance shared by the DfE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>

and to any guidance provided by Nottinghamshire Public Health at

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)

Cyber Attacks

No matter how robust you think your security posture is, it will never be perfect. At some point, there is a real possibility that a threat will cause significant disruption to the school's IT infrastructure. Since incidents can and will happen, it's important to be prepared. Schools should ensure they have robust measures in place including a Cyber Security Incident Response Plan (CSIRP). Such incidents, including ransomware attacks have the capability to shut down entire systems, rendering whole school operation impossible - with the added risk of data and security breaches and school closure to address the problem.

Schools should ensure that whole school GDPR training and policies are up to date and in place.

Reporting

Please report all Fraud and Cybercrime to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or [online](#).

Forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk.

Report SMS scams by forwarding the original message to 7726 (spells SPAM on the keypad).

For local support and more information : [Contact | EMSOU CYBER SECURE](#)
(eastmidlandscybersecure.co.uk)

You can also test your organisations readiness by accessing this free online tool : [Exercise in a Box - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Temporary accommodation

In very rare cases, Nottinghamshire County Council may request schools to act as a venue for temporary accommodation. This could entail housing evacuees in a school hall (possibly overnight) and providing them with refreshment, comfort and hygiene facilities. Schools will only be used upon agreement by the headteacher and where all other appropriate options have been explored.

Section 3: Policy

Taking the decision to close

Schools are expected to remain open in all but the most extreme circumstances as disruption to the normal pattern of provision can have an adverse effect on children's education. Closing schools at short notice may also cause difficulties for families if they need to make arrangements for children to be cared for during the school day.

The decision to close needs to balance the importance of continuing education against the possible risks associated with pupils and staff attending school in hazardous conditions. Decisions about the closure of individual schools are a matter for the headteacher and governing body. This applies whether an incident occurs overnight or during the day.

In circumstances where a school is partially operational because some children and staff are in attendance, the headteacher will need to consider if it is suitable to keep the school open. In arriving at a decision, the potential risks of sending children home will need to be balanced against the risks arising from keeping them at school, given the level of supervision available. In some instances, it may be appropriate to close the school for pupils but remain open for staff.

In the event of a decision being taken to close a school earlier than normal, headteachers of primary and special schools should notify parents / carers at the earliest possible opportunity. Children should be kept at school until the headteacher is satisfied that appropriate arrangements have been made to look after them and ensure their safety.

HR advice

The decision to close a school will normally rest with the head teacher, on the basis of weather forecasts and on-the-spot observations following an appropriate assessment of the risks. When radio stations advise people to avoid non-essential travel, it is directed at travel that could quite easily be deferred or cancelled altogether. It does not mean that travel to school or work is unnecessary.

Further information on preparing for severe weather is available on the Schools Portal at [Information and Resources for Schools | NCC Schools Portal \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nccschoolsportal)
Please refer to:

- School winter guidance
- Please see the following appendices for guidance on
 - Appendix 1: Severe Weather conditions – Guidelines for managers
 - Appendix 2: Guidance for head teachers and nominated property officers about managing building access routes during periods of snow and ice
 - Appendix 3: Plan for managing access routes during periods of snow and ice

NB These Appendices are attached at the end of this document as Appendix A, B and C.

Specific Information on school-based staff attendance

School closed to pupils

When a school is closed to pupils, employees are still expected to present themselves for work. Teaching and support staff who are unable to travel safely to their place of work should keep in contact with their school. There is an expectation for staff unable to travel to be prepared to provide a remote learning provision to pupils affected by the closure of the school or travel to another county council base, if required. Contract, cleaning and any other services due to visit the school also need to be advised of any emergency requirements.

In circumstances where the headteacher has made the decision to close the school, arrangements should be made for teachers and other support staff to undertake remote teaching. If it is agreed that staff should not report to their usual place of work, they will be expected to work remotely.

There may still be occasions where employees are unable to work and as a general guideline, employees should be paid in accordance with the relevant school policy. Generally, staff should be paid for absence if:

- The head teacher is satisfied that every attempt has been made by an employee to attend work
- The school/place of work is closed due to loss of power/water supplies, severe weather or damage caused by the weather
- Normal care arrangements break down at short notice e.g. their own child's school is closed and other suitable care arrangements cannot be put in place at short notice.

Any unauthorised absences should be reported in the usual way. Schools should ensure that staff can work remotely if required and regularly reminded of the school's policy. Wherever possible leave required to look after children is shared equally between carers.

For more information, please consult your designated School HR contact or the HR Duty Desk 0115 9774433 who can provide advice / guidance on employment related matters.

School open to pupils

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions may make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, all staff are expected to come in to school unless they have permission to be away from work for other reasons. Transport problems, which may be caused by snow or other factors, do not alter their obligation. This obligation applies equally to all staff and is not affected by where they live. Staff who live a considerable distance from their workplace or in isolated locations are also expected to attend work as usual, if at all possible. However, when adverse weather conditions make travelling difficult or dangerous, staff should make their own assessment of the risks of travelling and inform the head teacher.

The head teacher may then authorise staff not to attend school. In these circumstances staff are expected to work remotely or if required from another County Council base. If, after assessment of the weather conditions and travel, it may be appropriate to consider the implementation of remote learning for teachers and other support staff who are unable to travel. This facility is available since the lockdowns of 2020/21 and should be reactivated for the period of closure, whether caused by extreme weather (e.g. snowfall) or any other factor.

Therefore, it is strongly advised that schools have a detailed plan regarding what actions need to be put in place when there is a requirement for remote learning to be implemented. This will need to be shared, in advance, with all staff, so they are fully aware of measures the school is taking when there is severe weather conditions. In addition, headteachers and other senior leaders will need to plan what other work can be carried out remotely

Closure on in-service training days

The overriding statutory requirement is that teachers are required to work 195 days and children should receive 190 days education in the school year, unless the Department for Education determines otherwise.

Non-school facilities

Decisions concerning the closure of non-school facilities (e.g. wrap-around care, before- and after-school clubs, outdoor education centres, respite care homes) rests with the individual head of centre, who should inform the relevant provider or manager as soon as possible. Schools affected by such closures will be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

Section 4: Actions

Reporting closures

Headteachers or nominated deputies are responsible for maintaining contact with pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors, extended services, the media and the local authority in the event of a school closure. These groups should also be notified of any significant decisions about plans to reopen the school.

If you know more than one working day in advance that your school is to close (e.g. due to industrial action), please follow the actions in Appendix 1.

If your school is subject to an unplanned closure, please follow the actions in Appendix 2.

Also, any school closures should be reported to NCC at fairaccess@nottsccl.gov.uk

Transport

Schools that use Nottinghamshire County Council for the provision of transport should contact Transport & Travel Services. They will assume responsibility for contacting operators and making suitable arrangements to meet your school's needs.

Bus operators have a legal duty to ensure the safety and welfare of their passengers and, therefore, make the final decision on whether to undertake or continue any journey. Headteachers may wish to advise parents / carers of this position. No headteacher should attempt to insist that a firm provides transport if the operator does not consider it safe enough to do so.

Catering and facilities management

Schools with a contract or service level agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for catering or facilities management should telephone or email Catering & Facilities Management Services to inform them of the closure.

Contacts: Shane Grayson, Team Manager Schools Catering shane.grayson@nottsc.gov.uk 0115 9774794 or Mark Herring, Team Manager, Facilities Management mark.herring@nottsc.gov.uk 0115 8040441

Providers of respite care

Schools should assess if any of their pupils are receiving respite care at the time of the closure. If this is the case, headteachers should ensure the relevant providers of respite care (e.g. The Big House, Caudwell House) are informed, in addition to parents / carers.

Remote Learning

As set out in this document, where school closures take place schools should be prepared to offer remote learning provision to pupils affected by closure. Schools already have facilities in place since the Covid – 19 lockdowns of 2020/21 which should be reactivated for the period of closure, whether caused by extreme weather (e.g. snowfall) or any other factor.

Extended Services

Schools should also inform any extended services which may be affected by the closure.

Section 5: How to use NG Alerts

Instructions from BBC Radio Nottingham

For schools not registered to use NGAAlerts (see step-by-step guide below)

BBC Radio Nottingham has a web-based system for managing school closures when it snows, but schools can use it anytime.

This system called "NG Alerts" is the only way for schools to inform the BBC so that pupils, parents and families know when their school is closed. It replaces the phone and email systems used in the past.

To register click here

<http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/headteachers/register/8ca130ac6c0e8baef9ffc309b09c9c18> (please do not save or publish this link anywhere; this will avoid fraudulent use).

Then, complete the web form. It should take no longer than 5 minutes.

When a decision has been made to close your school, simply log in and let us know. It takes less than a minute using this link <http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/> You may want to bookmark this link.

The information you provide will be used on-air and on:

<https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadioNottingham> to inform your pupils and parents.

For schools already registered to use NGAAlerts

Please take a moment to read through this. It contains important information for your school

If a change of role has taken place, please contact the school directly. They will be able to log in and update their entry. BBC cannot update its records for a school.

When you want to make BBC Radio Nottingham aware that your school is closed please only use **NGAAlerts** <https://www.ngalerts.co.uk>.

The main purpose of **NGAAlerts** is to help you when it snows, but schools do also use it when other events happen that cause a school to close, such as a boiler breakdown.

Now we are able to offer this service to help you report **COVID-19** related issues.

We recognised that a case of COVID in school is a Public Health issue for the wider community – even if it's just a bubble that has been asked to not attend. So please do use the system to let BBC Radio Nottingham know. The FAQs below mainly relate to closures caused by bad weather and snow.

FAQs

Where will my school closure be listed?

On a 'snow-day' a member of the digital team will take the information from the NGAAlerts system and create a Facebook post, pinned to the top of the BBC Radio Nottingham page <https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadioNottingham/>. On weekday snow-days this is normally done from 06:30 every 15 minutes or so until 09:00, then less often until around 18:00, but sometimes later. Closures for 'today' are normally removed by the late-afternoon. This update service is not offered each day; only when a snow-day typically involves 12 or more schools.

When does BBC Radio Nottingham read the schools closed list?

BBC Radio Nottingham broadcasts school closures on weekday snow-days from 06:00-19:00. BBC does not promise to read every school out. The A-Z list is used on-air until it gets too long. Then only the 'most recent' are read while listeners are referred to <https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadioNottingham/>.

My school starts with 'The'. How should I list it on the system?

It's up to you. If you set up **The [school name]** then it will be grouped with Ts. If you enter it as **[school name] The**, it will be sorted by the first letter of your school name. You can log in and change it.

Does it matter that incorrect email addresses are in my head teacher manage area?

Yes, it means you might have trouble logging in. Please log in and check all your email addresses are correct.

Should I report my school is 'open' ?

For snow, please don't. But for COVID, that's fine.

I've just decided to close my school tomorrow. What do I select on the dropdown menu?

This can catch you out but check this link for help <https://www.ngalerts.co.uk/importantnote.html>

Can I put weblinks in the free text area?

You can, but BBC would prefer you not to. Nor should you ask parents to listen to another radio station. Also, remember the text you write in the box goes online, so avoid posting your mobile number.

Should I tell parents to call or email BBC Radio Nottingham to see if my school is open?

No. Either ask them listen to BBC Radio Nottingham or check <https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadioNottingham/> - or ask parents to call your school.

I'm registered, but can I phone or email to tell you my school is closed?

No. The only way we accept school closure information is via NG Alerts. For COVID reports we may contact the school for extra verification.

What happens to the text in the 'free text area'?

The way you input your school name and the words you use in the free text field go onto the public BBC website unchecked (for snow reporting). Therefore, your spelling, grammar and punctuation need to be accurate. Please also use sentence case, rather than all lowercase or all CAPS. You don't need to repeat your school name or say that your school is closed - and try to avoid greetings like "Hello there", which are a little odd online. Also, don't write too much - essays are not necessary.

I've sent a report in but now I want to change or update it. What should I do?

You cannot edit what you've already sent in, but if you send another report in, the previous one will drop off the database. However, the original will stay on the public website until the next update (see above).

I cannot log in. What should I do?

Please use the password reset link on the site.

A step-by-step guide to registration for NGAAlerts

STEP 1: REGISTERING AN ACCOUNT

1.1

The BBC has an online system (NG Alerts) for reporting school closures. This is hosted online and should be accessible from any computer with an internet connection.

1.2

Closures can be reported at any time of day or night, as long as you are registered on the system (see step 1.3). By reporting closures on NG Alerts, both BBC Radio Nottingham and Nottinghamshire County Council are informed of the closure.

1.3

Registration is by invitation only. To request an invitation please contact BBC Radio Nottingham from a recognisable school email address at radio.nottingham@bbc.co.uk.

1.4

You will then receive a link to a 'registration' webpage. You will need to submit information on:

- The name of your school
- The name of your school's headteacher
- Your school's DfE number
- The email address and password you would like to use to log-in to the system.

1.5

Please keep your log-in details in a safe place and ensure they are accessible outside school hours as you may have to report a school closure whilst away from the premises and at any time of day or night.

1.6

Nominated deputies should be aware of these details in case you are unable to report the school closure yourself. It may be appropriate to keep these log-in details within your emergency plan. If you do, please ensure that access to the plan is appropriately restricted - these details should only be made available to authorised members of staff.

1.7

BBC Radio Nottingham periodically email schools with a list of Frequently Asked Questions related to NG Alerts. If you have any queries about NG Alerts that are not answered by these FAQs, please contact BBC Radio Nottingham.

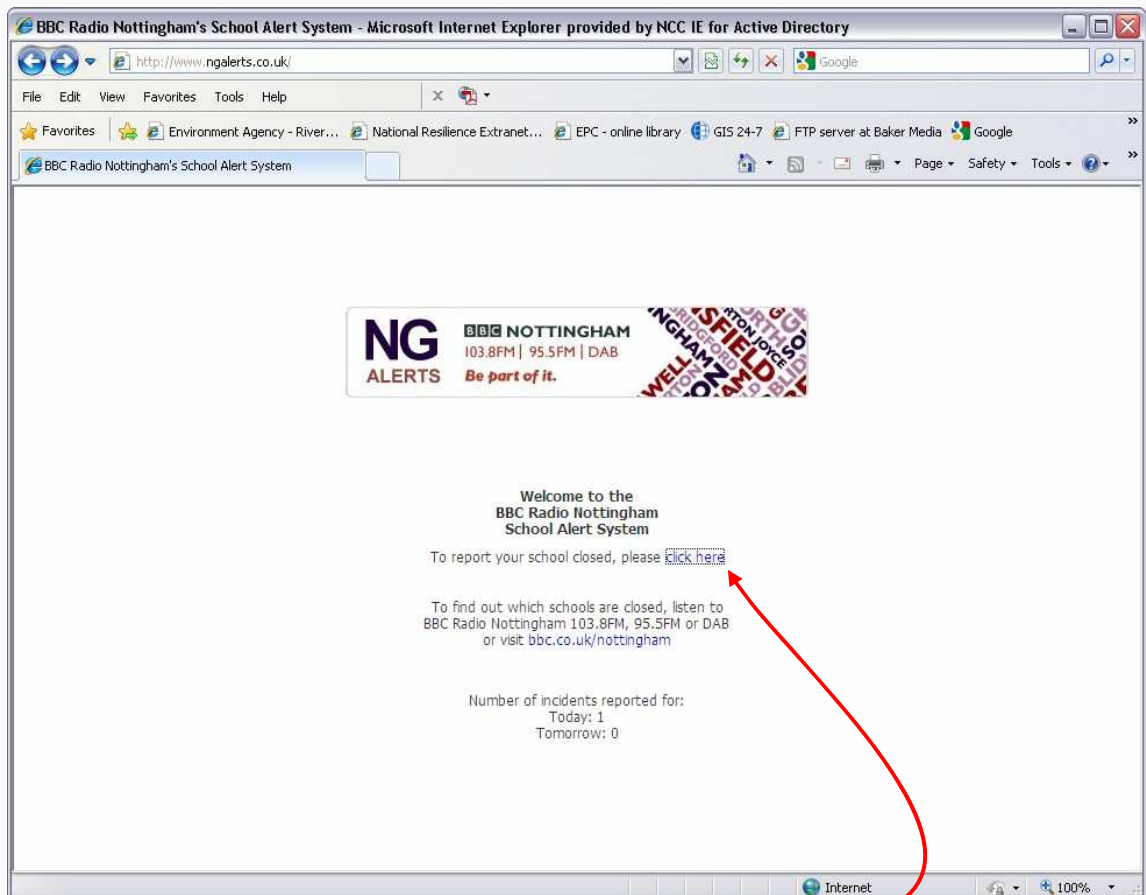
Tel: 01159 34 34 34

Email: radio.nottingham@bbc.co.uk

STEP 2: NAVIGATING TO THE WEBSITE

2.1.

Navigate to <http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/>



2.2

Click on this link.

STEP 3: LOGGING-IN

3.1

Enter your log-in details and click the 'submit' button. Please note each field is case sensitive.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Head Teacher Login - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by NCC IE for Active". The address bar shows the URL "http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/headteachers/login". The page has a dark header with the text "BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports". Below the header, the main content area is titled "Head Teacher Login". It contains two input fields: "Email:" and "Password:". Below the "Password:" field is a "submit" button. To the right of the login fields, there is a section titled "Not registered?" with the text "Registration by invites only. For an invitation please email from a recognisable school email address philip.chapman@bbc.co.uk". Below this is a section titled "Forgot password?" with the text "[Click here](#) to remember." and a red asterisk note: "* Please notice that email and passwords fields are case sensitive." A red arrow points from the text "If you have forgotten your log-in details please click here." in step 3.2 to the "Click here" link.

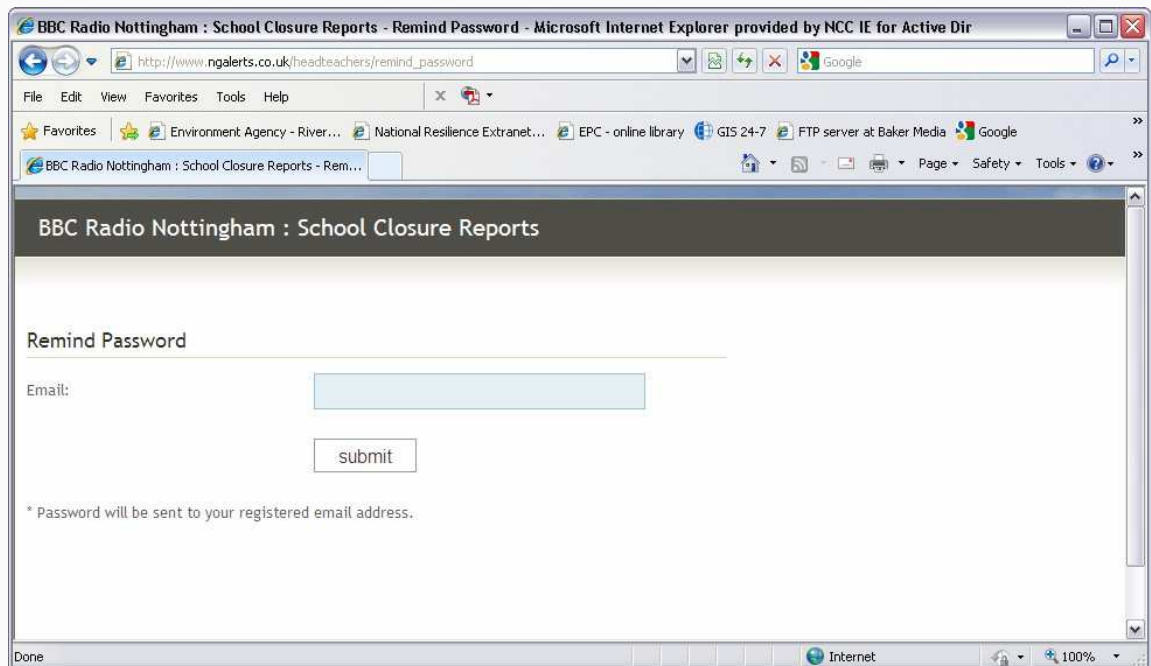
3.2

If you have forgotten your log-in details please click here.

STEP 4: FORGOTTEN PASSWORD

4.1

If you have forgotten your password, please enter your email address and click the 'submit' button.



4.2

You will receive an email with a reminder of your password. Please note this will be sent to the email address which is registered on the system. If you are only able to access your email account from school but need to report a closure off-site and have forgotten your password, you may be unable to record the closure.

The email will look similar to that below:

We received a password reminder associated with this e-mail address.

As requested, your account password is "*****" (without quotes).

Login URL:

http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/*****/*****/*****

Logged IP address: *****

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports

<http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/>

STEP 5: ACCOUNT DETAILS

5.1

The first time you log-in, you will need to provide additional information and contact details for two other representatives of your school. These members of staff should be aware of how to use the system in case you are unable to. You may wish to record the names of these secondary and tertiary contacts in your emergency plan.

5.2

When entering the location of your school, please type the local authority area in which your school resides (i.e., 'Ashfield', 'Bassetlaw', 'Broxtowe', 'Gedling', 'Mansfield', 'Newark & Sherwood', 'Rushcliffe' or 'City').

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Head Teacher Manage Area - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by NCC IE for A

http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/headteachers/manage

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Favorite Environment Agency - River... National Resilience Extrane... EPC - online library QIS 24-7 PTP server at Baker Media Google

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Hea...

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports [logout](#)

Head Teacher Manage Area [Edit Contact Details](#)

[If you are here to report an incident H/W please click here](#)

[Report Details of a School Closure/Incident](#)

Edit Contact Details

Full name of school:

Location of school in Hotts:

Postcode of school:

Ofes number:

Name of key contact:

Email address of key contact:

Landline number of key contact:

Mobile number of key contact:

Name of secondary contact:

Email address of secondary contact:

Name of tertiary contact:

Email address of tertiary contact:

Choose a password:

Repeat password:

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Internet 100%

5.3

Click the 'submit' button.

STEP 6: NAVIGATING TO THE SCHOOL CLOSURE PAGE

6.1

To report a school closure, click here.

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Head Teacher Manage Area - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by MCC IE for A

http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/headteachers/...
Google

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Favorites Environment Agency - River... National Audience Extrane... EPC - online library Q25 24-7 PTP server at Baker Media Google

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Head Teacher Manage Area

Head Teacher Manage Area

[If you are here to report an incident NOW please click here](#)

[Edit Contact Details](#)

[Report Details of a School Closure/Incident](#)

Edit Contact Details

Full name of school:

Location of school in Hotts:

Postcode of school:

DfEs number:

Name of key contact:

Email address of key contact:

Landline number of key contact:

Mobile number of key contact:

Name of secondary contact:

Email address of secondary contact:

Name of tertiary contact:

Email address of tertiary contact:

Choose a password:

Repeat password:

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Internet 100%

STEP 7: REPORTING A SCHOOL CLOSURE

7.1

Enter appropriate details in each field. This information can be updated. If you are unsure how long the closure may last, enter the minimum length of time you expect it to be in place. You can then log-in again at a later date to update the information accordingly.

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Head Teacher Manage Area - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by NCC IE for A

http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/headteachers/manage/npagat

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Environment Agency - River... National Resilience Extrane... EPC - online library QIS 24-7 FTP server at Baker Media Google

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports - Hea...

logout

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports

Head Teacher Manage Area

Edit Contact Details

Report Details of a School Closure/Incident

Report Details of a School Closure/Incident

Email:

Name:

Current most reliable contact number:

End date of the incident, "IMPORTANT" End of today

Details of the Incident:

IMPORTANT:

1) Don't put confidential info in the box below as it will be broadcast and published.

2) If you are telling us about an incident running beyond today it is ABSOLUTELY VITAL that you select "end of tomorrow" (or whenever) in the dropdown box ABOVE or your info will be wiped at the end of today.

You should consider telling us:

- WHY the school is closing.
- WHICH pupils will be affected.
- Do STAFF need to attend?

If you are unsure of the duration of the episode, you should just log for today.

If ongoing, you can add a new report later; it will replace the one you are about to send.

If you have any questions of any difficulty, please dial us on 0115 934 3434.

submit

© 2011 - BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports

7.2

Information entered in the text box will be made publicly available on the BBC website - please do not include any sensitive information in this field.

However, any messages which could help pupils and parents / carers should be included, e.g.:
"The school is closed to years 7, 8, 9 and 10. However, arrangements have been made for year 11 pupils and sixth form students. These pupils should arrive at school as normal."

7.3

Click the 'submit' button.

STEP 8: CONFIRMATION EMAIL

8.1

An email will be sent to your registered address with a summary of the information you have submitted. The email will look similar to that below:

```
We have received the following incident report for your school
< The name of your school will be included here >
-----
< The information you entered in the text box will be displayed here >
-----
If you are unaware of this, please check with your headteacher as soon as
possible.

If you believe this to be a false report, please call 0115 934 3434 as a
matter of urgency to report it as such.
-----
BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports
http://www.ngalerts.co.uk/
-----
```

8.2

School closures will be broadcast on BBC Radio Nottingham and displayed in alphabetical order by school name on the BBC Nottingham homepage:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/england/nottingham/>

8.3

Please note the BBC may attempt to confirm the information provided (using the contact details entered in step 5) before publishing this information.

STEP 9: UPDATING THE SYSTEM

9.1

When the closure date you provided in step 7 has expired, an email will be sent to your account:

Your incident report for "*****" has now expired.
The school closure you reported to the BBC has now apparently ended.
If your school is still closed, you will need to reaffirm this
at <http://www.ngalerts.co.uk> as a matter of some urgency.
Thank you.

BBC Radio Nottingham : School Closure Reports

9.2

If your school is due to re-open and the information you originally provided is still accurate, you do not have to log-in to the system again. The school closure will be removed from the website once the expiration date has passed.

9.3.

If your school is to remain closed, you will need to log-in to the system again and update the details accordingly.

Appendix 1: Planned closures

If you know more than one working day in advance that your school is to close (e.g. due to industrial action) please follow the actions below as soon as possible.

Reporting a planned school closure		
1	<p>Send an email to fairaccess@nottsgov.uk and to disruption@nottsgov.uk.</p> <p>This communication should be sent as soon as possible so that the required local authority teams are notified and support provided as required</p> <p>Within the subject field, please include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text 'PLANNED SCHOOL CLOSURE' • The name of your school • Ask the NCC recipient to confirm receipt to ensure security and prevent misinformation. <p>The following details should be included in this email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name, address and DfE number of your school • Your name and contact details • The cause of the closure • The estimated length of time of the closure 	⑨
2	<p>Consider using other methods of communication to inform pupils, parents / carers, staff and governors in advance, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing letters to parents / carers • Updating the school website • Using text messaging systems • Using social media • Using telephone trees • Updating the school notice board. • Updating governors 	⑨
3	<p>Contact any relevant services which need to be informed of the closure, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended services, wrap-around care, clubs etc. • Transport & Travel Services • Catering & Facilities Management Services • Providers of respite care. 	⑨
4	<p>The day before the closure, report the closure via NG Alerts. If this system is unavailable for any reason, please follow the back-up arrangements in Appendix 3 instead.</p>	⑨

5	Consider having members of staff present at the school entrance at the start of the day to ensure that any pupils who do arrive are informed of the closure and to check they are able to return home safely.	⑨
6	If partially closed due to industrial action, consider arrangements to monitor any picketing that might occur and ensure pupils and staff are able to access the school. Industrial Action Guidance	⑨

Appendix 2: Unplanned closures

If your school is subject to an unplanned closure (e.g. due to severe weather) please follow the actions below as soon as possible.

Reporting an unplanned school closure		
1	<p>Report the closure via NG Alerts. If this system is unavailable for any reason, please follow the back-up arrangements in Appendix 3 instead.</p> <p>Send an email to fairaccess@nottsc.gov.uk and to disruption@nottsc.gov.uk.</p> <p>This communication should be sent as soon as possible so that the required local authority teams are notified and support provided as required</p> <p>Within the subject field, please include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text 'PLANNED SCHOOL CLOSURE' • The name of your school • Ask the NCC recipient to confirm receipt to ensure security and prevent misinformation. <p>The following details should be included in this email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name, address and DfE number of your school • Your name and contact details • The cause of the closure • The estimated length of time of the closure 	⑨
2	<p>Consider using other methods of communication to inform pupils, parents / carers, staff and governors, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving a message on the school answer machine • Updating the school website • Using text messaging systems • Using social media • Using telephone trees • Updating the school notice board. • Updating governors 	⑨

3	<p>Contact any relevant services which need to be informed of the closure, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended services, wrap-around care, clubs etc. • Transport & Travel Services • Catering & Facilities Management Services • Providers of respite care. 	⑨
4	<p>At least one member of staff should be present at the school entrance at the start of the day to ensure that any pupils who do arrive are informed of the closure and to check they are able to return home safely.</p>	⑨
5	<p>As necessary, carry out these actions on a daily basis to report that the school has reopened (or to confirm it is closed for another day).</p>	⑨

Appendix 3: Back-up arrangements for NG Alerts

If NG Alerts is unavailable for any reason, please follow the actions below.

Reporting a school closure (if NG Alerts is unavailable)		
1	<p>Send emails to radio.nottingham@bbc.co.uk fairaccess@nottscg.gov.uk disruption@nottscg.gov.uk.</p> <p>This communication should be sent as soon as possible so that the required local authority teams are notified and support provided as required</p> <p>Within the subject field, please include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The text 'PLANNED SCHOOL CLOSURE'• The name of your school• Ask the NCC recipient to confirm receipt to ensure security and prevent misinformation. <p>The following details should be included in this email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name, address and DfE number of your school• Your name and contact details• The cause of the closure• The estimated length of time of the closure <p>Please note this email will need to be sent every day while the school is closed. Any information you provide in this email may be made public and broadcast on the radio. You must ensure the school does not include any sensitive information within this email.</p>	⑨
2	<p>Contact any relevant services which need to be informed of the closure, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extended services, wrap-around care, clubs etc.• Transport & Travel Services• Catering & Facilities Management Services• Providers of respite care.	⑨

3.	<p>Consider using any other methods of communication with pupils, parents / carers, staff and governors, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving a message on the school answer machine • Updating the school website • Using text messaging systems • Using social media • Using telephone trees • Updating the school notice board. • Updating Governors 	⑨
4.	At least one member of staff should be present at the school entrance at the start of the day to ensure that any pupils who do arrive are informed of the closure and to check they are able to return home safely.	⑨
5.	As necessary, carry out these actions on a daily basis to report that the school has reopened (or to confirm it is closed for another day).	⑨

HR Severe Weather Guidance

Appendix A: Severe Weather conditions – Guidelines for managers

1. Introduction

- 1.1** In the event of a period of severe weather conditions, e.g., snow, fog, floods etc. Corporate Directors will need to manage the situation within their department in order to continue to maintain County Council services, feeding into the corporate Risk Safety and Emergency Management Board through their departmental Business Continuity lead officer.
- 1.2** However, this must be balanced against the need to consider the extremity of prevailing and anticipated weather conditions. These guidelines have been prepared to assist managers in all departments but are not exhaustive.

2. Maintaining Services

- 2.1** All avenues should be explored to continue to maintain County Council services. Where necessary county council services will operate remotely. Where on site attendance is required, managers may wish to consider minimal cover being provided by employees who do not have particularly long or difficult journeys home, or by those who do not have specific personal or domestic needs. Also the possibility of diverting services elsewhere as well as using any locally agreed measures that are already in place for emergencies of this nature.
- 2.2** Where cover is required in critical service areas managers may request that staff work additional hours on a volunteer basis. Time off in lieu will normally apply in these circumstances.
- 2.3** In exceptional circumstances, managers may consider it necessary to close an establishment. This should be done in consultation with the Corporate Director or their representative. Suitable notices should be displayed at the entrance of premises to inform the public of the closure and how they may obtain emergency assistance if needed. The county council website, intranet, answering machine messages with appropriate details should be used where required. Blanket notification of closures using e-mail should only be used where all of the service is affected.
- 2.4** Where a decision has been taken by a Head Teacher to close a school teaching and support staff should be expected to work remotely in line with the school's contingency arrangements.
- 2.5** Head Teachers should consider the option that school staff report for work to engage in professional activity even where a decision has been taken to close a school to pupils.

3 Employment Issues

- 3.1** Employees should make all reasonable efforts to travel into work during periods of severe weather.

3.2 Where managers are satisfied that this has occurred, then employees should not be penalised for non/part attendance. As a general guide, employees should be managed in line with the relevant school procedures and paid for absences due to severe weather conditions if: -

- the manager is satisfied that every attempt has been made by the employee to attend work.
- their place of work is closed due to the loss of power/water supplies or damage caused by the weather.
- normal care arrangements break down at short notice e.g. school closures.

Any unauthorised absences should be reported in the usual way. Schools should ensure that staff can work remotely if required and regularly reminded of the school's policy. Wherever possible leave required to look after children is shared equally between carers

3.3 Where appropriate, managers should require staff to work from home or an alternative Local Authority workplace, in line with the council's guidelines on Homeworking (see Section B35 Health and safety manual.

3.4 Managers should also consider the potential for staff to use flexi time provisions (see Section D 26 Personnel Handbook) to manage their journey into work as necessary.

3.5 In some circumstances, it may also be appropriate, by mutual agreement, to treat an absence due to severe weather as part of an employee's paid annual leave.

3.6 Where employees remain at work to continue to provide County Council services, heating must be maintained at the appropriate level and not turned down. Security must also be maintained, and it is suggested that, where practical, there should be a minimum of two people in those premises which are remote or deemed to be vulnerable.

3.7 Managers should monitor prevailing weather conditions and the ongoing availability of public transport and risk assess these factors, balanced against critical service needs, to reach and communicate a decision on allowing staff to leave work early / continue to work remotely, if necessary, in order to maintain a safe environment for employees when leaving their place of work, particularly where buildings are isolated.

4. Conclusion

4.1 In a period of severe weather conditions it is hoped that, with the co-operation and flexibility of managers and employees, arrangements can be mutually agreed in order to minimise the effects on County Council services and its workforce.

4.2 Where Managers have evidence that there may be abuse of these guidelines then the council may treat absence, or lateness, as unauthorised absence.

Appendix B: Guidance for head teachers and nominated property officers about managing building access routes during periods of snow and ice

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Health and safety legislation requires employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe access to, and exit from, premises used as a workplace. This guidance is issued to assist you in the task of maintaining safety during bad weather, particularly ice and snow.

2. Responsibilities and arrangements

- 2.1** During adverse weather conditions, the overall responsibility for making arrangements for the clearance of snow and ice and the spreading of salt/grit rests with the Head Teacher or Nominated Property Officer. This responsible person should determine how on site resources are best used particularly the priority areas for snow and ice clearance and the application of salt/grit. A plan for dealing with severe weather should be drawn up in good time for each site.
- 2.2** Implementation of the plan will normally be the responsibility of site-based employees but they may want to refer to the responsible person for advice in particular circumstances. Details should be drawn to the attention of all employees working on the premises so they are aware of the safest ways of entering and leaving the premises. Reasonable steps must be taken to inform service users and the public of the arrangements.
- 2.3** Adults, including carers of people in their charge, are expected, legally, to behave as reasonable people. They need to take responsibility for the choices they make during severe weather, although NCC is expected to provide information to inform those choices. Ultimate responsibility for employee's health and safety in LA maintained schools rests with NCC. Schools should ensure that all appropriate risk assessments are completed and up to date.

3. Factors to be taken into account in drawing up the arrangements

- 3.1** Factors that should be considered when making decisions about what counts as reasonable steps are:
- a. The number and nature of people accessing the building
 - b. The availability of employees able to implement the severe weather plan
 - c. The scale of any clearance operations
 - d. The nature of the site
- 3.2** Where there is early warning of snow or icy conditions, the Responsible Person should consider arranging for priority areas to be salted and gritted in advance. Clearly the priority will be for maintaining the main pedestrian access route to the building. The responsible person will need to use their discretion in determining other priority areas that

people may need to use. Signage and other information should be used to inform people about which access routes to use. Snow and ice clearing duties should as far as possible be counted as part of normal working hours of caretaking staff, and as such, other non-essential duties may have to be left. If this causes particular difficulties, contact your caretaking Area Manager.

- 3.3** As a general rule, NCC is not expected to fully treat or clear its car parks. However, pedestrian routes to and from the car parks must be considered and also whether it is reasonable to clear car park spaces for disabled drivers or specialist transport.
- 3.4** All staff should be reminded of the need to wear appropriate footwear when coming to work in severe weather conditions as it will seldom be possible to clear all snow and ice from a site. In particular, walking from a parked car to the nearest access path may be more hazardous. Pupils, service users and visitors should be made aware of the arrangements so far as it is reasonable to do so.
- 3.5** Whatever action is taken, care must be taken not to make ground conditions more hazardous than if no action was taken. Ultimately, decisions about what is reasonably safe is a matter of judgment on the day and this may need to be revised as the weather changes.

3.6 See also:

NCC Winter Weather Plan, Section 3 “Weather Forecasting Capabilities” NCC Winter Weather Plan, Section 5 “Schools” NCC Winter Weather Plan, Appendix 2 “Priority Sites” Service Business Continuity Plans

4. Supply and storage of salt and grit

- 4.1** In the interests of safety it is advised that salt/grit is the most effective and economical method of over- covering slippery conditions. The Responsible Person must make arrangements to ensure that a sufficient supply of salt and grit is available for use by designated employees at the start of the cold season. Supplies should be ordered well in advance of adverse weather conditions. An appropriate container will enable a reasonable amount of salt and grit to be kept on site ready for use. The container also overcomes the problem of finding a suitable storage space for this bulky and occasionally used commodity. When ordering salt and grit, give consideration to the ability of employees to handle the bags and apply the mixture.

4.2 Important

In the past, there has been at least one instance of pupils in a first school picking some crystalline salt granules off the playground and tasting them, thinking they were snow or ice particles. Heads Teachers and NPOs of buildings with young children are therefore advised to purchase salt/grit mixture rather than pure crystalline salt for treating icy surfaces. Children should be warned accordingly.

5. Safety of employees nominated to spread salt/grit and clear snow and ice

5.1 Nominated employees will be at risk of injury from slipping over and from the task of handling grit/salt and clearing quantities of snow and ice. Suitable clothing and footwear will be needed when working outside. The personal capabilities of the individual must be considered and sufficient time allowed for the task taking account of welfare breaks. A balance needs to be struck, especially at small, low occupancy sites, between the risk to the individual carrying out route maintenance and the risk to small numbers of people accessing the building.

6. Monitoring the effectiveness of the plan

6.1 Arrangements should be made for access routes to be inspected regularly following the salting and gritting to monitor its effectiveness. It is recommended that this is done before the end of each session or working day. Additional information including signage about safe routes may be necessary. Check forecasts and weather warnings again and review the plan if necessary.

6.2 If there are any incidents related to the weather conditions or the task of maintaining the routes these must be recorded on Well worker. Include observations about the ground conditions, measures taken to reduce risk and information about the individual(s) involved, including what they were doing and their footwear at the time of the incident.

7. Checklist for head teachers and NPOs

- ☐ Develop a written plan to ensure that clearance of ice and snow and salting and gritting are as effective as possible (See below)
- ☐ Receive forecasts about severe weather
- ☐ Acquire an adequate supply of salt/grit available, suitably stored with appropriate tools for the moving & distributing the salt/grit.
- ☐ Site-based employees have appropriate warm and protective clothing and footwear for the job
- ☐ Communication arrangements exist to ensure that employees, pupils and visitors are made aware of the arrangements for safe access to and exit from the buildings?
- ☐ There is a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for snow and ice clearing activities.

Contacts: The Health and Safety Team at 01623 434032/3

Appendix C: Plan for managing access routes during periods of snow and ice

Property name:

Head Teacher / NPO:

Date: Review Dates:

Weather Warnings

NCC Emergency Planning Team BBC Radio Nottingham / Local Radio Met office:
http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/em/em_forecast_warnings.html

Communication with employees, service users and public (Describe how warnings and advice will be distributed to relevant people)

Details of the routes and areas that will be, where reasonable to do so, gritted and cleared of snow & ice. (Describe routes or provide an annotated area plan)

Location of grit/salt supply and equipment