

Inclement Weather and Related Emergencies

1. The Authority has a statutory duty to provide full-time education for school pupils for 190 days each year. Reducing the pupil year below this figure is permissible only where a closure is unavoidable and it is not reasonably practicable to make up for attendances lost. It is therefore necessary that schools should be kept open wherever possible during spells of severe weather and other emergencies (e.g. breakdown of heating systems, non delivery of fuel etc).
2. Points to be borne in mind in deciding whether or not to close a school are:
 - i) The Authority does not make ‘blanket’ decisions to close schools. All decisions must be taken on the individual circumstances of the school.
 - ii) It is preferable to close a school for half a day, rather than a whole day, unless this is really not practicable.
 - iii) Where staff are unable to reach school, consideration should be given to combining classes rather than closing the school. Every attempt should be made to accommodate children who arrive at school and who are unable to return home before the end of the school day.
 - iv) The school should have in place arrangements for deciding on whether or not to close if the Headteacher is not able to reach the school. The Authority does not expect decisions to be taken without an assessment of circumstances at the school. It is also helpful to consult neighbouring establishments so that where possible a co-ordinated response to the situation can be made.
 - v) The Authority should be informed and the Chair of Governors should be consulted about all closures, unless this is not possible.
 - vi) Decisions to close should normally be for no more than two days and reassessed regularly thereafter.
3. Where the school is closed, it may be appropriate to use local radio as part of the strategy for informing parents. Local radio stations have been advised to regularly check the Staffordshire County Council Emergency School Closure website:
(<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/schoolsandcolleges/emergencyclosures>).

The radio stations have been advised to use the information from our website to broadcast school closures to their listeners. Headteachers can enter their school closure directly onto our website by following the instructions given on the Staffordshire Learning Net (SLN).

4. In the event of the school having to close, all employees should be paid normally, regardless of whether they were able to report for duty, unless the Governors believe that individuals did not make reasonable attempts to travel to work and the closure was caused mainly by their non-attendance. The Headteacher should decide whether it is reasonable or necessary to require them to remain on the premises undertaking other duties within their job description. This will depend on:
 - i) paying due regard to matters relating to health, safety and welfare of employees and pupils;
 - ii) whether or not these duties could be carried out at home;
 - iii) whether staying on the premises would create unreasonable difficulties for the journey home, particularly where conditions are deteriorating.
5. In the case of a school remaining open, where the employee does not report for duty, the Governors have discretion to allow normal pay. In determining whether or not pay is to be allowed, the basic issue should be whether or not the employee has made every reasonable effort to attend school.
6. Advice from weather forecasters and the Police for people to 'stay at home' does not constitute an entitlement to pay for staff that follow this advice.
7. Where the Governors decide to withhold pay because of the employee's absence, they should notify the Authority so that the appropriate deduction can be made. This could involve a deduction for less than the full period of absence, if they believe that some of it was justified.
8. Governors are advised not to consider disciplinary action against staff who are absent because of inclement weather.

Online Recording of School Closures User Instructions

Log in to the School Closures System

1. On the School Learning Network go to :
<http://education.staffordshire.gov.uk/Procedures/Closure/School-Closure-Procedure.aspx>
2. Click on the **Head Teacher Log in** link.

NOTE: Schools and academies now use the same login page.

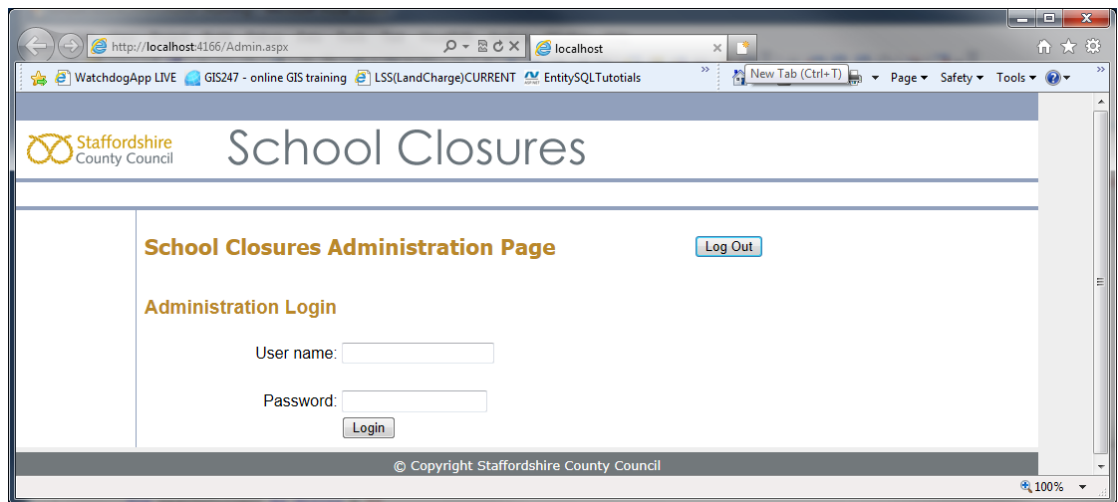


Fig 1. shows the Log In screen.

3. Enter the **User Name** and **Password** for your school closures account. Click the 'Log In' button.
4. If you have logged on successfully the **School Closures Administration** page appears on the screen. Note that your school name, school type and school district will appear on screen along with any current or future closure records for your school (see Fig 2. Below – showing TEST DATA ONLY).

School Closures Administration Log Out

School name: St. Peter's CE(A) First School, Alton
DfES: 3426
School type: First
School district: Staffordshire Moorlands

Add (add the details to each field then click 'Save')

* Start date: (dd/mm/yyyy)
 * Finish date: (dd/mm/yyyy)
 * Closure reason: Please select
 * Description/Information:

Current and Future Closures Show expired closures only

Delete	Edit	Start Date	Finish Date	Closure Type	Description/Information	Created Date	Edited Date
		01/07/2013	01/07/2013	Inset day	Inset Day - TEST ONLY.	14/05/2013 11:07:39	14/05/2013 13:11:55

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Fig 2. shows a data grid with one school closure record for St Peter's First School (this is TEST DATA only).

- The **data grid** (see Fig 2. above) displays only **current or future** closure records for the school. Closure records with an end date prior to today's date will not appear in the data grid unless the '**Show expired closures only**' check box is ticked, after which only expired closures are shown (un-check the box to return to the original setting).

Enter a school closure record

6. To enter a school closure record complete all of the details indicated in Fig 3 below.

School Closures Administration Log Out

School name: St. Peter's CE(A) First School, Alton
 DFES: 3426
 School type: First
 School district: Staffordshire Moorlands

Add (add the details to each field then click 'Save')

* Start date: (dd/mm/yyyy) 01/10/2013
 * Finish date: (dd/mm/yyyy) 01/10/2013
 * Closure reason: Other
 * Description/Information: Test closure demonstration.

Save New Cancel New

Current and Future Closures Show expired closures only

Delete	Edit	Start Date	Finish Date	Closure Type	Description/Information	Created Date	Edited Date
		01/07/2013	01/07/2013	Inset day	Inset Day - TEST ONLY.	14/05/2013 11:07:39	14/05/2013 13:11:55

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Fig.3 shows where to enter the information for a new school closure record.

7. Enter the closure **Start Date** and **Finish Date** – each date must be in 'dd/mm/yyyy' format otherwise an error message will show when you try to save the closure record.
8. Select a **Closure Reason** from the drop down list.
9. You must enter a description or enter extra information about the closure in the **Description/Information** box (maximum 1000 characters, please keep this as brief as possible).
10. After completing the record information and clicking on the '**Save New**' button the data grid will refresh to show the new school closure record.

NOTES:

If your school is to be **closed for one day** then the start date and the end date will be the same. For example, a one day closure on the 15th November 2013 will have a start date and end date of the 15th November 2013.

If your school is closed for a 'Weather related' reason, the closure period may only be for 24 hours. If your school remains closed for two or more consecutive days because of weather related reasons you must enter a new closure record for each day.

You may not enter closures with past dates.

username ara85

password scarstap