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CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## **Emergency Situations Policy for all School Employees 2021-2022**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Emergency Management Plan

This policy is derived from the West Sussex Model Policy January 2010  
(revised Spring 2020)

### **Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)**

Broadwater is a Christian School. We will enable children to become wise, confident, successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.

*The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22*

It is this fruit that, in partnership with parents, we will instil in the children of our school.

# Emergency Situations Policy for all School Employees 2021-2022

## 1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out the general expectations for staff and headteachers/line managers in emergency situations to ensure that services continue to be provided, and that the health and safety of employees are protected.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all school employees.

An emergency situation could include (not an exhaustive list):

- Adverse weather or environmental conditions. (e.g. snow, floods)
- Pandemic illness outbreak.
- Civil disturbance (e.g. fuel shortage, blockades)
- Building evacuation/ closure.
- Major incidents/accidents. (e.g. terrorist attack)

This policy may also be supplemented by additional or replacement guidance, relevant to the particular situation that will be issued by the Director of Operations Learning, Emergency Management or People Management at the time.

## 3. Service Continuity

Even in an emergency situation the school is still required to provide services to the school community. West Sussex County Council exists to provide services to the people and communities of West Sussex, so even in an emergency situation the Authority must do everything we can to maintain services and help people cope with the problems created by the emergency situations therefore where possible and **safe** to do so employees should continue to come to work or make alternative arrangements to work elsewhere.

It is essential that the Governing Body keeps service continuity plans up to date and makes all employees aware of their contents and where they are held.

It is also essential that up to date records of contact details for employees and their next of kin are held. The school office holds these details and all employees are responsible for informing the headteacher of any changes to those details.

### **Safeguarding**

Where the school is accepting employees from another WSCC establishment the headteacher will ensure that checks are undertaken to verify identity (e.g. the employee to provide driving licence). Pay and Employment Services will be able to clarify whether all necessary checks (e.g. DBS) have been completed. Employees without a DBS check should not be unsupervised in a role, where a DBS check would be required. The headteacher may risk assess and allow employees to work in these roles if they are supervised.

It would be unreasonable to expect school employees to provide care or education for young people in circumstances where the school does not hold full details for the young person concerned.

### **Preparation**

In some emergency situations a limited amount of warning is given that difficulties may occur e.g. severe weather warnings. In these circumstances the headteacher/line manager and employees should agree what arrangements will be put in place should the employee be unable to travel to work in the morning. Options that can be considered are outlined below.

## Attending work

- **Short- term emergency situation 1 to 3 days only.**

If an employee is unable to travel to their normal place of work they should immediately telephone the headteacher/line manager to discuss their situation and why they cannot attend work.

The following alternatives should be considered:

- 1) Can the employee work from home?
- 2) Can the employee report to an alternative County Building/School to work?
- 3) Are there reciprocal arrangements in place for the employee to report to the offices of one of our partner organisations to carry out their work?
- 4) Is there an alternative safer method of transport that the employee can use to get to work, taking into account travel advice?

If the above applies then staff will receive a day's pay as normal. However, if none of the above applies, the headteacher will consider whether the employee can make up any lost time over an agreed period, or whether they can take flexi leave or annual leave (where conditions of service allow); if this is not possible the leave will be treated as unpaid leave.

Staff failing to attend work and who do not contact their headteacher/ line manager to discuss alternative arrangements will be required to take a day's leave (flexi leave or annual leave). Where this is not possible the absence will be treated as unpaid leave. The headteacher should inform HR Shared Services the absence is to be treated as unpaid leave.

- **Longer term emergency situation – More than 3 days.**

If the emergency situation looks likely to last beyond 3 days then the headteacher must put into place contingency arrangements for employees and it is the Governing Body's expectation that employees will take every reasonable step to ensure that they work a normal day. Employees should either:

- Travel to work safely (this should include considering walking, using public transport, or car sharing);
  - Agree with their headteacher/ line manager that they will present at a County Council building or school near their home;
  - Where reciprocal arrangements exist, agree with their headteacher/ line manager to report to the offices of one of our partner organisations in West Sussex to carry out their work;
  - Agree with their headteacher/ line manager that they will work from home, if they can demonstrate that they have the necessary technology and facilities to do so and this does not affect essential services;
- Or
- In very exceptional circumstances (and where prior arrangements have been made) report to another council's building or school outside of West Sussex for alternative duties.

If none of the above options are suitable for staff, they will need to take unpaid leave (unless they have outstanding flexi leave or annual leave that can be used to offset their absence, where conditions of service allow).

Any exceptional circumstances will be referred to the Governing Body, who may decide, depending on the circumstances, to waive this requirement.

## Late arrival at work.

Staff arriving late for work as a result of an emergency situation should not suffer a loss of pay, but the headteacher may require them to make up the time on another day.

Wherever possible staff should advise the headteacher/line manager that they are delayed, to enable the headteacher/line manager to plan effectively.

### **Leaving Work Early.**

Where conditions deteriorate during the day, staff will be advised whether they can leave early. If it is agreed that they may leave early they will not suffer a loss of pay, but the headteacher may require them to make up the time on another day.

Employees wishing to leave early through choice, will need to take flexi leave, annual leave or suffer a loss of pay, unless the headteacher agrees that the request is reasonable in the circumstances, in which case the above will apply.

### **Changing Duties and/or Working Extra hours to cover absence.**

During an emergency situation, employees may be asked to undertake different/additional duties or to work additional hours to help the Authority to ensure that services continue to be provided to our customers.

Employees are expected to co-operate with reasonable requests from their headteacher/ line manager either to vary their duties, perform a different function or to work additional hours.

Any requests for employees to vary their duties, perform a different function or change their hours will be reasonable and will take into account employee's personal circumstances and will bear in mind the County Council's overall responsibilities for supporting the people of West Sussex and everyone's part in maintaining the Authority's service.

Headteachers/ line managers should ensure that employees covering additional/ different duties are fit for and receive the adequate basic training and information to enable them to carry out the duties safely and effectively and that the relevant risk assessments take place.

Employees without a DBS check should not work unsupervised in a role, where a DBS check would be required. Headteachers may risk assess and allow employees to work in these roles if they are supervised.

### **Arrangements for pay where additional duties/ hours are required.**

- **Duties at the same grade** – No additional pay will be provided, as this is reasonable within an employee's job description.
- **Duties at a higher grade** – There is an expectation that for a short-term period (up to four weeks) no additional payment will be made for employees undertaking duties at a higher grade. Periods beyond this will be covered by the acting up arrangements.
- **Additional Hours** – Depending on the number of hours worked, provision for compensation for this will be made either through flexi time arrangements, time off in lieu at a later date or pay for the additional hours worked in accordance with the employee's contract of employment.

Staff should not be asked to work in excess of the maximum hours laid down in the Working Time Regulations, which is an average of 48 hours per week. Average working hours are calculated over a 'reference period', which is normally a 17-week period.

### **Cancellation of Leave**

In an emergency situation, the headteacher/line manager may reasonably request that an employee cancel at short notice pre-booked annual leave or come into work when on leave, if requested.

It is our expectation that employees would reasonably co-operate with these requests.

If this occurs then time off will be provided at another time.

## **Cancellation of Training Courses.**

In the event that an employee's training course is cancelled as a result of an emergency situation they will be expected to attend work as normal or, if they are unable to travel to work to report their absence as described above.

## **Data Protection/ IT usage**

In an emergency situation employee, should still adhere to the Acceptable Use Policies and Data Protection Policy and should take extra care to safeguard data if working remotely.

Employees should also adhere to all advice issued about usage of remote access to ensure that service continuity can be maintained and that network resources are not overloaded.

## **4. Building Closure/Evacuation**

**In the event of a fire, bomb scare or other situation requiring the immediate clearance of the building, the building should be evacuated in accordance with the fire evacuation procedure. All employees should report to the relevant muster point and under no circumstances should re-enter the building or leave the muster point until instructed.**

**In certain circumstances it may be necessary to close a building for health and safety reasons. When notification is given that a building is to close, the headteacher/line manager is responsible for ensuring that all employees have left the building are not continuing to work on laptops or holding meetings, even if it appears safe for them to be there. They should also notify anyone working off site, who needs to return to the building that they cannot enter until notified. Although employees should ensure that all personal belongings are taken with them, there may be occasions where this is not possible (i.e. they have returned following attending a meeting off site).**

**Arrangements should be made with the headteacher/line manager for the recovery of personal items.**

If it becomes necessary to close a building or evacuate it for more than a few hours or for a period of time, then the provisions set out in section 3 Service Continuity will apply, where this is not possible then the time off will be paid

## **5. Leave to Care for Dependents**

As a result of an emergency situation an employee may be required to stay at home and care for a dependent. (this does not apply to single one off or localised school closures, or ill health of a dependent when the Governing Body's standard arrangements with regard to care for dependents will apply).

If the employee is unable to attend work then the employee should telephone the headteacher/line manager immediately to advise them of their situation.

If the absence is short term, and the work is suitable then the headteacher/line manager may agree that an employee may work from home.

If it is not possible for the employee to work from home the headteacher/line manager may agree that the employee can:

- 1) Where conditions of service allow take a day's leave/ flexi leave
- Or
- 2) Make up the missed hours over a set period of time.

If none of the above apply the absence will be treated as unpaid.

If the situation becomes prolonged (more than 3 days) then employees should make alternative arrangements for the care of their dependents and report for work as described in the section Attending Work (Longer term emergency situation - More than 3 days) above. If this is not possible they should discuss the situation with their line manager and agree where practicable that the time be made up over an agreed period. Otherwise absence will be unpaid, although this should be a last resort.

## **6. Pandemic Illness**

In the event of a pandemic illness, guidance will be issued at the time as to how employees can protect themselves and how to respond to the situation.

## **7. Sickness Absence**

In an emergency situation sickness absence should be notified and paid as normal and the usual sickness certification will be required and procedures will be followed unless otherwise advised.

For details of the sickness policy, how to refer someone to Occupational Health and the rehabilitation policy please contact the school office.

## **8. Personal Protective Equipment**

The headteacher/line manager should ensure that all employees, even those undertaking duties on a temporary basis are issued with appropriate personal protective equipment, where appropriate, and are adequately trained on how to use it.

## **9. Fuel/Equipment**

In certain circumstances some employees may be issued with fuel or equipment to enable them to continue to carry out their work.

Employees should take care to store the equipment safely and use the fuel wisely. They should also take care to ensure their own health and safety whilst carrying out their duties by adhering to the lone working policy (where appropriate).

In the event that an employee is found to be misusing, selling or sharing with non-authorized personnel fuel or equipment supplied to do their job, disciplinary action may be considered

## **10. Vaccinations/Medication**

In certain circumstances some employees may be vaccinated or given medication to enable them to continue to carry out their work.

Employees should take care to minimise the risk of infection by following the relevant infection control guidelines.

In the event that an employee is found to be misusing, selling or sharing, with non-authorized personnel, medication supplied to do their job disciplinary action may be considered.

## **11. Accidents at Work**

In an emergency situation if an employee has an accident at work (this includes a road traffic collision when driving on School/County Council business) the employee should receive the appropriate first aid and medical treatment, if appropriate.

In all instances of accidents at work, the accident must be recorded on line (Heath and Safety, WSSfS) or on form HSW3.

The Health and Safety Team must be telephoned immediately if there is an accident which results in:

- a fatality;
- an amputation of fingers, toes or limbs;
- dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine;
- any fracture to a bone other than thumbs, fingers or toes;
- an event that causes loss of consciousness or need for resuscitation;
- loss of sight (whether temporary or permanent);
- injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours;
- exposure to asbestos particulate;
- an acute illness caused by a hazardous substance that needs hospital treatment; Or
- likely absence of more than 7 consecutive days because of the injury or illness sustained at work.

The Health and Safety Team will inform the relevant bodies (e.g. HSE, Police etc.).

There are also some dangerous occurrences that must be reported immediately by phone. These are listed in the information on the front of the pads of form HSW3. See also Health and Safety WSSfS.

If the accident is serious enough to require the employee to go home, or to attend hospital for medical treatment, the manager should inform the employee's next of kin and arrange for them to either collect the employee from work or to meet the employee at hospital if the employee is being transported to hospital.

In the event of a fatality, it will be necessary to inform the next of kin. How this is done will depend on the circumstances of the fatality and advice should be sought from the HR Management Support Team, without delay.

## 12. Use of Agency Staff

Service continuity may continue to be provided through the use of agency staff. Agency staff should only be paid for the hours that they work.

## 13. Sources of Support

Advice on the application of this policy can be obtained from the HR Management Advice Team.

The school has its own medical support- see the Business Manager for details or the display in the staff room.

In addition, employees have access to Health Assured the Council's free confidential 24-hour counselling and advice line, they can be contacted on 0800 0305182

In a traumatic emergency situation, a team de-briefing maybe required. This service is provided by Health Assured but is at an additional cost and can be arranged by liaising with the HR Professional Support Team.

### **Other contacts:**

- HR Professional Support Tel 033022 22422 or email [HR.ProfessionalSupport@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:HR.ProfessionalSupport@westsussex.gov.uk)
- Health and Safety Tel 01243 752025 [healthandsafety@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@westsussex.gov.uk)
- HR Shared Services Tel 01243 6(42148) or email [hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk)

Written by Policy & Practice Team (LW) January 2010

Reviewed: March 2020 NH SHRS (updated ref to Education&Skills, Health Assured, accident reporting and HR contacts)

Sense checked: May 2020 KMG SHRS