

St Mary's RC Primary School, Haslingden

Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible. However, in the event of disruption caused by heavy snow, the prime concern of the school must always be the safety of the pupils and staff.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair/ Vice-Chair of Governors. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Insufficient staff members are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
- Conditions on site are dangerous
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.

If the school is to close:

- The closure will be reported to Lancashire County Council and a message will be displayed on the front page of the school website.
- The media (BBC Radio Lancashire 95.5 FM) will then broadcast details.
- Parents who have provided up to date mobile phone numbers will also be alerted to the closure by text message.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty, places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However parents are expected to check both their mobile phones and the website (and/or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts) when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way. The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families who live a considerable distance from the school, are unable to attend, even where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence to the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents the child coming into school, risks their child being registered as an un-authorised absence.

In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents will be contacted by phone either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.

In the event of snow some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, children and visitors will be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this in assembly.

Before and after school opening hours parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground. In icy conditions the caretaker will salt wide pathways as follows:

A) from the top gate to the main front door entrance

B) from the top gate to the infant entrance

Where necessary, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day. On school days where the school is closed to pupils, the pathway will still be maintained during snow and ice weather on a daily basis by the caretaker, so as to keep the pathways clear and prevent build-up of ice and snow.

During adverse weather conditions, as usual, the school will be open from 8.40am so the children can come straight into school. The playground may also be out of bounds to parents and children at the beginning and end of school, and if the Head Teacher decides it necessary, at break times as well. In the Head Teacher's absence the senior teacher on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy