St Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School, Pulborough

A Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum

SNOW CLOSURE PLAN FOR PARENTS

This policy was adopted in: November 2019

The policy will next be reviewed in: November 2020

ST MARY'S CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL SNOW PLAN
ISSUED TO PARENTS

It is the school's policy that it will open on all normal school days even when some poor road conditions exist. However, in the event of a heavy snowfall, we cannot guarantee that staff will be able to attend school and a decision to close or restrict school opening may have to be made.

St Mary's CE (Aided) Primary School will aim to remain open as long as:

- The site is safe to access.
- There are enough staff to safely supervise the children.
- Meals can be offered. This may include a cold alternative.
- A member of the leadership team is on site.

The decision to close the school can only be taken by the Headteacher.

In the event of inclement weather overnight:

- A decision will be made by 6.15am in the morning.
- This decision will be based on a risk assessment made by members of staff who live in Pulborough and can make an assessment of the condition of roads and pathways in the area, the forecast for the rest of the day, and the number of staff who are able to get to school to ensure an appropriate staff:pupil ratio.

If the weather conditions are severe enough to force closure or restricted opening this decision will be communicated to parents by the following means:

- The school website
- Text
- Email
- Local radio
- WSCC website - www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/emergency-school-closures/

It is **vital** that parents read the message themselves rather than rely on a verbal version from others. Arrangements may be very specific and change from day to day.

Restricted opening – where school is open but some staff and pupils may be unable to attend due to weather conditions:

The senior member of staff on site will organize the staffing allocations irrespective of normal responsibilities. If the school is closed, a member of staff (where possible) will be available at school to ensure that messages and communication are maintained for the first few hours of closure. Thereafter the school will be empty.
If there is an enforced school closure, we cannot look after children. However, those already delivered to school prior to a decision being made will of course be looked after until they can be collected.

Dropping Off

Parents are asked to exercise extreme caution when dropping off or collecting children by car because of icy paths and pavements. At the end of the day, the children should be collected as usual but there will be no after-school clubs or staff meetings. Parents who wish to collect their children early due to the road conditions may do so. On such days, children's access to the playground may be restricted. Parents are reminded to ensure their children have warm clothes and suitable footwear in case their journey is disrupted or they are stranded.

Communications

Once a decision is made, the school phone is likely to be very busy and it may not be possible to get through so we would ask parents to check the school website for up to the minute information. The business manager will send a SchoolComms message to parents. Information will also be shared with local radio stations and the Local Authority. However, we cannot guarantee that this information will be broadcast and it is likely that the school website will be updated more quickly than the Local Authority.

THEREFORE PLEASE DO NOT PHONE THE SCHOOL TO ASK IF WE ARE OPEN, PLEASE VISIT THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

Impact on education

On days when the school has restricted opening, children may not be taught by their usual teachers or in their usual classes, as we may not have our full quota of staff. However, we will ensure that we have an educationally valid day. If there is a prolonged closure of the school, staff will advise work that may be completed via the school website which also has a range of resources and links to support learning at home.

Re-opening the School

This will be announced via the following routes:

- Text
- E-mail

- School website
- WSCC website - www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/emergency-school-closures/

Once we return to school, there is every possibility that it will still be snowy on the field and playground. We will go out and play on the field so long as the ground is frozen and there is plenty of snow to have fun in. NO CHILD will be allowed out without appropriate clothing such as gloves and wellington boots or other boots. So please provide appropriate NAMED footwear for children when they return to school.

Monitoring information about travelling conditions from the emergency services and weather warnings from the Met Office

The headteacher will monitor travel conditions and weather warnings via the Internet and will liaise with the Deputy Head, School Business Manager and other staff who live in close proximity to the school to discuss local conditions.

Keeping the school open with fewer staff present than usual

Children's and adults' safety will always be the first consideration.
Teachers who are unable to travel to school safely must inform the Headteacher as soon as possible and not later than 6.45am. A decision will then be made about the possible redeployment of staff to enable the school to remain open. Redeployment may include:

- The Deputy Headteacher/SENDCO covering a class.
- The Headteacher covering a class.
- PPA teachers covering a class

In the event of significant numbers of children not being able to travel to school safely a decision may also be made to combine year groups to enable the school to remain open. However, no class size would be greater than 34 children (30 children in Early Years and Key Stage One).

Resources available to prevent the school closure, mitigate the effects of the weather or reduce risk

A well-maintained supply of salt and grit is kept available on site.

Publicising the school closure to relevant parties

In the event of a decision being taken to close a school because of deteriorating weather, the school will contact:

- The media (e.g. local radio)

- Parents – via e-mail and text
- West Sussex County Council Contact Centre on 0845 075 1007

  (Note: WSCC will alert schools of the Emergency School Closure Dedicated Telephone Number, and when to use it, should one be set up at any time)

The school will also:

- Update its website
- Contact staff from outside providers (eg. catering staff)
- Contact staff and expected visitors

Special arrangements to ensure examinations can still take place

In the event of the school having to close at any time when statutory tests must be taken the Headteacher will seek guidance from the relevant authorities and arrangements may be made for those children taking the tests to sit them at another school in the locality.

Reassuring children and guardians if examinations cannot take place

If no such arrangements can be made, children and parents will be reassured by the Headteacher that Teacher Assessments will be submitted in place of Test Results.

Emergency arrangements in case children / staff are stranded at the school

Parents and families will be informed by text and e-mail. The most senior staff member on site will assume control. Emergency provisions would be obtained from either Tesco or Sainsbury's stores, both of which are within walking distance of the school. Blankets are stored in school in case of overnight stopovers. The situation would be treated in the same way as a residential for the children – an adventure.

HR issues associated with staff absence (e.g. payment of staff unable to get to work)

Staff are advised that if they are unable to get to school safely or if the school is closed they will be expected to work from home. Staff are advised to take laptops home so that they can easily access the school website. Staff will be responsible for updating their class pages to ensure children have appropriate work to complete during periods of school closure.

Provision of remote learning

Class teachers are responsible for keeping their class pages on the school website updated so that children have appropriate work to complete during periods of school closure.