

## **BAD WEATHER/EMERGENCY CLOSURE PROCEDURES**

### **If the school is to close:**

- Information regarding the closure will also be placed on the school's website and the text-messaging service will be used to inform parents.
- Local radio stations pick up this information from the Staffordshire [school closures list](#) (Click here to follow link). The school will ensure that this information is posted at the earliest opportunity.

### **School closure due to snow**

It is our intention where possible to continue to open as normal during periods of inclement weather. Staffordshire County Council does not make a blanket decision to close all schools due to poor weather; the decision to close a school is made by the headteacher. They have to determine whether children and staff can travel safely to and from school and if the site will remain safe throughout the day. We take our responsibilities to educate and care for our students seriously and are aware of the impact on parents and carers if the school is closed at short notice.

However, careful assessment needs to be made about whether opening in snowy conditions is appropriate. There are several factors to consider. These include:

- The severity of the weather at the time
- State of pathways, steps and slopes around the school
- Condition of roads and pathways in the local area
- If the school's heating, lighting and water is working correctly
- Whether catering can be provided
- Availability of public transport and school coaches
- The forecast and likelihood of an improvement or deterioration in the weather

Please note that significant numbers of pupils use local bus services, trains and school transport, and as such the ability of the companies to offer a normal service is an important consideration.

We endeavour to provide parents with as much notice as we can. Our website is regularly updated during periods of poor weather.

On days of potential difficulty due to snow, early inspection of the site is conducted and an initial decision is taken, dependent upon the above factors. Please note however this decision will be reviewed throughout the day as these factors are subject to change: the weather may deteriorate; the forecast may change; the ability of bus companies to operate may change or unforeseen other factors may impact on our ability to operate. Therefore we may be forced to close even during the course of a school day. Again, we will always try to provide parents with as much notice as possible, and make every effort to ensure pupils and staff can leave the school and return home safely. We will communicate any school closure information via the school website and text message.

Where the decision is taken to close the school part way through the day, pupils will not be sent home unless the headteacher is confident of their ability to make the journey safely, gain access to their homes and be safe there. Students will be given permission to contact their parents by mobile phone.

Schools may also need to close due to other unforeseen circumstances such as heating failure, burst water pipe, etc.

Where a further decision needs to be made to close the school for the following day, this will be communicated on the school website and via the text-messaging service.

Sometimes these judgments are difficult. We appreciate your patience and understanding at these times.