

Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible during periods of adverse weather, including snowfall. The decision to close the school, either before or during the school day is one which is never taken lightly and is the responsibility of the Headteacher. Every school has a unique set of circumstances from the layout of the site, accessibility and staff's living arrangements in relation to their proximity to the school.

The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply;

☒ Insufficient staff are able to get to school to keep it running safely; (DBS checked, first aid trained etc) This will depend on the location of the school and the staff.

☒ Conditions on site are dangerous; driveways, roadways, the car park and pathways are hazardous or there are issues with heating on site etc

☒ Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel, for children, parents, visitors and staff alike

If the school is to close;

The closure will be recorded in a variety of ways. Should the conditions around the school be a concern in the morning or there is the likelihood of insufficient staff being able to reach the school safely, (including the site manager), the Headteacher / School Business Manager will contact the Local Authority as soon as possible to state the school will be closed. This information will then be passed directly onto the local radio stations and appear on the Derbyshire County Council Website. Information will also be posted on the school's website;

<http://www.buxworthprimaryschool.org.uk/>

Parents who have ensured we have the most up to date contact numbers and are registered with our text message system will receive a text message directly to their mobile phones. This will be activated by the school admin team or the Headteacher once the closure has been agreed which will be as early as possible.

The school will make all practical efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during periods of adverse weather as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty of the situation places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However parents are expected to check the website / and or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is clear that a closure is a possibility. This helps to keep the phone lines as clear as possible for any outgoing calls which need to be made by the school.

The school also appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive to school later than normal. If the school is closed or closes through the day due to anticipated adverse weather, all children's absence will be officially authorised. However, if parents do not bring children into school due to not being able to travel in because of snow or ice, we request that you telephone the school and inform us of the situation as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each individual case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence with the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school will be closed without gaining confirmation or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevents their child coming to school, risk the child being registered as having an unauthorised absence.

If schools/establishments are in any doubt about any issue relating to adverse weather they should in the first instance contact their area health and safety advisor.

SNOW PLAN

ACCESS In the event of adverse weather, staff will clear a pathway to the main entrance via the school entrance. If the smaller pathway around to the classrooms is too icy, all visitors, including parents and children, will use the main entrance door only to enter and exit school.

Even when cleared and gritted, parents, children and visitors must remain aware that pathways do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this in assemblies. Whilst the Headteacher has overall responsibility for Health and Safety, personal responsibility by staff, parents, children and visitors to exercise caution when entering / exiting the site is requested.

BEGINNING / END OF THE DAY Before school parents are asked to keep to the gritted pathways and send children into school immediately on arrival. This applies to parents dropping children off at the school's Breakfast Club too. Children will be able to gain access to their classrooms from 8:45 am. We would ask that parents do not wait around on site, but leave as quickly as possible. We would also politely ask that parents do not come into the school building with their children as this makes all entrances and exits congested. If you have a message, please pass this onto the office staff on

01663732426 leaving the site using the main entrance to the Administration office only. At the end of the day children will be released to parents on the playground as usual. However, please ensure children vacate the site as soon as the school day finishes at 3:30pm.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES In the event of adverse weather, all staff-run clubs after school will be cancelled.

If less than 50% of the classes cannot open, then the whole school will be closed. This is based upon the number of qualified teachers or HLTAs able to get into school and planning on a ratio of 1:30 in Key Stage 1.

This also includes all PPA time / Management time being void in events of adverse weather to ensure as many staff as possible are available to teach. This in itself can be difficult for parents who may then have children in several classes which may include some which are open and some which are closed. In this incidence, the school cannot

take in the additional children whose classes may be closed but do expect children in those classes open to be in school, unless it is too treacherous for children and parents to travel into school.

LATE OPENING In some situations, it may be that school can open later during the morning when the site manager has been able to secure the clearing and gritting of the pathways and sufficient staff can make it safely into school. In incidences such as these, information to this effect will be posted as previously via our text message service, the school website and local radio stations. If this option is available, then school will open no later than 10.00am due to catering arrangements and preparation.

DAYTIME SNOW CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE AREA Should children need to leave school early due to worsening conditions, a message will be sent out via text and where necessary, a phone call to the individual parents. Such an early release would only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. For staff living some considerable distance away from the school, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether to allow these staff members to leave before the end of the day, ensuring that the classes can be covered until 3:15pm by another member of the school staff.

In the absence of the Headteacher, other members of the School's Leadership team will be responsible for making all decisions relating to the closure of the school.

The Chair of Governors will be informed of any decision to close the school.