

St.Mary's Catholic Primary School

Procedures for Snow and Bad Weather.

Decision to close:

In the event of snow or bad weather, we may have to close the school. This will be an absolutely last resort. Every effort will be made to keep the school open.

Should we feel this is necessary, we will endeavour to make any decisions on the closure of the school by 7.15 am. However, this may not be possible, it will depend on the weather conditions at the time.

It will be the decision of the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher as to whether the school should be closed and for how long. The Deputy Head will make the decision in the absence of the Headteacher.

Reasons for closing the school:

In the event of an emergency or particularly harsh weather conditions, the decision to close is never taken lightly. It will depend on the circumstances prevalent at the time including:

- Local conditions (ease of access to and around the school site).
- How many staff are able to get into school (some teaching staff do not live in the surrounding area and the school must ensure that sufficient staff can travel in to school safely and return home safely at the end of the day).
- The provision of hot school dinners, hot water and heating.
- General health and safety of the school site

School clubs:

School clubs may be cancelled if it is decided that the school site needs to be closed. This applies even if the club is indoor.

It is important that all children and staff are able to return home safely.

Attendance:

In very bad weather and extreme conditions, we will leave the class registers open until 9:30am to enable you to make your way safely to school. This will also prevent potentially dangerous congestion outside the school in icy conditions.

In snow or bad weather, every effort must be made to ensure that your child attends school. To keep your child away from school when they could attend, will result in an **unauthorised** absence being recorded on the attendance register.

For siblings attending different schools:

Each school makes their own decisions whether to close or not. This could mean that two schools in close proximity to each other, make different decisions as to whether to remain open.

Do not assume that because one is closed in an area, all schools are closed.

Should a parent/carer decide to keep a child at home because a sibling is not attending school, then that will be counted as an **unauthorised absence** with the child's attendance record marked accordingly.

Changes to a school being open or closed:

Please note that the school may have to be closed for the whole or part of a day, this may change during the course of the day as weather events unfold. It is always difficult to make the right decision due to the unpredictability of the weather but we will aim to do this as swiftly as we can. Rest assured that any decisions taken will be based around ensuring that your children are kept as safe as possible.

In the event of heavy snow fall during the school day that causes us to be concerned about children's welfare in relation to returning home, we will again text for immediate collection, update our school website and inform the local radio stations mentioned above. Please check your email and mobile phone throughout the day for any updates.

Informing you:

In the event of closure we will send a text and email message to the primary contact for all children.

We will also put a note on our school website

- We will inform Thurrock Local Authority and local radio stations who announce a list of school closures in the region.
- Essex Radio - On 95.3 and 103.5 FM

PLEASE DO NOT 'PHONE THE SCHOOL FOR INFORMATION AS YOU WILL BLOCK LINES OF COMMUNICATION THAT MIGHT HAVE TO BE USED IN AN EMERGENCY.

Keeping warm

Children can be thrilled at seeing snow and want to enjoy it to the fullest extent so on snowy days the children will need wellingtons / boots and suitable outdoor clothes to enable them to go out on the playground.

If they are not prepared, including a change of shoes, they will be unable to go outside.