



St James CofE Primary School

Inclement Weather Policy

17 March 2017

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Approved :

Guidance for parents/carers and staff in the case of bad weather

Criteria

It is our policy to remain open unless we are forced to close because there is a risk to the health and safety of staff and pupils. The Head Teacher is delegated by the Governing Body to make the decision to close the school due to inclement weather conditions in the immediate locality. The head teacher will notify the Chair of Governors of the decision made and consult if there is doubt.

The decision will be taken on the basis of one or more of the following criteria:

- (a) Prolonged and excessively high temperatures (e.g. 35 Degrees Centigrade)
- (b) Prolonged and excessive low temperatures (e.g. Minus 15 Degrees Centigrade)
- (c) Prolonged and excessive high winds that render travel dangerous (e.g. 60 miles per hour)
- (d) Prolonged and excessive snow fall or ice resulting in public transport being cancelled and travel to school not being possible or safe
- (e) Excessive and prolonged rainfall/flooding resulting in public transport being cancelled and travel to school not being possible or safe
- (f) Where 50% or more of pupils/teaching staff are ill and classes cannot be covered/the closure of the school would prevent the spread of illness.

How parents will be notified that the school will be closed

Closure before the school day: If the school is to be closed, parents will be notified by:

- Text messaging
- A message on the school answerphone where it is possible to access the school grounds
- Notifying the LA who will put the information on their website

Such an event is highly unlikely and will be avoided where possible. There is no need for parents to contact the school to check whether or not the school is open. Unless announced in the ways described above the school will be open.

While we understand parental concerns, it would be helpful if parents/carers were aware of the difficulty for an office potentially responding to literally hundreds of calls. Parents should not telephone the school at these times unless there is an emergency.

If the school is forced to close overnight for any other reason, a notice will be also displayed outside the school at the entrances.

Closure during the school day:

- Should the weather turn worse during a school day, pupils will only be sent home if there are satisfactory arrangements for them returning safely.
- Parents will be notified of school closure using the text messaging system using contact details supplied by parents.
- The school will release pupils to adults, who come to collect them if they are on the child's list of people authorised to collect them or with written/phone consent from the parents.

Actions for staff if the school is to close:

- Staff who travel furthest will be released at the earliest opportunity.
- At least 2 staff including a member of the SMT should remain until all pupils have been collected.

- Staff will be contacted if the school is closed using supplied by the office.
- Kitchen staff should notify their suppliers of closure.
- If school is open and staff are unable to reach school for health and safety reasons, they should contact the Head/Deputy and work at home. Such time will be classed as PPA time.

Staff responsibilities for dealing with early closure during the school day

- The Headteacher or person in charge will communicate a decision to close to all staff including the cook using the text messaging service following advice and discussion with the LA and local schools. Non-class based staff will support the office to contact parents.
- Where a child is known to live some distance from the school, every effort will be made to contact their parents as a priority.
- At least 2 staff (preferably including a SMT member) will stay on site until all children have been collected.