



School Closure due to Adverse Weather Conditions Guidance for Parents REVISED February 2021

INTRODUCTION

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will make every effort to remain open during the school day to deliver education to its pupils. However, the Head teacher is authorised to make an emergency closure in the event of disruption caused by severe adverse weather. The prime concern of the school must always be the safety of the pupils and staff.

CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL

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

1. Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
2. Conditions on site are dangerous.
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel.

The decision to close will be made by me in consultation with the chair of governors.

PROCEDURES

In the event of extreme inclement weather, such as heavy snowfall over night and anticipated continuation into the next day, or extreme icy conditions, St. Joseph's will follow the procedures below:

After consultation with our Chair of Governors, Leadership Team, Site Manager, and minibus drivers, I will make a decision as to whether St Joseph's needs to close to children. I will make that decision by 7.30am if that is possible. Please consider that I need to have sufficient information before making a decision.

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1. Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
2. Conditions on site are dangerous.
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty places considerable difficulties upon parents.

Please be patient as it does take a certain amount of time for this decision to then be shared with you. The following systems are used:

- You will receive a ‘Marvellous Me ‘ message if you are signed up to it. You must ensure that school has current details.
- There will be a posting on our school Facebook and Twitter page.
- There will be a posting on our school website page: www.stjosephs.npcat.org.uk
- Local radio
- Redcar and Cleveland’s website: www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/alerts

If you are not informed of a closure by 7.35am then school is open as usual.

If you are not informed that school minibuses are unable to run by 7.35am, then minibuses are running. They may be a little late if travel is slower than usual. Please be patient.

Please don’t ring school, it ties up the telephone when staff are trying to contact the necessary agencies.

ATTENDANCE

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive a little later than normal.

If the school is open and there is snow, the decision as to whether or not to send a pupil to school must be at the discretion of the parents. The school recognises that there will be isolated cases where some children are unable to travel to school. In such cases, parents should inform the school of this exceptional circumstance, we may then be able to authorise an absence.

School cannot authorise absences unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

EARLY CLOSURE

Once the decision has been made to stay open, St Joseph’s will try to remain open for the rest of the day. If the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether children can return home safely later in the day, school may need to close. In such cases the school will ensure that children are collected from school. I can reassure you that children will always be kept safely in school until collected by a parent/carer. Parents have to make the decision whether they need to pick children up early if they so wish if conditions worsen.

SCHOOL SITE

When ice or snow hamper movement around the school, in order to minimise the risk of injury to staff, pupils and parents, the caretaker will ensure that all paths around the school site are gritted or cleared of snow as soon as is practicable.

PLAYTIMES

In the event of snowy weather, please send children to school in wellingtons or boots. We will let children enjoy playtimes outside as long as there is no compacted ice. There will be one section of the field where children can throw snowballs if they wish. Snowballs must not be thrown on the playground or the other field. Staff monitor this carefully.

Prior to pupils being allowed to play outside in the grounds they will be warned by their teachers not to throw snowballs near windows, not to make slides on footpaths and to take extra care when playing in the snow. Pupils will only play outside under the supervision of an authorised member of staff.

COVID UPDATE

There are additional measures that need to be taken into account during the pandemic.

The staff to pupil ratio is particularly important – classes may have to join together as their bubble (e.g. Y3/Y4, Y5/Y6) but bubbles will not be mixed. This may affect our capacity to open.

