



December, 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Emergency Closure (including Severe Weather Conditions)

Once again at this time of year, it is appropriate to remind you of the procedures to follow in the event of emergency closure or for severe weather conditions. We will do everything in our power to keep disruption to your child's education to a minimum and crucially to ensure their general safety. If for any other reason such as a failure in the heating system or gas leak for example, I have to apply a full or partial closure, the same procedure will apply. To achieve this, we rely upon your co-operation in the following areas:

1. Overnight Developments – should overnight weather conditions in Ipswich deteriorate, I shall consult early in the morning with the relevant authorities such as the Local Authority, to determine whether conditions are local or general. If conditions are sufficiently bad and I decide to close the school, I shall then ask the Local Authority to inform local radio. Parents should therefore tune in to BBC Radio Suffolk as early as possible for information relating to schools, from approximately 6.30a.m. onwards. Confirmation of closure will also be found on our website. If the school remains open and parents have a genuine concern about children travelling to and from school, they should, at this point, decide not to send their children to school on this day. In this case, this will count as an authorised absence. This will apply to other overnight developments which cause the school to close.

2. Daytime Developments – should conditions begin to deteriorate during the course of the school day, I will again consult with the Local Authority who will again inform local radio if the school is closing early in order that students can reach home in safety. Where we have been given parents' e-mail addresses, or parents have registered with 'ParentMail' we will also inform them via this method and details will be displayed on the school website. We will endeavour as a school not to close once we have opened unless safety is compromised. We will give very careful consideration as to whether to open or not in adverse weather conditions. However, if the decision is made to open the school, then it is most likely that the school will remain open for the duration of the school day unless again, safety is compromised.

In the event that we do close early, senior staff will remain on site until all students are on their way home. If any student either faces, or anticipates any difficulty, please be assured that they will be allowed to remain safe in school until their particular situation is satisfactorily resolved. Therefore, they will not be in any danger.

Cont.



PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR HOW YOU CAN HELP AND PLAN AHEAD

PARENTS ARE REQUESTED:

a) Not to telephone the school for information:

Our telephone lines need to be kept clear for emergency use. All information will be made available to parents as outlined above. Parents are also requested not to arrive at school with the intention of taking their children home before the end of the normal school day. This disrupts further the smooth running of lessons and raises the expectation that others may go home. If you feel this is in any way a likely eventuality, children should be kept at home at the outset.

b) To listen to BBC Radio Suffolk and look at our website:

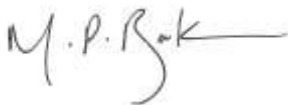
These are the definitive sources of information for a guide on local conditions. These will help you to decide on the basis of the information, together with your own assessment of conditions in your locality, whether or not to send children to school. (Please do not solely rely on information from other local radio stations as this may be conflicting or in fact from social media reports that may be generated from incorrect information). Despite the fact that some students may worry that their attendance records may be adversely affected by not arriving in school on days affected by severe weather conditions, parents need to be mindful that the risks in their children attempting to reach school are often unacceptably high. Additional worry may also be caused to staff and to parents in the arrangements necessary for children to return home. I would also stress that children's attendance records would not be adversely affected by an absence caused by severe weather conditions.

c) To make your own emergency arrangements well in advance:

By ensuring in the case of older children that they have a key to give access to their house and in the case of less independent children, by arranging for a trusted and responsible adult or relative to receive their children if they return early from school. Please arrange for your children to be able to contact them or a responsible adult in case of emergency if for example your child should become stranded.

In summary, in every eventuality, **safety of students and staff is paramount** and this is the key factor when making 'Emergency Closure' decisions. We realise that some students have long journeys to school; equally, teaching is now a commuting profession and some staff travel from outside of the area.

Yours faithfully



Matt Baker
Headteacher