

St Andrew's C.E. Primary School

Policy for Adverse Weather / Potential School Closures



Mission Statement

'St. Andrew's School seeks to be one in which high educational standards are developed from a firm Christian basis and which fosters sound Christian understanding and values and ideals'

In particular, we aim to:

- *enable all our pupils to develop their full potential and to grow in understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values;*
- *provide an environment in which the importance of good relationships is seen and can encourage the pupils in their own understanding and relationships;*
 - *show concern for the welfare of all who work in the school;*
 - *strengthen the links between school, church, home and the wider community.*

Our school seeks to achieve these aims by organising the curriculum in such a way that it is relevant to the needs of our children.

There is also involvement of the school in the work and worship of St. Andrew's Church.

With God's help we aim high

Overview

Schools may be unable to open for a variety of reasons including:

- breakdown in the heating
- frozen or burst pipes
- power cut/failure
- inaccessibility of roads and/or the site due to very heavy snowfall or other adverse conditions

Severe Weather

Should there be severe weather, please note the procedures below

1. Parents will be notified by text as soon as the decision has been made to close the school
2. The school website (www.standrewsbolton.co.uk) will be updated with a notice as soon as possible, indicating a date and time of notification.
3. www.bolton.gov.uk will be updated as often as appropriate with severe weather warnings. The website also includes this guidance for parents and others who may be concerned about school closures.
4. We will advise TowerFM 97.4FM and BBC Radio Manchester 95.1FM

The headteacher will make the decision to close the school based on the following information:

1. How do we decide whether the school will be open or not?

If the headteacher, or deputy headteacher in their absence, undertakes a risk assessment and deems that the school is safe to operate, the school will be open.

2. What is taken into consideration when making the decision?

The main factors include whether the school is safe with some clear paths to enough entrances and, very importantly, how likely it is that enough members of staff will be able to arrive at school before the children for the ratios to be adequate. This is a difficult decision as staff are often held up in traffic during the time that the decision is being made and cannot be certain when they are likely to arrive on site.

3. When is the decision made?

Enough time needs to be made for the site supervisor to make the site safe, for the headteacher and/or the deputy headteacher to arrive and undertake a risk assessment and for staff to make contact and indicate how likely they are to arrive on site before school starts. We aim to make the decision as to whether to open school between 8:00am and 8:15am, giving parents at least half an hours' notice.

4. What happens when the decision has been made?

When the decision has been made, parents will receive a text informing them of the decision, the information will be posted on the school website and the local radio stations will be notified.

5. What if parents are late when bringing their children because of the adverse weather conditions?

If the school is open, a decision will be made, dependent on the road conditions as to whether to extend the school registers. Parents will be notified of this by text and on the school website. This means that additional time will be given for parents to bring their children to school and the register will close later. This is done to support parents and help ensure safe driving to and around the school.

6. What if the school has to close during the school day?

If the conditions become severe during the school day, a decision may be made to close the school. Should this happen, parents will receive a text informing them of the decision and it will be posted on the school website. An appropriate number of adults will remain on site with the uncollected children, until parents arrive. (See further details below)

7. Who will receive the text?

Please be aware that our text messaging service only allows for registering one number per family for technical reasons. This means that the mobile number you have provided to the office via the data collection form will be receiving the text. Please make sure that the school has updated numbers at all times, otherwise you will not receive these important messages.

8. Are parents given the choice whether to collect?

When conditions are poor, but not severe, a decision may be made to allow parents to collect children early if they wish to do so. This is done to support parents in difficult weather and the resulting traffic conditions, and to limit the number of cars and people using the roads around the site at any one time for safety reasons. Again, you will be sent a text informing you of this decision and the time from which children can be collected. Any Key Stage 2 (Junior) pupils who normally walk home by themselves will not be allowed to leave prior to 3:30pm unless collected by an adult (if the adult is not the parent, the parent must be inform school as to the arrangements made).

9. How will releasing the children be organised in the event of an early school closure or early collection by choice?

In order to ensure safe use of the site and safe handover, the school will apply the following procedures:

- Prior to the usual end of day dismissal times (KS1 - 3:20pm; KS2 – 3:30pm) adults collecting children should come to the main entrance / reception area.
- Only the parent/carer or adults noted on the admission form should collect children unless school is informed of an alternative arrangement

- Only a responsible person of 16 years or older may be delegated to collect children
- Parents should be aware that staff managing the handover may not know them or the designated adult collecting them so they will be asked to identify themselves and children will be asked they know who the adult is.
- The school will do everything reasonable to ensure an efficient and safe handover in these situations and will expect the full support of parents. This may mean a period of waiting whilst children are collected and identities verified.

10. Could these procedures change?

The school reserves the right to change these procedures if necessary and, at short notice. If this happens it will be based on safety and staffing capacity.

Please be aware that it may not be possible for the school to answer telephone calls during school closure or early collection.

In the event of an unexpected school closure, it may be possible as an emergency option to contact the Out of School Club which may still be running on 07927035707.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL

Please be aware that during bad weather, only the main road, Newbrook Road, will be gritted, therefore Crescent venue may be dangerous. This is not the responsibility of the school and parents must make the decision if they can drive safely on to this road. We do not close the school for this reason as all roads may be unsafe in bad weather and drivers take the decision themselves about whether it is safe to drive. **Please allow extra time for your journey**

It would be a great help if families could walk whenever possible or even park a little way away from the school and walk the last part to avoid congestion and danger to pedestrians, including our children, and other cars.

Please also remember that the school car park is for the use of staff, contractors and visitors only.

Our gritting procedure is as follows:-

1. Path past the car park to the main entrance.
2. Path from the top infant gate to the infant entrance nearest Year 2.
3. Path around the school building from the car park to the upper junior entrance and on to the lower junior entrance.

Mr McKend may be gritting alone if all staff are deployed in school and this may take some time. We request that you look out for instructions on notice boards left out to inform people about the safest access points

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

1. Ensure that school has the most up to date contact details and checking for text messages regularly, on the first listed mobile number (then passing those messages on as required)
2. Check the school website for updated information
3. State your child(ren)'s name and class and identify yourself to the office on arrival.
4. Form an orderly queue when the main entrance reception is busy
5. Wait in a calm and quiet manner for your child(ren) to arrive.
6. Read and understand our dismissal and closure procedures
7. Follow staff instructions

This policy and its procedures are available in the School Information/Policy Section of our website at www.standrewsbolton.co.uk and updated when required.