

Friday 25th January, 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Procedure for Emergency School Closure

As we hit a cold period, with the possibility for school closure due to severe weather or building issues, (for example snow, flooding, loss of heating or power), I would like to remind you of the procedure for closing the school.

1 Closure before School begins (before 8am): A text message will be sent to all parents, a post will be updated on our social media pages and our website flash will be updated. Information will also be broadcast on Radio Cornwall, Pirate FM and Heart FM.

2 Closure during the School day: A text message will be sent to all parents, a post will be updated on our social media pages and our website flash will be updated. Information will also be broadcast on Radio Cornwall, Pirate FM and Heart FM. Children will be collected from their classroom door and signed out to parents by the teacher. If you are happy for your child to walk home alone, or if your child will be collected by someone else, please send a message to the teacher through Class Dojo. Any student who cannot return home, will be looked after at the school until the parents/carers can be contacted.

Please refrain from telephoning the school office for updates as this will congest our telephone lines. We will inform parents directly of any updates.

Where safe to do so, we will open the school as normal, but may consider a late opening or early closure. The safety and well-being of our children will be the first priority in any decision to close the school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Bunting'.

Claire Bunting
Headteacher

School emergency closures

A guide for parents / carers

We recognise that the decision to close a school in the event of an emergency (e.g. snow, flooding, no water or heating) significantly impacts upon you, as parents / carers. This guide outlines the agreed procedure which all schools are asked to follow and offers advice to parents / carers on the key things to consider, both before and after the decision to close has been made.

Guidance given to schools

Guidance and procedures are sent to all schools on an annual basis, usually at the start of the autumn term. To prevent the possibility of fraudulent school closures, schools are required to follow a verification process before providing school closure information. Schools are then asked to:

Undertake a risk assessment, using common sense to determine whether it is feasible for children and staff to remain in the school; and if not, what subsequent risks could arise by sending them home. Before school hours start, schools are also asked to assess if the roads are safe for children to travel to school.

Seek approval from the Governing Board (usually the decision of the Chair of Governors will suffice) to authorise the decision to close.

Notify Cornwall Council and the three local radio stations (BBC Radio Cornwall, Heart FM and Pirate FM). Providing the school follow the agreed procedure, each of the radio stations have all agreed to broadcast details of all school closures.

We will publish a list of current school closures on the Cornwall Council website at www.cornwall.gov.uk/schoolclosures and on our social media channels.

Know your school's procedure

Although schools are asked to follow this procedure, schools should have their own plan of action to be followed in the event of a closure. This should include details of how parents will be notified (e.g. via radio, text message, social media, etc). It is essential that schools communicate their plan to all parents as early as possible, and equally that all parents familiarise themselves with the agreed plan.

Who to contact

If the decision is made to close, you will be notified by the school's agreed notification procedure. Should you need to contact the school directly, please be aware that the line(s) may be busy or unavailable when a large number of parents are calling at the same time.

Useful websites

Cornwall Snow Advice
www.cornwall.gov.uk/snow

Met Office
www.metoffice.gov.uk

Environment Agency
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Devon & Cornwall Police
www.devon-cornwall.police.uk

If you would like this information in another format please contact:

Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY

Email: equality@cornwall.gov.uk Telephone: 0300 1234 100

