



Snow and Ice Procedures



St Mary's Birchley Catholic Primary School

We are always prepared for the possibility of snow disruption/adverse weather during the winter months and as a school have a clear set of procedures to follow when wintry weather is expected.

Our key objective during adverse weather conditions is to ensure that school is able to be opened on a site that is safe and adequately staffed.



The Role of the Headteacher and SLT

When wintry weather is expected, or arrives unexpectedly, the headteacher, SLT and caretaker will liaise closely to ensure that the school site is safe for all and that there is an adequate number of staff to supervise the children.

If the conditions are very severe, the headteacher will make the decision, if necessary, to close the school, or make arrangements to enable children to arrive/be picked up from school safely. This may include a later starting time or an earlier closing time.

Senior staff will be out on the playground to greet the parents and children. They will remind people to keep to the gritted paths.

In the absence of the headteacher a decision will be made by the deputy headteacher.

When a decision has been made to close the school, the SLT will ensure that:

- A decision is made as early as possible in order to give parents as much notice as possible – preferably before 7.00am
- A text message is sent to all parents
- The school website is updated with a closure notice
- Local radio stations are informed of the decision so that a message can be relayed over the air

In the event of heavy snow during the school day a decision may need to be made to close the school with immediate effect. The decision to close the school during the working day is not taken lightly but the overriding principle is the safety and well-being of pupils and staff.



Where a decision has been taken to close the school during the school day:

- Parents will be informed via text message
- The school website will be updated with an immediate closure message

- Parents and carers will be expected to make arrangements for their children to be collected as soon as possible
- Staff who live the furthest away will be released as early as possible to enable them to travel safely
- SLT will remain on site until the last child has been collected



The Role of the Caretaker

As winter approaches, the caretaker will check level of grit and inform the office if more needs to be ordered in anticipation of bad weather.

The caretaker will endeavour to clear snow and ice in time for school opening times according to the agreed routes shown on a plan of the school held in the headteacher's room.

It is the caretaker's responsibility to ensure that designated pathways are signposted, using cones if necessary, and are adequately gritted.



The Role of Staff

Teachers on playground duty on snowy or icy days, will visually check the play areas, and in consultation with SLT, will decide whether it is safe for the children to use the playground. (It may be necessary to cone off dangerous areas).

Only children with suitable footwear and warm clothing will be allowed to play outside on these days. Staff need to check footwear to ensure suitability.

All children will be reminded by staff about playing safely, staying away from icy areas and only throwing snowballs if considered safe to do so by the staff member on duty.



The Role of Parents

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that they keep informed of all decisions made by responding to text messages or website alerts.

School expects parents to collect their children as swiftly as possible if a whole school closure is activated due to heavy snow during the school day.

It is also anticipated that, on snowy and icy days, parents will bring their children to school in suitable footwear, warm coats, gloves and hats. Wellington boots can be changed once in school and put back on again when the children are going outside.

