

St. Michael's C of E Primary School

Adverse Weather Policy

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher, after consultation with the Chair of Governors. 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 for travel.**

If the school is to close:

- 1. The closure will be recorded on the Essex County Council Website by the Head Teacher. This information will be displayed to the public via the school's website:**

www.stmichaelsbraintree.co.uk

The media (BBC Radio Essex 95.3/ 103.5 FM and Essex Heart 96.3/102.6 FM) will also broadcast details.

- 2. Parents who have opted into the scheme will be alerted to the closure using ParentMail activated by the Head Teacher once the closure has been logged with the County Council.**

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions, and the uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However, parents are expected to check the website as their first point of call, when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed. The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances parents should inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation, as the school has a duty to clarify the circumstances of each case so as to be able to formally authorise the absence to the Local Authority. Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into school, risk their child being registered as an un-authorised absence.

Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.

In the event of the school having to close during the day, due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents will be contacted by ParentMail or telephone either at home or work, and asked to collect their child. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. The school will not close until all children have been collected.

In the event of snow some pathways will be cleared and salted. The first pathway to be cleared will be the Clare Road gate. Parents, children and visitors will be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this in assembly.

Before and after school opening hours parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground.

In icy conditions the caretaker will salt wide pathways as follows:

- A) from the Clare Road gate to the front door
- B) from the Main gate to the front door
- C) The path at the back of the school leading to the classrooms

Where necessary, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as it is possible throughout the day.

On school days where the school is closed to pupils, the pathway will still be maintained during snow and ice weather on a daily basis by the caretaker, so as to keep the pathways clear and prevent a build-up of ice and snow.

During significant adverse weather conditions, the School Hall will be open from 8.40am for parents to bring their children inside. All parents should enter the school with their child directly by the main entrance, and report to the office before taking themselves and their child into the hall. Parents are asked to leave the school immediately on dropping their children off.

During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to parents and children at the beginning and end of school, and if the Head Teacher decides it necessary, at break times as well. If it is safe to use the fields, children will only allowed to do so if they are wearing boots. They will need shoes to wear inside school.

In the Head Teacher's absence the senior teacher on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.

Approved by Governors: 15th January 2013

For review in: Spring Term 2015