

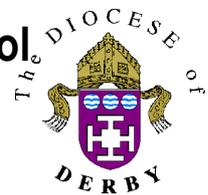


*'Aiming High
Together'*

Calow Church of England (V.C.) Primary School

North Road Calow Chesterfield Derbyshire S44 5BD

Headteacher: Mr D. Sumner



Friday, 18th January 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to clarify arrangements in case of extreme weather.

It is the responsibility of each individual Headteacher to decide whether a school remains open or needs to close, for reasons of safety, during extreme weather conditions. Every school site is different, and there are various elements which influence the decision, which is why you might find some schools are quicker than others to close when it snows. The safety of our pupils, staff and families is our top priority, and will guide all decisions we take in such circumstances.

We will keep the school open for as many pupils as possible, if I consider it reasonable to do so, taking into account many different factors. These include:

- Ground conditions, and whether a safe path from the school gate into school can be created
- Whether sufficient staff are able to get to work safely
- Heating
- Water supply
- Power supply
- Catering

We will use our text messaging service (first), www.derbyshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures (second – this is where the local radio stations get their information), and our Facebook page (third) to communicate any decision to close. Occasionally, based on current conditions and forecasts, it will be obvious the day before that closure is inevitable, but we are usually more likely to leave it until early in the morning, as this gives us a chance of opening if possible. I appreciate that for work and childcare reasons some parents would prefer an earlier call, but this has to be balanced with our obligation to open if it is safe to do so. In some cases, this may mean opening a bit later than normal, to allow time for us to make the site safe. I will aim to communicate any decision to you by 7:30am (earlier, if I can), after consulting with the caretaker and other staff.

We will take into account any credible forecast of weather deteriorating during the day, but changes are not always predictable. Sometimes, if conditions worsen dramatically, we may have to close the school during the course of the day. We know that this can be inconvenient, but we would ask for your understanding and cooperation please, as we would never take the decision lightly and need to put safety above everything else.

When the school is open, we expect children and staff to attend if they can get here safely, considering alternative routes and transport or walking where applicable. Please take care in icy conditions.

When school is open, we always assess the ground conditions. If the ground is too slippery, areas will be designated 'out of bounds' or children will be kept inside for break time. Children may be allowed to play in the snow, if we judge the conditions to be right, but only if they have warm clothing, wellies or other boots appropriate for snow to wear outside, and a change of shoes to wear around school. If the snow is suitable, I might allow snowmen at break time, but not snowballs or sledging on the school grounds. This includes before and after school.

Please ensure that your child has sufficient warm clothing when the weather is cold, and that these items are clearly named. Woolly hats, scarves and gloves are encouraged.

Kind regards,

Headteacher