

Whitchurch Combined School

Policy for Emergency School Closure



If you think the school may have to close:

Check the Bucks CC website

Check school text message

Listen to Bucks Radio

Check with a friend – maybe they have already heard via the usual means if you are having difficulties.

It is the policy of Whitchurch Combined 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 Headteacher in liaison with the Chair of Governors. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- If insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely
- Conditions on site are dangerous
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous to travel
- Boiler Breakdown – temperatures below H&S limits
- Burst pipes resulting in no water or flooding
- An unforeseen emergency

How do you find out if we are closed?

If the school is to close, the closure will be recorded on the Buckinghamshire County Council Website by the Headteacher. This information will be displayed to the public via the schools directory on the BCC website: www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/schools/schools.page We will endeavour to make sure the closure is posted before 7.30am. The media (Bucks Radio) will then broadcast details. We will also text message all parents with the information.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances as we appreciate that such conditions and the uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents. However, **parents are expected to check the BCC website** and/or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

The school appreciates that during bad weather children may possibly 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. We want everyone to arrive safely so please drive carefully.

The school recognises there will be isolated instances where families are cut off, even when 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 prevents the child coming into school risks their child being registered as an un-authorised absence.

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

Closure During the School Day

In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, we will make every effort to contact parents by telephone either at home or work or mobile in order for you to collect your child.

Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. The closure will be posted on the BCC website. No child will be released to another adult without notification from their parents. If it has been confirmed that the school is closing, you may wish to let others in your friendship groups know as this will help us enormously. Please be assured that we will look after all children until they are collected.

We will always try to forewarn parents in writing of any possible closure.

Remote Learning

If the school is closed, we will offer remote learning provision as set out below.

For Day 1, learning will be set on the school website under 'Class Pages'.

- In EYFS – a phonics and topic activity
- In Years 1 and 2 – a phonics, Maths and English activity
- In Years 3 to 6 – a SPaG, Maths and English activity

Further work will be set using a combination Google Classrooms, Class Dojo and the school website. The Class teacher will communicate in advance expectations regarding 'Remote Learning' depending on the length of closure.

Site Safety

In the event of snow, some pathways will be cleared and salted. 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.

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

- a) All access paths into the site and premises
- b) Generic walkways

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

In the Headteacher's absence, the next senior teacher on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Emergency School Closure Policy.

R Mobbs

September 2025