

ST. MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIRKBY LONSDALE

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

In the event of bad weather, it is always the school's priority to remain open and as such the site team will work to ensure that the site is both accessible and safe. There are, however, rare instances where the school might not be able to open as normal as a result of severe weather.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Headteacher. 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.

2. CLOSURE PROCEDURES & COMMUNICATION

If the school is required to close:

- The closure will be recorded on the official **Westmorland and Furness Council Emergency School Closures Portal**.
- The Business Manager or Headteacher will alert local media, who will then broadcast details.
- Parents will be alerted to the closure using the email/SMS communication service activated by the Business Manager or Headteacher once the closure has been logged with Westmorland and Furness Council.
- The school website will prominently display a closure notification message.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents informed as to the situation during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions and uncertainty place very considerable difficulties upon parents. However, parents are expected to check the school website.

3. REMOTE EDUCATION DURING CLOSURE

In accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance on emergency closures, where the school is closed for in-person teaching due to severe weather, the school will aim to provide **remote learning opportunities**.

4. ATTENDANCE & REPORTING ABSENCES

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 individual families are cut off, even

where the clear majority of children can get into school. In such instances, parents must inform the school of the circumstances of this exceptional situation so the school can record the absence under the appropriate statutory DfE attendance code (e.g., Code Y2 for widespread travel disruption or Code Y7 for unavoidable emergency causes).

Parents acting on the assumption that the school would be closed without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the school of circumstances preventing attendance, risk their child being registered with an unauthorised absence.

Statutory Attendance Recording during Full Closures:

In line with DfE statutory regulations (*Working Together to Improve School Attendance*):

- Where the school site is officially unexpectedly closed to all pupils due to adverse weather, sessions are recorded under **Code Y4** (*Unable to attend due to whole school site being unexpectedly closed*). This does not count as an absence and does not affect the pupil's attendance record.

5. EARLY 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, parents will be contacted by phone/text/email either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.

6. SITE SAFETY & CLOTHING

In the event of snow or ice, main 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 worship time.

The school advises all pupils, staff, and visitors to wear appropriate clothing for the conditions. This includes wearing wellington boots or sturdy footwear during snowy, icy, or wet weather.

Before and after school, parents are responsible for children and their behaviour during poor weather conditions whilst on school grounds.

Approved by Headteacher & Governing Board



Headteacher Signature: _____

Date: September 2026