



The Federation of the Church Schools of  
Shalfleet and Freshwater & Yarmouth  
*Together for a Brighter Future*

## SNOW AND BAD WEATHER PROCEDURES

*'Schools should, wherever possible, stay open in severe weather. They play a key role in their communities and by staying open, help both their pupils and parents'*

### Department for Education

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service. As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may need to close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite. We recognise that it is important that our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Yarmouth C.E. Primary School and their onsite preschools, will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice during the winter months.

The government has stressed the importance of schools remaining open, wherever possible, as closures have a knock on effect on parents/carers who are key workers in other areas of the public sector, e.g. Health Services, thus undermining crucial service deliver. The overriding principle is, therefore, for schools to remain open to the maximum degree possible, as is consistent with health and safety requirements, even if it is not possible to run a full timetable.

*'The decision whether to close must, however, be for headteachers as they know their schools and surrounding areas. They should use common sense in assessing the risks and their schools open'* – Department for Education

The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- A sufficient number of staff are unable 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 for travel.
- Essential services are disrupted, i.e. frozen pipes, no heating or electricity

If the school is to close:

1. The closure will be recorded on the school website.
2. The HT/DHT & SBM will email all staff to inform them of the school closure
3. The school will alert all parents/carers to the closure using the Dojo class messaging system
4. The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents/carers 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/carers. However, parents/carers are expected to check the website and/or make themselves aware of the radio broadcasts when it is

clear that a closure is a possibility. Weather reports are broadcasted on Isle of Wight Radio 107 and 102FM who will broadcast weather updates for the local area. Parents/carers are also asked to check weather updates on the internet and the Isle of Wight Council website where details of school closures will be displayed.

5. The school appreciates that during bad weather children may arrive later than normal; parents/carers should endeavour to contact the school to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed.
6. 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/carers 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/carers 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
7. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence
8. In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar unforeseen circumstances, parents/carers will be contacted Dojo and a phone call either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. All parents/carers are urged to ensure that mobile phones are always switched on and audible in case the school are trying to contact them.
9. In the event of snow some pathways will be cleared and salted. Parents, carers, children and visitors will be made aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain dangerous. Children will also be reminded of this at school.
10. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground before and after school opening hours in icy conditions the school site supervisor will salt wide pathways around the main routes and walkways that children and parents/carers use, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.

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

During significant adverse weather conditions, the School Hall will be open from 8.00am for parents/carers to bring their children inside. All parents/carers should deliver their child directly to the front entrance, children should then report to the main hall and the supervising staff member. During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to parents/carers and children at the beginning and end of school, and if the Head Teacher decides it necessary, at break times