



WESTHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL
Bolden Terrace,
Westhouses,
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Derbyshire
DE55 5AF

Headteacher: Miss P McPherson
Telephone: 01773 832518

*Welcoming, Hardworking,
Positive, Supportive*

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ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITION ACTIONS

Parents and carers are to assume that, unless announced otherwise, the school will remain open in adverse weather conditions, including snow.

The school will only close if:

- Advised to do so by the Local Authority
- Met Office warnings advise 'non travel' in and around the immediate vicinity of the school
- Limited numbers of staff at school prevents acceptable adult to pupil ratios

If school does close, you will be informed via the texting service, telephone, school website or local radio news station. **Please avoid calling the school, as lines will be limited as we contact the appropriate authorities.**

Deciding to travel to school or taking your child out of school, even if it is open:

It will be the responsibility of parents and carers to decide if it is safe for them to travel to school. The Headteacher cannot make such decisions on your behalf. In exceptional cases, the school can authorise absence as a result of problems caused by adverse conditions, such as road closures, traffic delays and similar. *However, parents electing to take their child out of school when it is not closed should be aware that the absence may be recorded as unauthorised unless told otherwise.* Authorisation, in such cases, will be the decision of the Headteacher in consultation with the parent and if necessary the governing body.

School should be informed if you deem it unsafe for you to travel.

Limited staffing resulting from adverse conditions or 'other school closures':

Should the number of staff in school be reduced, 'best fit' actions may be taken to meet the needs of pupils, including; combining classes, 'skeleton' curriculum delivery or in extreme cases, some non-academic activities.

Should a change of circumstance occur after school has started, we will inform you of this as soon as we can.

I reiterate that parents are to assume that school is open unless informed otherwise.

Suitable clothing:

In all circumstances children should arrive at school with clothing suited for outdoors, including:

- Hat and gloves



- Wellington boots (or similar)
- A change of foot-wear and socks

A 'common sense' approach to snow

Many schools are of the opinion that snow and children do not mix. I do not agree. Although I understand that children, like all of us, are more vulnerable to slips, trips and incoming snowballs at this time of year, I will not prevent children playing out, or in, the snow.

Of course, careful consideration will take place prior to break times as to the conditions of the playground, snow and ice in order to assess or 'reduce risk', however children should anticipate being outdoors.

Snowballing

When there is sufficient snow, and it is safe to do so, designated areas will be provided in which the throwing of snowballs *is allowed* and areas will be chosen where snowballs *are not* allowed. This way children will be able to make 'clever choices' and be 'responsible' for them, choosing where to play and which experience they want. **Those entering areas designated for snowballing must accept that they are likely to be hit and that they take this risk by playing there.**

It may be useful to discuss and impart your wishes with your child regarding this matter, as they will be responsible for where and how they play.

Therefore, the arrangements for school closure in case of snowfall are as follows. If the snow is heavy in the morning, I will contact all teachers to enable me to determine the level of supervision there will be in school.

If this is inadequate and the school needs to be closed:-

- We will text parents and carers – please ensure that your mobile numbers are up to date on our texting system. If you have been receiving school texts in the last few weeks then we have the information we need – thank you. *If you are not on our texting service, or you experience a bad mobile signal, please ensure that you have made arrangements for another parent to contact you via your land line should they receive a text containing information about school closure.*
- We will send notification to Derbyshire County Council who will have an up to date list of school closures on www.derbyshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures. This was a new system introduced last year by DCC to help schools and parents.
- Local radio will now be emailed school closures by DCC and will make announcements as they have done previously.
- School website will be updated with the latest information.

To summarise.

- The school will close only if there is no safe alternative
- Children should come prepared to go outside
- Every opportunity will be provided for pupils to keep safe, whilst enjoying the conditions
- Working conditions may require adaptation if other schools close or staffing is restricted

Please be aware that children will only be allowed to leave with their parent unless the school has received prior consent.

Yours sincerely

Miss P McPherson

