

Saint Macartan's Primary School



Adverse Weather Conditions Policy

January 2016

Saint Macartan's Primary School

Policy for Adverse Weather Conditions

It is the policy of the 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 Principal.

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 (acceptable PTR).
2. Conditions on site are dangerous:
 - Can pupils and staff access the school building safely?
 - Can pupils and staff be evacuated in an emergency?
 - In an emergency, could the Emergency services access the school?
 - Is the area designated for disembarkation from transport safe for pupils?
3. Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel. Following a detailed Risk Assessment carried out by the Principal, if the school is to close:

1. The closure will be reported to Education Authority (Southern Region) and DENI by the Principal. This information will be displayed to the public via the school's website: www.stmacartanspsclogher.com

The media (BBC NI) will be informed and *may* then broadcast details.

2. Parents will be alerted to the closure using the Teachers to Parents Text service activated by the Principal once the closure has been logged with the Education Authority.

The school will make all practicable efforts to keep parents 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. However, parents are expected to check their text messages (named contact only), the website and/or make themselves aware of the radio/TV broadcasts when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

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 families are cut off, even where 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 Education and Welfare Service. 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.

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 telephone and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.

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.

Before and after school opening hours parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school playground.

In icy conditions the building supervisor (Jimmy Hagan) will salt pedestrian pathways/access routes.

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

During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to children throughout the day. This will be at the Principal's discretion.

In the Principal's absence the Teachers (Mrs Alisa Mc Guinness/Miss Eilish Monaghan) on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Adverse Weather Policy.