



Thornford (VA) CE Primary School

Extreme Weather Policy

Written – July 2013

Update: As applicable

Rationale

Thornford Church Primary School is situated within a small rural village served by minor roads, which can be hazardous during extreme weather. Some of the roads leading into the village can flood, which also can be very dangerous.

The school itself has extensive outdoor areas, which can become dangerous during snow or extreme weather.

Aims:

To ensure that children, their parents / carers and teachers are safe travelling to school / whilst at school during extreme weather conditions. Thornford Church Primary School recognises the threat of death and injuries on roads to pupils, parents and teachers and has prepared this policy to reduce that threat.

- Parents / carers receive early indication of a school closure due to extreme weather if the School Leadership Team (SLT) / Chair of Govs (Vice-Chair if Chair is not contactable) make this decision
- Parents / carers are updated as appropriate with the latest information if the school is closed / closing due to extreme weather
- Pupils understand the potential dangers of extreme weather, whilst appreciating the importance of coming to school
- Children will be taught how to act safely during extreme weather, e.g. appropriate clothing, actions etc.
- The school is aware of the routes commonly used by children and parents, identifies potential dangers, and addresses these dangers with relevant officers at Parish Council and District level, e.g. gritting etc.
- The school will supervise pupils leaving the premises and allocate a Senior member of staff to ensure road safety at the end of the school day
- As a general rule, an appropriate section of the school grounds will be gritted to ensure safety; if this is not possible, pupils will remain inside the building for their own safety
- **Parents / Carers**
- Quick access to information on school closures and updates as applicable
- Parents / carers must ensure that children are restrained correctly in cars, and that their vehicles are roadworthy during extreme weather. *It is not the school's responsibility to check vehicles.*
- Parents / carers ensure their children possess appropriate clothing for extreme weather whilst at school (if the school remains open)

School Closure Procedure

- SLT (Head, or Deputy if the HT is unavailable) will contact the Chair of Governors (or Vice-Chair if Chair is unavailable) to decide whether the school premises are safe to open / operate. *This decision is never taken lightly and will be based on many factors, including adult-to-child age-appropriate ratios, availability of senior staff, and weather conditions (including the forecast)*

- SLT to post the decision on our school website as soon as possible. This will include any updates for parents / carers / staff
- SLT to contact all staff to inform them of a decision to close the school, and to allocate any appropriate work-based tasks from home
- SLT to inform local radio stations (see below) and contact the local authority via its website <http://mapping.dorsetforyou.com/closedservices/schools>
- The school will be re-opened when it is deemed safe and appropriate, applying the procedures outlined above
- If possible and safe, a member of staff living in the village will attend school to notify any arriving parents of the school's closure

School Closure – Parental Information

- School closures are very rare and parents / carers should always assume that the school remains open unless they hear otherwise from the school. However, in the event of severe weather conditions, e.g. very heavy snow or flooding, the school will report any closure to parents via:
- Local Radio: Wessex FM (97.2 FM), HEART FM (96.3 FM) & THE BREEZE FM (105.6)
- Thornford School website: www.thornford.dorset.sch.uk
- Local authority website: <http://mapping.dorsetforyou.com/closedservices/schools>
- Should heavy snow or extreme weather conditions during the school day necessitate an early finish, we will endeavour to make telephone contact with the parents / carers of all pupils