

School emergency closures

A guide for parents / carers

We recognise that the decision to close a school in the event of an emergency (eg snow, flooding, no water or heating) significantly impacts upon you, as parents / carers. This guide outlines the agreed procedure which all schools are asked to follow and offers advice to parents / carers on the key things to consider, both before and after the decision to close has been made.

Guidance given to schools

Guidance and procedures are sent to all schools on an annual basis, usually at the start of the autumn term. To prevent the possibility of fraudulent school closures, schools are required to follow a verification process before providing school closure information. Schools are then asked to:

Undertake a risk assessment, using common sense to determine whether it is feasible for children and staff to remain in the school; and if not, what subsequent risks could arise by sending them home. Before school hours start, schools are also asked to assess if the roads are safe for children to travel to school.

Seek approval from the Governing Board (usually the decision of the Chair of Governors will suffice) to authorise the decision to close.

Notify Cornwall Council and the local radio stations (BBC Radio Cornwall, Goldmine FM, Heart FM and Pirate FM). Providing the school follow the agreed procedure, each of the radio stations have all agreed to broadcast details of all school closures.

We will publish a list of current school closures on the Cornwall Council website at www.cornwall.gov.uk/schoolclosures and on our social media channels.

Social Media

- **Facebook**
www.facebook.com/TFFCornwall
- **Instagram**
www.instagram.com/TFFCornwall
- **Twitter**
www.twitter.com/TFFCornwall

Know your school's procedure

Although schools are asked to follow this procedure, schools will have their own plan of action to be followed in the event of a closure. This should include details of how parents will be notified (eg via radio, text message, social media, etc). It is essential that schools communicate their plan to all parents as early as possible, and equally that all parents familiarise themselves with the agreed plan.

Who to contact

If the decision is made to close, you will be notified by the school's agreed notification procedure. Should you need to contact the school directly, please be aware that the line(s) may be busy or unavailable when a large number of parents are calling at the same time.

Useful websites

- **Cornwall Snow Advice**
www.cornwall.gov.uk/snow
- **Met Office**
www.metoffice.gov.uk
- **Environment Agency**
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
- **Devon and Cornwall Police**
www.devon-cornwall.police.uk

Contact us

Email: togetherforfamilies@cornwall.gov.uk
Call: 0300 1234 101