

THE POCHIN SCHOOL SNOW/ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

The contents of this policy also applies to The Pochin Pre School and The Before and After School Club

(snow also refers to adverse weather)

The Pochin School is committed to providing a secure, safe, stimulating and inclusive environment.

In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow, the prime concern of the school will always be the safety of the pupils and staff. The decision whether or not to send a pupil to school, however, must be at the discretion of the parents, taking into account factors such as local road conditions and the availability of childcare.

The school aims to remain open in the event of snow. We feel this is important for the children's education. In the event of heavy snowfall, we cannot guarantee a normal school day.

However, there are certain factors which may lead to the school closing, such as whether:

- there are enough members of staff to be able to provide satisfactory care;
- the severity of the weather conditions is on such a major scale that it is unlikely that many people will be able, physically, to make it into school;
- the school can provide lunch for the children;
- the school grounds are sufficiently safe for children, parents and staff;
- the school has sufficient heating;
- the school has lighting and hot water across the site;
- external agencies, e.g. police, local government, motoring organisations, etc, are advising against school travel in our region.

If the school is to be open, we will post this on the website as soon as possible and normally by 7.30am on the day as well as notifying you of this by **text**.

When the school is open, we will remain open until the end of the normal school day .

If, for the reasons outlined above, the safest decision is to close the school, we will post this on the website as soon as possible and normally by 7.30am on the day as well as notifying you of this by **text**.

If the school is closed it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that the following events happen:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair/Vice Chair of Governors
- The school website is updated
- Notices are placed on all school entrances advising visitors, parents and pupils that the school is closed
- School is appropriately staffed by teachers/teaching assistants to deal with any pupils who arrive at school unescorted until parents or emergency contacts can collect the pupils.

These tasks do not all have to be completed by the Headteacher, although they have the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out

Staff Attendance

Although, it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for staff to get to and from work, unless directed to the contrary by the Headteacher, then the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff may not be able to arrive before the normal start of school time.

If the school is closed to children, again in severe conditions, staff must make a judgment about the safety of travelling and inform the Headteacher as soon as possible. Staff who live in walking distance of the school must make every effort to attend, provided the paths within the school have been cleared. If staff cannot attend school they must work from home on planning, marking, preparation of teaching resources etc. All staff should be able to access the staff server and access school email.

Clearance of Snow

Within the school site, the school is responsible for snow clearance and the clearance of school paths is the specific responsibility of the Premises Officer/Head Teacher. Volunteers can put their names down to help with the clearing of the snow. When severe weather is forecast, the Premises Officer/Head Teacher should be tasked to lay salt and grit on arrival. If heavy snow falls over the weekend, the Headteacher and Premises Officer/Head Teacher should be in regular contact to ensure the safety of the premises.

The clearance of public roads and public paths is the responsibility of the Highways Department.

Children's safety in school

If there is any question of children's safety being at risk, the school has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the children indoors.

Prior to pupils being allowed to play outside in the grounds, they will be warned by their teachers not to throw snowballs near windows, not throw snowballs at other children, make slides on footpaths and to take extra care when playing in the snow. Classes will take it in turns to go outside with their class teacher, provided it is safe.

The series of frequently asked questions on the following pages should answer any queries you may have.

SNOW POLICY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to contact the School?

There is no need to contact the school regarding your decision to travel or not; this will help avoid blocked phone lines.

To travel to school or not?

Parents have to decide whether it is safe and desirable for them to make the journey into school. If the school is open, and once we have established which pupils we have on site, we will construct a schedule for the day which will include, where possible, relevant academic work - and a range of activities aimed at making the day as productive as possible.

Does it matter what time we arrive at school?

We will expect children to arrive at school on time, but appreciate that this may be difficult. If the children are late it is important that children sign in and register at the front office.

What will happen if heavy snow arrives during the school day?

We will try to stay open till the end of the day. However, if you wish to collect your child(ren) from school before this time, you are welcome to do so, but please ensure you come to the school office.

Anyone struggling to collect their child by 3.30pm, due to poor road conditions, transport arrangements, etc, should contact the school to inform us of the likely collection time.

Will there be after school activities?

There will be no after school activities or clubs other than those usually provided. However, should you be delayed in collecting your child, please ring the school office to keep us informed. As always, we will look after the children

until you are able to get here, but please remember that members of staff will be also be anxious to get home if the weather and road conditions are poor.