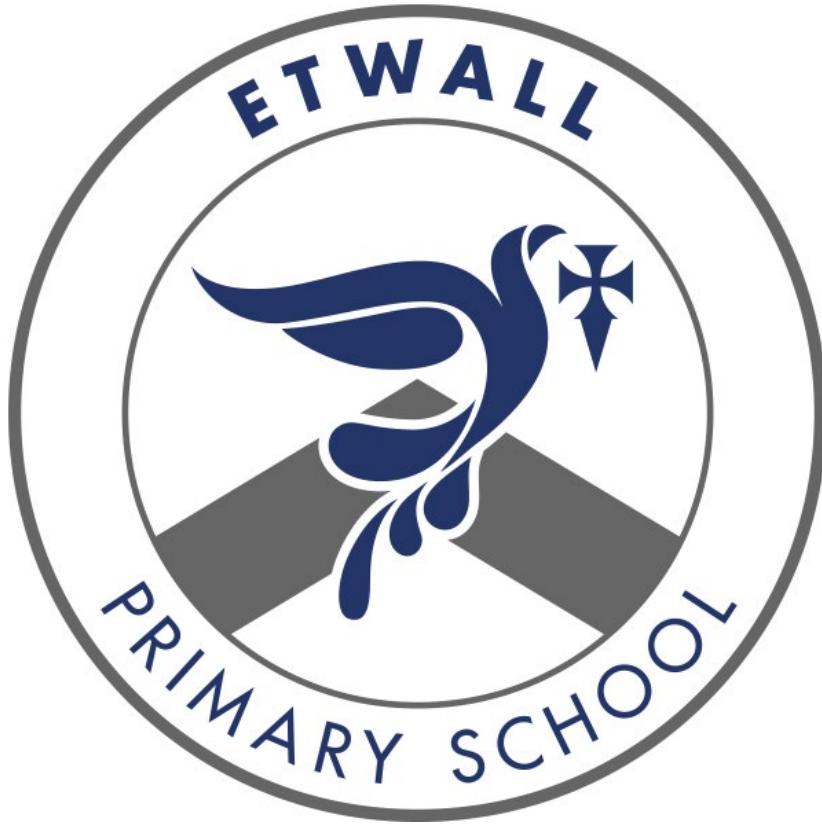


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ADVERSE WEATHER GUIDANCE

At Etwall Primary School we believe that everyone should be included and that there is equality of opportunity for everyone, regardless of race, gender, ability, disability and social factors. This guidance is intended to be inclusive of all in the school and wider school community.

ADVERSE WEATHER

It is the policy of Etwall Primary School to make every effort to remain open whenever possible as long as it is safe to do so. The prime concern when making a decision to close the school will always be the safety of pupils and staff.

The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher, in conjunction with the SBM, DHT and the Chair of Governors. The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- An insufficient number of staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
- Conditions on site are dangerous
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel
- Heating, electricity or water is not available

1. Will sufficient staff be able to reach school to ensure pupils/service users can be adequately and safely supervised? This depends on such factors as location of the school and where staff live in relation to it.

All staff concerned about their journey to school are instructed to contact the Headteacher as early as possible after 6.30am to advise, so that they may determine the level of supervision expected in school that day and estimated times of arrival of staff living further afield. This allows a decision to be made early enough to communicate to parents and staff.

2. Can safe access routes to and from the school gates to entrances be maintained?

As many staff as possible are asked to help clear access routes and a path up the school drive with snow shovels. Grit spreader purchased for use of staff/caretaker for ease. Staff may be asked to park on the road until driveway is sufficiently clear of snow.

Whilst safety on the public highways is not the responsibility of the school this may well play a part in the decision on whether or not to open. It is certainly likely to play a part in any decision on whether to close early if snow should start to fall heavily, especially when coupled with up-to-date weather reports. Travel on the public highway is discouraged unless essential during periods of heavy snowfall schools.

Other options which school may consider include delaying opening until a later time than normal when routes may have been cleared/gritted.

If the school is to close:

1. The closure will be recorded on the school website www.etwall.derbyshire.sch.uk
2. The school will alert parents to the closure using the school apps (Arbor and Class Dojo, for example) or e-mail.
3. The school will endeavour to keep parents informed during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that uncertainty places considerable difficulties upon parents. Parents are expected to check the website and school app and/or check emails.
4. Where the school is officially closed, all absence is counted as authorised absence.

5. 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 the school app, text message, e-mail or a phone call either at home or work and asked to collect their child/ren. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances. All parents/carers are urged to ensure that mobile phones are always switched on and audible in case we are trying to contact you.

In the Headteacher's absence, the Deputy Headteacher will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to adverse weather conditions and will do so in conjunction with the SBM and the Chair of Governors.

If the school is to open during adverse weather conditions:

For a school to open, there must be at least one member of staff per class, and at least 4 additional members of staff to support children with EHCPs. One member of staff must be a school leader, there must be a teacher in each phase, and a staff member qualified as a paediatric first aider. It is expected that a DSL would be on site but this may be risk-assessed according to the current needs of any vulnerable children in school. A member of office staff must be available for communication purposes and to ensure the smooth running of basic operations of the school.

Lack of staff

If some teachers can't get to work, temporary solutions may include:

- Remote learning measures for some or all pupils
- Employing supply staff
- Combining classes where there is a large enough space to do so
- Using other staff and volunteers to supervise alternative activities
- Rearranging the curriculum

We will carry out a risk assessment and discuss with the chair of governors whether or not to close the school due to staff shortages.

The [DfE emergency planning guidance](#) explains that in exceptional circumstances – if the quality, care and security of the children is maintained – schools can temporarily exceed infant class size limits to prevent the school having to close.

1. 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 they are likely to be delayed.
2. 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 Local Authority. 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.
3. 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 at school.
4. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children do not slide on the school driveway or paths before and after school opening hours or throw snowballs. In icy conditions the

school site supervisor will salt wide pathways around the main routes and walkways that children and parents use.

5. During adverse weather conditions, the playground may be out of bounds to children at break times and/or lunchtimes as well. The site manager will advise staff if this is the case.

General Winter Precautions when not closing

There is a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure safe access and egress routes to, from and around the premises for staff, pupils/parents/carers and visitors. The following precautions help us to meet this duty.

1. A suitable supply of grit/salt is stored on the premises to deal with the areas we need to grit during icy/snowy weather. Stocks of salt are stored both in the boiler house and the grit bin to the rear of the Vic Hallam building. Caretaking staff should inform the SBM if stocks in either area are running low.

We have a plan and suitable risk assessment detailing the areas to be cleared/gritted based on the risk of people slipping/falling. This pays particular attention to areas at most risk. At least one designated access/egress route is gritted (and re-gritted throughout the day as necessary). A pathway on the school driveway is cleared and gritted and around the school building for access to the rear entrances through the two school gates.

Playgrounds are not cleared as the school field is used during snowy periods for safety. In the event of time critical issues, the first route to be cleared is from the school office to the main gates and then afterwards, from the gate by the school house up to the fire exit at the bottom of the KS2 corridor, allowing everyone to get into school. Other routes can be addressed later in the day.

2. Gritting will need to take place before people arrive and before times of regular usage throughout day as necessary.
3. We make the school community aware of where the designated gritted/cleared routes are and take measures to prevent them using non-gritted routes by locking gates or using A-frame boards.

If the pool entrance is not gritted before the beginning of the school day, it is kept locked and everyone is directed through the entrance off the school drive to classes.

4. The site manager carries out the gritting/clearing and has appropriate equipment; personal protective equipment, boots, gloves, coats etc, training and sufficient time to carry this out. They are fully familiar with all the risk assessments relevant to this work, and are given suitable instruction on how to carry out the work, including use of equipment.
5. A manual handling assessment is carried out for the gritting operation.
6. We have a large car park so it can be problematic to grit it in its entirety when we are need to prioritise access routes done for the children. Staff may be encouraged to park on Egginton Road so we can grit the school driveway. The bottom of the school drive will be coned off to cars as needed.

7. If for logistical reasons it is decided the car park cannot be gritted then it will be closed until such time as it can be gritted or can be made safe, and access to the car park should be prevented by signs or by locking the gates to the car park.

Access to other areas which have not been gritted/cleared are restricted. The playground gets very icy, so the school field is usually used for playtimes for children who are sent to school suitably dressed for snow e.g. wellies, gloves etc. It may be appropriate to let pupils out to play in playgrounds covered in fresh snow as long as it is not icy underneath and pupils have on appropriate footwear and over clothing, and are suitably supervised. Parents/carers are advised re: winter/snow clothing and footwear well in advance.

8. Staff should be encouraged to wear appropriate footwear during icy/snowy conditions.

Please also refer to school risk assessment for adverse weather.

Other useful information

Please refer to in conjunction with the DCC emergency closure procedures for schools.