



St. Joseph's N.S, Derrywash Emergency Closures Policy

Introduction:

The school policy on emergency closures was drafted as a whole school exercise, involving the staff and Board of Management.

Rationale:

The need for the school to produce a policy on emergency closures in recent years is primarily due to:

- Inclement weather, such as heavy snowfalls, high winds etc.
- Leaks in the local water scheme which causes a Health & Safety Issue regarding access to toilets, etc.
- Break down in the heating system.
- Serious damage to school building.
- Critical Incident.

Our policy for Emergency Closures follows the guidelines for schools available in the following publication; National Rules for Schools – Rule 60

Relationship to School Ethos:

St. Joseph's N.S. strives to provide a child friendly, secure environment catering for the needs of all students as far as is practicable.

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide for the welfare of all pupils while on the school premises
- To ensure a safe, child friendly school environment is available to all children
- To comply with Health and Safety legislation

Procedures

Disconnection of Services:

Where water or electricity services to the school are to be disconnected, a week's notification is normally given to the school authorities. This enables the school to furnish the parent body with the relevant advance warning of such closures via letter or text. It is not the policy of the school to confirm such closures through the local Radio station.

Where the heating system breaks down, the sewage system overflows or the water pipes burst, parents will be given notice as soon as possible via text. Every measure will be taken to repair the system as soon as possible.

Heavy Snowfall/High Winds/Thunderstorms:

In the event of heavy snowfall and high winds, storms/lightning etc. parents are contacted via text and/or email and informed that the school will remain closed. If the school has already opened and is in operation when high winds etc. occur and remaining on the premises is a risk to all – teachers will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected by either parents/guardians.

Damage to school building

The procedures in place for heavy snowfall are generally replicated in the event of severe damage to the school building such as burst pipes, collapsed ceilings, fire damage, etc. and parents are contacted via text and/or email and informed that the school will remain closed. If the school has already opened and is in operation when damage occurs and

remaining on the premises is a risk to all – teachers will remain on the premises until all the children have been collected by either parents/guardians.

Critical Incident/Death:

In some instances the school might remain closed for pupils in the event of a critical incident or death of a staff member, BoM member or pupil. Parents are informed of such closures either by email or text. In this particular instance, the school may remain open to staff and BoM or Parents Association if issues such as church services, Guards of Honour, readings or counseling is required (See Critical Incident Policy).

Roles and Responsibilities:

Particular responsibilities on various personnel within the school chain of command when an Emergency Closure takes place. These include;

- Compliance with Health and Safety legislation
- Maintaining a safe school environment for all staff, children and parents

IMPLEMENTATION/RATIFICATION AND REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in November 2017. It will be reviewed again in 2021.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson Board of Management)

Date: _____