

Future Severe Snow/Ice Plan for Families

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice, extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption.

As a fundamental principle - every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite or staffing levels are too low to ensure the safety and well-being of all the children.

We recognise that it is important that our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Cobham will always make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting main walkways within the school site, checking that heating is working and that hygiene areas are able to be used effectively. If we have enough forewarning, we may be able to utilise our grounds maintenance contractors to help us to clear paths in the first instance within the school site, if they are available and we call them before anyone else does! If not, it is the first of us to arrive, that starts the clearing!

How will we let you know if the school is closed?

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, I may have to take the decision to close the school. This decision is not made lightly, and I will try and make it as early as physically possible, to ensure the least disruption for you all.

Once this decision has been made we will in the first instance notify parents via schoolcomms – either by an email or a text. The decision will also be published on the [Kent Closures website](http://www.kentclosures.co.uk). To determine whether Cobham is open or closed please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk. Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website may also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children's centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for [Email alerts](#) on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an email alert to let parents know if Cobham is closed. Local radio will sometimes provide information of school closures. But the first notification will be via email or text.

What can you do to help?

- Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/winter for more information about gritting routes and travel issues around Kent so you can plan your journey.
- Please approach the school parking areas with caution.
- Emails will confirm whether you need to provide a packed lunch from home in case school meals cannot be provided. (However our catering providers may make this decision well after our own decision of opening or closing—once they know their own capacity of staffing) but we would keep you updated. If we have not heard from TCS by 8am, then we would text to request all children to have a packed lunch. So do keep checking your emails and texts.
- Breakfast club may or may not be able to offer support on any snow day – but if I have team members in school from 7.30am including myself, we will try and offer the children a safe space in the school house or a classroom to wait in- but we cannot offer the children breakfast!
- Don't forget suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies, spare shoes, spare socks and a WARM COAT! I am not fussed about uniform on these days – wrap them up for being as warm as possible for outside play!
- Decisions often are made dependent on the timing of snow, the forecast of more snow during any given day and how treacherous the site becomes during the day.
- If we have to close school early for any reason, then again we would alert all families by text. We appreciate that not all families would be able to collect the children early and of course these children would be kept safe until 3.15pm, but we would appreciate all your efforts to collect ensuring that staff too can travel home safely in the light, where possible. Or ask other families to support this collection if at all possible. We would of course ensure that all children are kept safe until any collection. We are lucky that we have a couple of colleagues within walking distance and I would stay on site until all children have been collected.
- If you are concerned at all about your walk or drive to school, then do not make it. I appreciate the levels of anxiety are high in these circumstances. On the first day of school closure, no additional school work would be sent, but if the closure is in place for 2 or more days – learning would be provided electronically via email and would be expected to be returned to school completed on the first day of attendance.

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