



# Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

Tunstall Bank, Sunderland, SR2 0SX

Telephone: 0191 523 9745 Fax: 0191 523 9775

Email: venerable.bede@venerablebede.co.uk Website: www.venerablebede.co.uk

Head of School: Mr D Airey (BSc Hons)

Executive Headteacher: Mrs G A Booth (BA Hons/M.Ed.)



DAI/TCG

16 January 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

**Please note: the school is open. This letter is only for information in the event of an emergency school closure.**

As we have now had the first snow of winter, I thought that it would be sensible to remind everyone of our procedures should there ever be a need to consider closing school due to adverse weather, or other unforeseen situation. Whilst these situations do not happen very often, it is better to be fully prepared and know what to expect. A decision to close school would only be taken in one of the following circumstances:

- Insufficient 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 to travel
- An emergency occurs in school (such as water failure / ingress) which would make it unsafe to remain open

Our priority is always the safety of our pupils, parents and staff.

The decision to close school would be made as soon as practicable so that parents / carers can make appropriate arrangements for their children that day. Our aim would be to make the decision by **8.00 a.m.** By this time, we should know whether sufficient staff are able to get to school so that school can operate safely. Just as I am sure many parents / carers work in areas other than Sunderland, many staff live in other areas and have to travel in to work.

**If the decision to close school is made, we will alert you BY:**

- **Sending a text your nominated number (you can change this on our website if it is out of date or if you want to check it is correct)**
- **Making announcements on local radio (Sun FM, Metro, BBC Newcastle, Spark FM)**
- **Displaying the detail of closure on the school website (if practicable)**

.../2



The decision to close school would usually be made on a daily basis, unless it is known in advance that a prolonged closure might be needed. We will also decide whether it may be possible to open school with reduced hours that day i.e. opening at 9.00 a.m. or 10.00 a.m., if this would enable staff time to get into work safely. We would also look at whether we could open school to certain year groups, if the whole school could not operate.

If we needed to close school during the day, we would inform parents / carers by text as well as the other mechanisms listed. Pupils would also receive a letter outlining the situation to take home, containing further advice and guidance. In these circumstances, we need to rely on the common sense of pupils to ensure that they are able to make their way home safely. We always insist that pupils remain in the safety of the school building, where they will continue to be supervised, if they feel that they would not be able to get themselves home or get into their house. We would look after each pupil until someone was able to collect them safely.

If we do need to close school, we would appreciate it if you could keep any non-essential telephone calls to a minimum. We have a limited number of phone lines and it is likely that these will be very busy during that time.

If you feel that you need further clarification on our systems for school closure, or you need to make us aware of any particular needs for your child, please contact your child's form tutor or Head of Year in the first instance.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation should there ever be a need to close school at short notice.

Yours faithfully



**Head of School**

