

School policy for adverse weather conditions

Alameda Middle

Firs Lower

Russell Lower

Dear Parents and carers,

As we are approaching the worst of the winter we would like to inform you of our procedures for closing the school in the event of extreme bad weather.

Although the policy for all schools in Bedfordshire is to remain open whenever possible, the school has a duty to care for the safety of children and staff. The Headteacher, in consultation with the school Governors, may decide to close the school in extreme weather if the weather conditions are so severe that it is dangerous for children and staff to travel safely to, or from, school. The three schools in the Alameda pyramid - Alameda, Firs and Russell - have together agreed the schools closure procedure.

Scenario One. Extreme weather conditions at start of the school day Where possible, a joint decision will be taken on whether to close or not. (Sometimes the individual situation for the different schools may make a joint decision impossible) Official announcements will be made once a decision has been taken (see below).

Unless you are advised that the school is closed by one of the approved channels identified below please ensure your child is sent to school as normal.

We will endeavour to inform parents of a school closure before 8:00 am.

Scenario Two. Closure during the school day.

If insufficient numbers of staff report to school and the school is unable to operate safely, then it may be necessary to contact parents, so that a sizeable majority of children can be sent home.

If the weather deteriorates significantly during the day, Headteachers and Governors from the the three schools will consult one another and if possible, reach a joint decision on whether to stay open or close. Again, differences in individual circumstances may mean that different decisions are taken for the three schools. Official announcements will be made once the decision has been taken.

A skeleton staff will be maintained on-site to supervise children awaiting collection. **No child will be released early from school until a parent or carer has collected him or her.** (In the case of Alameda, where pupils normally walk to and from school on their own, no child will be released unless the parent or carer has been notified and has agreed).

There are other scenarios which could lead to a school closure e.g. fire, flood, failures of heating/water systems etc. which might be individual to one school and in this event, the same methods of informing parents would be followed.

The agreed methods of informing parents and staff are;

- **School websites:** www.russell-lower.co.uk, www.firslower.co.uk; www.alamedamiddleschool.co.uk
- **Local radio stations;** BBC Three Counties Radio 95.5FM and Chiltern Radio 97.6FM.
Note: Parents and carers are asked not to phone radio stations.

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- **SMS**; Additionally Firs parents who have agreed to participate in the text messaging system will receive a text messages on their mobile phones.

We are sure you agree that working together with Russell and Alameda is a positive step as it will help to ensure that, where possible / appropriate, all three schools adopt a consistent approach, which will be far more convenient to parents in the local area.

Yours sincerely

Adam. J.G. Campbell
Headteacher