

January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to Term 3, it's been wonderful to see our children back in school this week - thank you for your support in helping them look smart and be organised for the new term.

Although snow tonight and tomorrow is looking less likely, we felt it would be helpful to outline the process we follow when making the very difficult decision on whether we can keep the school open in the case of a severe weather event. Please rest assured that we will always try to keep the school open at all times and will only ever close if we cannot operate safely.

Why We Might Need to Close the School

The decision to close the school is never taken lightly and is based on several factors, all focused on the safety and well-being of our children and staff:

1. **Road Conditions:** We assess whether roads and pavements locally are safe for travel and whether our car park can be cleared in time for safe walking.
2. **Weather Forecasts:** We monitor real-time conditions and forecasts for any hazardous weather patterns including the possibility that snow may fall during the school day making travel home for students and staff difficult or unsafe.
3. **Facility Safety:** Power outages or heating issues may make the buildings unsafe. Please be aware that the school buildings are old so very cold weather can mean we cannot heat the building to a comfortable and safe temperature.
4. **Site Safety:** Gritting paths and playgrounds takes hours. If this cannot be completed before school starts, it poses a significant safety risk.
5. **Staffing Levels:** Severe weather can prevent staff from travelling safely as most staff live outside of Wootton Bassett. Additionally, some staff have primary-age children and may struggle with those schools closing, creating childcare challenges for them. Low levels are staff impact supervision and safeguarding and we may not have the staff:student ratios we need.

How We Communicate a Closure

If closure becomes necessary, we will communicate promptly through:

- **Text:** Sent to all families usually by 7:30 a.m.
- **School Website & Social Media:** Updates will be posted on both.

Please ensure your contact details are up to date to receive notifications without delay. If you have changed your details, please update it on the Arbor app, or phone into school if you would like some help with this.

What to Expect if a Closure Occurs

- We will continue to monitor conditions and provide updates as necessary.
- Please make sure that your child completes Doodle and keeps in the “green zone”. Children have reading books sent home with them and they can read this please at home too.
- We will set a photograph competition, we want children to enjoy a rare snow day too!

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we prioritise safety during the winter season. Thank you for your continued support and here's hoping we don't need to make this tough decision

With warmth

Hilary MacMeekin

Hilary MacMeekin
Headteacher