

St Paul's High School



Winter 2014 / 2015

Aim

This plan aims to set our procedures in the event of adverse weather that may result either in school closure, or restricted school opening.

A closure due to adverse weather could be made at any time. This plan aims to prevent:

- Pupils and staff being stranded unnecessarily at school, by careful decision making
- The unnecessary risks taken travelling to and from school, through good communication
- A negative impact on pupil education, by alternate means of support
- Accidents in school, by good risk assessment.

Policy

It is policy that the school will open on all normal school days even when some poor road conditions exist. However, in the event of adverse weather we cannot guarantee that staff will be able to attend school and a decision to close or restrict school opening may have to be made.

In the event of a building closure, pupils in Years 11 - 14 are aware that alternate provision has been made using the school's Virtual Learning Platform, Oscail 24/7. Pupils should visit www.oscail247.org and use the resources which have been posted online to continue their school work from home. In certain cases 'live' online classroom sessions will be facilitated using video conferencing and distance learning technology. Pupils will be alerted to these lessons via notifications posted on Oscail 24/7, and via Facebook and Twitter, and the school website.

Procedure

If the weather conditions are severe enough to force a school closure, this decision will be communicated by one or more of the following means:

- A message will be published on the website home page as soon as possible. The **Severe Weather Alert** information will be displayed on the school website homepage (www.stpaulsbessbrook.org). This is the main communication tool we will use. If power is off in your home, you can access this through most mobile phones.
- A message on the school Facebook (www.facebook.com/stpaulsbessbrook) and on the school's Twitter feed (www.twitter.com/stpaulsbbrook)
- Message left on the school answer phone (if possible)
- Notification using BBC online and where available, announcements on BBC Radio Ulster (94.5 FM or 1341 MW)
- Message Board at gate, if closed

The decision to close/re-open the school will be taken by the Principal in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

A decision will be made by 7.30am at the latest, but hopefully much earlier, or where possible the night before if conditions are predictable. Please check online for updates before leaving home to travel to St Paul's.

As above, once a decision is made. The school phone is likely at this time to be very busy and it may not be possible to get through in a timely fashion. Please only use the phone for emergency calls. The most reliable way to receive our communications is via the school website and/or Facebook or Twitter.

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

1. Will I be contacted in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather?

No. Parents are advised to check the school website for regular updates. Alternatively follow St Paul's High School on Facebook, or subscribe to the school's Twitter feed for updates.

2. Do I need to contact the school if my child is unable to travel due to adverse weather?

There is no need to ring the school if your child is unable to travel to school. In line with our Policy on Attendance, an explanatory note should be provided on your child's return to school.

3. How do I know whether it is safe to travel to school or not?

Always check the school website or social networks first. Parents and staff have to decide whether it is safe to make the journey into school. Where possible the school will try to ensure that there will be someone at school to greet the pupils. If no member of staff is present upon arrival at the school, your children must remain your responsibility and should not be left unattended.

Remember, in cold winter weather it is always advisable to carry extra warm clothing in cars in case you get into difficulties.

4. Will pupils be registered late if we are delayed arriving at school?

No, registration normally closes at 10.30am. Pupils arriving beyond normal close of Registration will not be registered as **late**.

Appointments/Meetings

If school is closed due to adverse weather all appointments and meetings will be rescheduled.

Impact on Education

There may be days when the school is operating with a reduced number of staff due to adverse weather conditions in local areas. Your child may not be taught by their usual teachers or in their usual classes. However, we will ensure that they have as normal a 'school day' as possible.

Contingency Plan for school closures and examinations

A contingency plan has been put in place in the event of the examinations officer not being in school on the days of public examinations. Parents are strongly advised to refer to the school website, Facebook or Twitter for specific information relating to public examinations that may be affected by adverse weather.

Important Numbers and Websites:

School Telephone:	(028) 3083 0309
School Website:	www.stpaulsbessbrook.org
School Virtual Learning Platform:	www.oscail247.org
School Facebook page:	www.facebook.com/stpaulsbessbrook
School Twitter feed:	www.twitter.com/stpaulsbbrook (* note the spelling of <i>stpaulsbbrook</i> *)

January 2015