

December 2020

Schools Closure Notification System



Dear Parents

If we haven't had enough uncertainty with school closures and coronavirus, we are now at that time of the year again when we need to think about the possibility of needing to close the school in the event of severe weather. It is a decision not taken lightly, and indeed, it is a decision I have only had to make once in recent years. I am sure you understand that there is a degree of ambiguity with a decision of this nature and I will be in constant communication with Mrs Avey at Highbury in order to tie up our thinking. In the interest of staff who have to travel from distance, we would endeavour to make the decision by about 7.30am.

We will always try and keep the school open if it can be staffed sufficiently. We would then encourage pupils to bring suitable clothing to venture outside and make the most of an amazing snow-covered outdoor learning environment.

Herts Council have a system across all its schools, the [Everbridge Notification System](#), whereby you could register to receive automatic updates should the ultimate decision need to be made.

To check you are still registered or to sign up you should use the following link:

member.everbridge.net/index/892807736725489

It takes no more than five minutes to register and you can edit your information should it have changed or should it change in the future.

Each contact within the system can have two devices added for each communication type which enables you to include the mobile number and email address of a partner or a grandparent in the registration process. They too would then receive any messages in relation to our school's closure. If you have children at more than one school, you are able to register for those schools too in a single process.

As well as using the Everbridge System, we will also inform you using twitter (@whitehilljunior) and the school website. I would ask you not to telephone the school before 8.00am on days when we might be closed as these calls will block the phone line at a crucial time when we are trying to contact staff to assess the situation and check their availability and this our capacity to keep the school open.

If you know the school is closed please contact a friend and pass the message on (please don't rely on messages from children). Your help and cooperation will enable us to deal with the situation quickly and efficiently.

With all our experience of remote provision and blended learning due to Covid, it is expected that the class teachers will open up a Google Meet for their class and deliver instruction and/or ideas for the day. This would be particularly relevant if we believe the school may be closed for more than one day.

When we return to school, if there are any willing parents who would like to bring along their snow shovels and help clear the playground we would be delighted to offer them a hot tea or coffee afterwards.

Thank you in anticipation.

Steve Mills
Headteacher

