



'SMALL BUT MIGHTY'

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches." Matthew 13 31-32

COMPASSION

CURIOSITY

COURAGE

EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

Policy agreed (date):	2025
Policy published (including on website) (date):	2025
Next review (date):	2026

At our school, inspired by the parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32), we believe in the power of small but mighty beginnings. Just as the tiny seed grows into a great tree, we nurture each child's potential with **compassion, curiosity and courage**, enabling them to grow, flourish and make a lasting impact. Together, we create a community where every individual can achieve greatness, no matter how small the start.

Introduction

Conditions may arise which will affect the normal running of schools. In these circumstances the head teacher is responsible for determining what action is appropriate. As conditions in Wiltshire can vary considerably, it is considered that the headteacher is in the best position to take appropriate action. These conditions may arise because of extremely adverse weather or the breakdown of services and facilities.

When an emergency closure has to happen the headteacher will notify Wilshire Council Children's Services by emailing directordce@wiltshire.gov.uk.

General principles

The headteacher is responsible to the governors and the authority for the running of the school and the safety of pupils and staff. Therefore the headteacher will decide what action needs to be taken in emergency conditions. The first consideration should always be the **safety and welfare** of the pupils and the staff.

Whenever possible the closure of a school to pupils should be avoided. When considering closure due to emergency conditions, the headteacher will decide whether initiating a partial closure, half day closure or combining classes would remove the need to totally close the school thus ensuring the premises are kept open for as long as possible and to as many pupils as possible.

Considerations

Before closing the school, the headteacher will consider

- The **safety and welfare** of the pupils and the staff.
- How to keep the school open as long as possible and to as many pupils as possible – including, in poor weather, for those children who have already reached the school. The amount of staff needed at the school to keep the school open in poor weather should also be considered.
- How the school can open again as soon as possible, for as many, if not all pupils.

Having considered all relevant facts and taken any necessary advice, the headteacher will decide what action is appropriate. In considering whether it will be necessary to depart from the school's normal operations the head teacher may choose to consult:

- The co-chairs of the governors
- Members of staff
- Whoever may be involved in providing the relevant services to the school (e.g. catering provider, education transport section/the transport operators, education welfare officer and environmental services)

Action

If the headteacher has decided to close the school in an emergency, the following action will be taken:

- Ensure that the school uses several channels to contact parents about the emergency closure. *These will include Class Dojo, Parentmail, and the KVS Community Facebook page. BBC Radio Wiltshire and Heart FM Radio will be used for full day closure linked to extreme weather such as snow.*
- Contact parents to explain the reason for the school's departure from normal.
- Ensure that all who should know of this change in operation are informed as soon as possible (e.g. parents, local authority, catering service, transport etc).
- Make appropriate arrangements to cancel or modify services (e.g. transport and catering).
- Ensure that, if young children are being sent home early, parents are notified about collection time.
- Ensure that parents know to email or call with changes to usual person collecting.
- Inform parents, as soon as possible, when the school will be open to pupils again.
- Notify the Local Authority of the decision to close by emailing the Coordination section at directordce@wiltshire.gov.uk and contact them again every day that the school remains closed.

The headteacher will do this as early as possible so that the authority has an accurate picture of the situation countywide, can inform local councillors and the council's communications team and provide support where it is needed.

Communications

It is the headteacher responsibility to ensure that communications to parents are clear and give as much detail as possible.

The school will use several channels to contact parents about the emergency closure. These will include Class Dojo, Parentmail, and KVS Community Facebook page. BBC Radio Wiltshire and Heart FM Radio will be used for full day closure linked to extreme weather such as snow. **Radio stations will only be used for a school closure and not to inform of the school being open when others are not.**

If there is an emergency closure during the school day, due to extreme weather or loss of services then office staff will also contact all parents via telephone, to ensure that they have received the messages about the closure and they know what time children need to be collected at/by.

While the headteacher will plan to give parents as much notice of a closure as possible, there may be rare times when time is limited and there is an expectation that parents will collect their children as soon as possible.

Sending children home

If the school has to close during the school day they will use a range of communications (listed above) to inform parents. **All** children will need to be collected from the school site at the time set by the headteacher, No children will be left at the site without staff in attendance. Children will not be put on the bus or taxi if the school closes early – these children will need to be collected by parents too.

Emergency Contacts

Parents must give the schools details of 3 emergency contacts. **Data Collection forms are sent out annually in September to all parents.** Parents are required to complete and return the forms promptly. If the forms are not returned the previous year's form will be annotated as such and kept on file. Information on emergency contacts & instructions in respect of each pupil will be held centrally in the emergency contacts folder held in the school office.

It is essential that parents to keep the school up to date with any change in their contact details.

Safeguarding Precautions on Closure

No pupil will be allowed to leave school with another child's parent or carer, unless the school has received permission from their parent – ideally this should be given via email to office@kennetvalley.wilts.sch.uk, but can be taken by calling the school on 01672861202/01672861643.

The school will ensure that there is adequate supervision by members of teaching staff for those pupils who cannot go home or to their emergency destination immediately and therefore have to remain at school until they can be collected.

If for any reason the school building / premises are not safe, the whole school will move the Kennet Valley Hall. The location of the staff & children will be published on a notice on the school gates, as well as included in the information sent to parents, Wiltshire Council and the local radio station.

A file of all emergency contact details will be taken out of the building to ensure we are able to make contact with parents/ emergency contacts for staff members.

Keeping Children Safe in the Building

If the emergency was due to an external threat, all children and staff would remain in the building to stay safe. Staff would ensure that the building was safe and secure by closing and locking all windows and locking all external doors including the front door. Depending on the nature of the threat, the children may remain in their own classrooms, to minimise distress or moved to a central place of refuge.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE

KENNET VALLEY C of E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Every effort is made to keep our school open during bad weather, however in the event of our school having to close this winter due to adverse weather conditions, you can find out whether the school is open to pupils through the following routes...

Listening to BBC Radio Wiltshire or Heart FM for school closures

This will be broadcast daily. Please assume school is **OPEN** unless it has been mentioned by name on the radio or on the Radio Website.

You will receive a message from Parentmail.

You will receive a message via Class Dojo.

We will post a message on the KVS Community Facebook page.

Look for the **SCHOOL CLOSED sign on the gates and / or near to the entrance.**

If it is necessary to close the school the situation **WILL** be monitored on a daily basis and we will re-open again as soon as possible, please remember we **MUST** have sufficient teaching staff on site to open.

PLEASE DO NOT leave your child if there are **NO** teaching staff present.

Should it be necessary to close the school early the children will be kept at school until someone collects them.

It may be that a parent who is collecting their children offers to collect/give shelter to other children. This arrangement must be communicated to the school office, via email or over the phone, by the child's parent/carer before they will be allowed to leave the premises with anyone else.

We don't have to close often, but we **DO** need a contingency plan.