



12th January 2010

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

Snow Closures

I wanted to write to everyone to thank you for your patience and understanding during the recent emergency closures of the school. The decision to close the school like this is always a very difficult one, and I wanted to re-assure you that it is one we take reluctantly and only after carefully weighing up the potential risks and benefits of trying to stay open.

In the case of our school one challenge that we have is that the majority of our teaching staff, and many of our teaching assistants and administrators, live outside the area and drive in each day. On Wednesday it was clear that, although some staff made it into school we wouldn't have enough adults on site to run the school safely. The heavy snow and the further snow and ice during last week also made the site itself dangerous, and presented ongoing problems with trying to clear paths and walkways.

We had fully intended to open on Monday, but early in the morning it became clear that our heating system had failed! With temperatures still being so low it was clear that we couldn't open as planned and I took the decision to stay closed for a further day.

Whilst the school was closed teachers continued to work from home, and I know that several parents and carers accessed the special work activities that were posted during the week on our school website (www.wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk). Our caretaker has also worked hard to clear paths and make the site as safe as possible.

I am pleased and relieved (as I am sure that you are too!) that we are now able to open again - although with just a few restrictions:

- This week there won't be any after school activities. This is so that staff who have to drive home can set off in good time before roads become snowy or icy. Please make sure that your children are collected promptly at the end of the day.
- The meeting for parents of children learning English, planned for tomorrow, has had to be postponed. We will let you know the new date as soon as we have one.
- The exact menu offered by the school kitchen may vary slightly this week as the deliveries of supplies have been slightly affected by the weather **but school dinners will continue as normal.**
- We won't be letting the children use the playground fully until we are confident it is as safe as possible - although we will let the children out in the snow during the day! You may like to consider sending your children into school with Wellington boots or perhaps a pair of indoor shoes to change into - clearly named please and preferably in a shoe bag.

Teachers and teaching assistants will be working extra hard to help children to catch up with the work they have missed over the coming days, and children may get a little extra homework. I have authorized the absence of any child who was late to school today because they had travel problems or because parents



'Children leave the school as confident, well rounded individuals' Ofsted 2009

www.wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk



didn't realize that school was open again, but from tomorrow can I ask that everyone makes a special effort to be on time for school. Road conditions are still very difficult, including pavements for walkers, so please leave extra time for your journey and go carefully.

Given that we have had a delayed start to the term I am very sorry that we have to close as planned and previously announced on **Friday 22nd Jan**. This is unavoidable I am afraid as the whole staff have to be retrained in an area of safeguarding pupils. However I am going to ask teachers to give children some work to do at home on that date.

What if there is further snow?

Although the weather has improved in the last few days you will know from the news that we are not out of the woods yet! Please continue to listen to local radio if you think our school could be affected by the weather (or any other emergency) and you can also look on the BBC Oxford website and the county website under 'school closures'. Please also check our school website regularly in case we want to pass on information to you directly from our school. You may want to keep the information at the bottom of this letter somewhere safe.

Thank you once again, and best wishes

D. Lewin.
Headteacher.

Information about Emergency School Closures

Please listen to BBC Radio Oxford 95.2 FM for announcements
Or
Heart FM 102.6

Check www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
and
www.bbc.co.uk/oxford
or
www.oxfordmail.co.uk
for further details

www.wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk for home learning details for children

