

Winter Planning for Schools advice for parents from Durham County Council

Schools should, wherever possible, stay open in severe weather. They play a key role in their communities and by staying open help both their pupils and parents.”

Department for Education

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service.

As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However schools may close due to ‘unavoidable’ circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.

We recognise that it is important that our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Wearhead Primary School will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting and clearing pathways.

How will we let you know if the school is closed?

However, if we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, our head teacher may have to take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Durham Closures website. To determine whether Wearhead Primary School is open or closed please visit www.durham.gov.uk/schoolclosures. Search for the school in the search box. The Durham Closures website can also be used to find out if other services in Durham are open or closed, such as nurseries, children’s centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for SMS/Email alerts on the Durham Closures website. This service will send an SMS or email alert to let parents know if Wearhead Primary School is closed.

Please note that as long as we have a minimum of two members of staff at school we can remain open. Please ring the school (01388 537265) after 8.30am on the morning of severe weather, even if school transport has been cancelled, as some staff are able to walk to work. We will always do our best to remain open when it is safe and sensible to do so.

What can you do to help?

- Please visit www.durham.gov.uk/winterroads for more information about gritting routes and travel issues around Durham so you can plan your journey.
- **You may have to provide a packed lunch** from home in case school meals cannot be cooked on site.
- **Don’t forget suitable warm clothing** – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies etc. or even a change of clothing.
- **If you are a working parent or feel you may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up, please could you put a back-up plan in place with another family member or parent and inform the school.**

Many thanks for your support in helping Wearhead Primary School remain open during periods of severe snow/ice.

