

# Emergency Closures Policy

## Introduction

### Rationale

The need for the school to devise a policy on emergency closures in recent years is primarily due to:

Dealing with inclement weather, such as heavy snowfalls, occasions when we have no heat due to power cuts. Flooding due to burst pipes. **Forced closure by the Health Authorities**

### Relationship to School Ethos

St. Brigid's National School strives to provide a child friendly, secure environment where child safety is of utmost importance.

### Aims and Objectives

- To provide for the welfare of all pupils while on the school premises
- To ensure a safe, child friendly school environment is available to all children
- To conform with Health and Safety legislation

### Procedures.

In the event of a heavy snowfall, the Principal shall consult with the Chairperson of the B.O.M. as soon as is feasible, and a decision is made as to whether it is in the interests of all parties to close the school.

If the snowfall is prolonged over a number of days and the school is closed indefinitely, parents will be informed of re-opening dates through *Text-A-Parent*.

Department of Education and Science guidelines will be followed in relation to making up lost time due to unforeseen circumstances

### Forced closures by Health Authorities

**The Board of Management will ensure that all guidelines from the Department are followed.**

### Disconnection of Services

Where water or electricity services to the school are to be disconnected, a week's notification is normally given to the school authorities. This enables the school to furnish the parent body with the relevant advance warning of such closures via circular or text. It is not the policy of the school to confirm such closures through the local Radio station.

## **Critical Incident / Death**

In some instances the school might remain closed for pupils in the event of a critical incident or death of a staff member, B.O.M member or pupil. Parents are informed of such closures either by circular or text whichever is appropriate. In this particular instance, the school may remain open to staff and B.O.M or Parents Association if issues such as Church services, Guards of honour, readings or counselling is required (See Critical Incident Policy).

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Emergency closures in the school place particular responsibilities on various personnel within the school chain of command – mainly on the Chairperson, Principal and Board of Management

- Positive school community feedback
- Conformance with Health and Safety legislation
- Maintaining a safe school environment for all staff, children and parents

## **Ratification**

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management

## **Implementation and Review**

The policy will be implemented and reviewed in the light of unplanned events and legislation requirements.