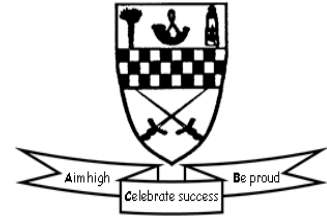


MAURICEWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL
11 Muirhead Place
Penicuik
Midlothian
EH26 OLE

Education, Communities and Economy Division



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App: Search "School App for Parents"



MIDLOTHIAN



6th November 2023

Dear Parent / Carer.

Severe Weather and School Closure Arrangements

As we head into the winter months I wanted to make you all aware of our Severe Weather and School Closure arrangements. Severe weather is the most likely reason for an impromptu school closure. This may be a blanket closure of all Midlothian schools, a single school closure or a local area closure. There may be other times where we are forced to close due to unforeseen circumstances, where it would be unsafe to remain open. The health and safety of all our children, staff and parents is always of the utmost importance.

Obviously we hope that these plans are not necessary in practice, but it is important that we are prepared for all eventualities.

There are several different scenarios which we have planned for, as outlined below:

If the school has to close during school hours -

- You will be notified initially via Group-call. This will go to the email address of the primary contact you have identified on the data checks / enrolment forms. **Please note, our system does not allow the message to go to more than one contact per child.**
- This will be followed up with a message on our school app, and our website will be updated.
- Midlothian Council communication team will also share the information via the council website and social media channels.
- You will be asked to come and collect your child as soon as possible from school. Please report to the main entrance.
- You will be directed into the Gym Hall where you will be asked to form an orderly queue. A member of staff will tick you off on our class lists and instruct another member of staff to go and collect your child/ren from their classrooms. Children will be prepared and ready to go home as soon as the decision to close is made.

Here at Midlothian Council, we take your privacy seriously. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, you have a right to know how we collect, use and share your personal data.

This privacy notice explains the information we need in order to carry out School and Nursery provision. This activity is part of the Education Service provided by Midlothian Council. More information about the Education Service privacy notice can be found at:-

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200285/access_to_information/338/privacy_and_cookies/9

- Once someone has gone to collect your child you will be asked to move through to our Infant Hall to wait for them. We will be operating a one-way system for safety reasons as we have to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Once you have your child/ren, you will be directed to leave via the ELC garden (Infant Hall door). A member of staff will be at this door, and will highlight your children's names on a class list. This 2-step verification is to allow us to be absolutely sure that all our children have been safely collected.
- **If a parent is unable to collect, and you wish a neighbour or family member to collect your child from school, you must call the school office and let us know. We will not let your child leave with anyone but you unless we have your express permission to do so.**
- If phones are busy, you can leave a message. Please be aware that in the event of such a circumstance, staff will be extremely busy and able only to take brief messages about collection. They will not be able to provide further information as our priority will be ensuring all children are collected quickly and safely from school in order that staff can also then make their way safely home.
- Further communication will come via the same channels to update you as to the duration of the closure. We advise parents check local radio stations also for school closure information.
- We will try to send your child home with their device
- If the closure occurs before lunch, we may only be able to provide a packed lunch for those pupils entitled to Free School Meals and Clothing Grants. This would only be those who have applied for, meet the eligibility criteria and been awarded this grant. **These eligible pupils will receive a packed lunch to bring home.**
- If the closure occurs at lunchtime or in the afternoon, all pupils will have lunch as normal.

If the school has to close out-with school hours for the upcoming or following day -

- You will be notified initially via Group-call. This will go to the email address of the primary contact you have identified on the data checks / enrolment forms. **Please note, our system does not allow the message to go to more than one contact per child.**
- This will be followed up with a message on our school app, and our website will be updated.
- Midlothian Council communication team will also share the information via the council website and social media channels.

Remote Learning

- There will be grids of learning activities on the school website, targeted at Early (ELC - P1), First (P2 - P4) and Second Level (P5 - P7). These can be used on the first day of a school closure.
- If a closure extends into a second day, we will share learning activities on Google Classroom. In this event, there will be more detailed communication issued so that parents know what to expect.
- If the school closes within the school day, devices will be sent home with children.

Icy Conditions

Even though the school may be open, there may be implications of adverse weather that impact during the school day and particularly on the way to / from school.

The council take responsibility for gritting safe routes to school. Our janitor is contracted to grit paths from the main gates to certain entrances. He is unable to grit the whole playground. On particularly icy days we will try to get a message out on the school app early in the morning, to help parents to plan. The safest gates on an icy/ snowy day are Salamanca gate, and the gates leading from Mauricewood Hill. The safest entrances will

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be the ELC entrance for nursery children only, the main entrance for visitors, the Juniper block entrance for any learners entering from Mauricewood Hill, and the Willow Block top atrium entrance for any learners entering via Salamanca gate. On such an occasion, children will be able to reach their classrooms by travelling through the school, with adults on hand to support safe movement.

We thank you for your understanding and hope that these closure procedures are not required.

Kind regards,

Jen Mouat

Head teacher

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