



Rivington Foundation Primary School

Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 7SE
Tel: (01204) 696951 Headteacher: Mrs S. E. Annette
Email: bursar@rivington.lancs.sch.uk
www.rivington.lancs.sch.uk

Re: School Closures 1/03/2018 and 2/03/2018

Dear Parents,

I would like to thank you all for your co-operation and support during two challenging days on Thursday and Friday. As a working parent, I can sympathise with the inconvenience and worry an unavoidable school closure can bring – it was certainly not a problem I wanted – teaching and learning is my priority.

A decision to close the school is never taken lightly or in isolation. It is always based on health and safety grounds. The extent of the snow which fell on Thursday was not forecast for Rivington and, if it had been, it would have been preferable to inform families the night before. While a small handful of the children are able to walk to school this is not the case for everyone. The vast majority of our families and staff travel by car, some over considerable distances. We have to ensure that there are sufficient adults in school to supervise and teach the children.



Snow fall can often be quite localised and while it may appear that snow fall is light in one area it can be much worse in the areas that staff are travelling from and vice versa. The immediate area surrounding Rivington was particularly dangerous from early morning and throughout the day due to falling and drifting snow coupled with high winds.

On returning to work on Friday we were confronted with the full effects of the previous night's storm - these were not present on Thursday evening. The strong winds throughout Thursday night had led a large and completely healthy tree to fall in the school grounds.

As I have said before, during these times it is often the 'best, worst decision' that has to be made and I want to assure you that a school closure is a last resort when it is the only way to ensure the safety of our children. These decisions are never made in isolation and I spent much of early Friday morning gathering advice from all manner of external experts based at Lancashire County Council and beyond.



Rivington Foundation Primary School

Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 7SE

Tel: (01204) 696951 Headteacher: Mrs S. E. Annette

Email: bursar@rivington.lancs.sch.uk

www.rivington.lancs.sch.uk

On a quick inspection, there were a number of trees with large loose branches still hanging 'by a thread'. After ringing advisers at County Hall, it was agreed that on the grounds of Health & Safety, we should close. Staff were fantastic in their response and we closed the school in the safest and most orderly way that we could. Most importantly, your children were not on-site and therefore safe.

I was in school on Friday, booking contractors and talking with staff from County Hall. A full inspection of the site took place. The most dangerous area appeared to be all along the drive although we could not be certain that other trees did not present danger. On Friday, in very bad conditions again, the tree and several large branches from others were removed.

I am completely hopeful that school will be open on Monday. A full tree survey is being carried out on Saturday morning to ensure that the remainder of the site is safe. This was done in October but it is important that we now reassess the situation again so that we can open on Monday fully confident with the safety of the site.

I would just like to say thank you to all parents for fully understanding our situation – knowing that the decision to close school was not an easy one to take, especially at such short notice. We fully understand that this closure caused disruption for you, but it really could not be avoided. Hopefully now we can settle down to what we do best – to teach the children in a fun, exciting, stimulating and safe environment.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter from myself, the school staff and school governors.

Kind regards,

Sarah Annette.