



Emergency Closures Policy

Introduction

This policy on emergency closures was developed in consultation with the Board of Management, staff, parents, and pupils. It has been communicated to the entire school community and is available on the school website.

Rationale

A clear policy on emergency school closures is necessary due to:

- Inclement weather conditions such as severe frost, heavy snowfall, high winds, or flooding.
- Construction or maintenance work that may necessitate temporary closures for health and safety reasons.
- Unexpected disruptions to essential utilities such as electricity, water, or heating.
- Critical incidents, including the passing of a staff member, Board of Management member, or pupil.

Relationship to School Ethos

St. Patrick's N.S. is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment that fosters respect, diversity, and the well-being of all pupils.

Aims and Objectives

- Ensure the welfare and safety of all pupils while on school premises.
- Maintain a secure and child-friendly learning environment.
- Comply with all relevant Health and Safety regulations.

Procedures for Emergency Closures

1. Severe Weather (Frost, Snow, High Winds, Flooding, or Thunderstorms)

- The Principal will consult with the Chairperson of the Board of Management as soon as possible.
- If closure is necessary, parents/guardians will be informed via:
 - **Aladdin Connect** messaging system.
 - A notice on the **school website** and **social media pages**.
 - **Local radio stations**, if deemed necessary.

2. Utility Disruptions (Electricity, Water, Heating Failure)

- Where advance notice is provided by utility providers, the school will inform parents at least **one week in advance** via:
 - **Aladdin Connect** messaging system.
 - A circular or email notification.
- If an unexpected disruption occurs during school hours, parents will be contacted immediately, and appropriate arrangements will be made for the safety of pupils.

3. Critical Incidents (Including Bereavement)

- In certain situations, the school may remain closed for pupils following a critical incident or death of a staff member, Board of Management member, or pupil.
- Parents will be informed via **Aladdin Connect** and/or a **circular**.
- In some cases, the school may remain open for staff, the Board of Management, or the Parents' Association to coordinate funeral arrangements, guards of honour, readings, or counselling. (See **Critical Incident Policy**.)

4. Early Closures and In-Service Days

- Parents will receive at least **one week's notice** of any planned early closures or in-service training days.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the **Board of Management, Principal, and school staff**. Key responsibilities include:

- Ensuring timely communication with parents.
- Adhering to Health and Safety regulations.
- Maintaining a secure learning environment.

Policy Ratification and Communication

This policy has been updated and ratified by the **Board of Management** at its meeting on **7th October 2025**. It will be reviewed regularly in response to unforeseen events that may necessitate school closures.

Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Implementation and Review

This policy will be reviewed at regular Board of Management meetings to ensure it remains current and effective.