

Severe Weather & Emergency Procedures

January 2026

In the event of bad weather or an emergency the school will, very occasionally, need to close but we will do our utmost to remain open. The decision to close is not taken lightly and is only made after full consideration of the safety of the site (including heating, pathways and the access road) and in consultation with local authorities and bus companies to ascertain local conditions. Due to the various information required, please note that it is not always possible to make a decision about school closure and site safety until around 6:30am.

Should the decision be made to have a later start or close the school in the event of bad weather or an emergency, the mechanism of informing you about the arrangements is shown below.

- Parents will be informed (by 7am) by text message and email via Edulink to the primary contact of a 'late start' or closure. For the system to work, you must ensure that our records are kept up to date with any changes to mobile telephone numbers.
- A message will be placed on the home page of the school's website, we recommend to check the website regularly in case of text/email message delays:
<http://www.stourvalleycommunityschool.org/>
- A message will be placed on the school Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/StourValleyCommunitySchool/>
- A notice will be placed on Suffolk County Council's school closure page:
<https://schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk/>

There is often a 'time-lag' between making the decision to close and appearance on any website. This is because of the high volume of people trying to access the systems.

In the event of a 'late start' due to bad weather, Stour Valley will finish at the normal time – 3pm. Please note, however, that some bus companies may choose to collect students to take home early even if the school stays open until 3pm for other bus routes. We will inform you via the methods listed above if that is the case. There will be no after school lessons/clubs/detentions/meetings for students unless the weather has improved considerably during the day. We will communicate our position clearly via the methods noted above.

A decision about sending students to school in difficult weather conditions must be made by each individual family, as local conditions can vary considerably. Students should think carefully about their footwear to and from school and wear the most appropriate footwear they have to help them manage on very slippery paths in the local area. Students should then change into their normal school footwear on arrival. Students should also ensure that they are warm, wearing an appropriate coat, hat and gloves.

In the event of worsening weather conditions during the school day necessitating closure, we will give as much notice as possible and communicate this decision by the modes of communication listed above. We would expect that students will use their normal mode of transport home and if this is not possible then we will try and contact parents/carers to make the safest alternative arrangements.

Unless told to the contrary, parents and students should assume that the school will re-open the following day. This system will operate on a second and subsequent day if necessary. This information will be provided using the communication methods listed above.

Staff should attempt to get into school, whenever possible, unless informed of a closure. In the event of a closure, staff should be prepared with suitable IT facilities to set students appropriate and relevant work to complete, which will be recognised upon the students return to school. All student work will be recorded on Edulink.