Monday 4th February 2019

Dear Parents

I was sorry for the convenience caused due to school closure on Friday. I wanted to explain that the decision to close was not taken lightly.

I do recognise the impact on parents of a school closure on the morning and the possible disruptions this can cause but I sincerely hope that you appreciate that this decision was made with the interests of all and their safety as the central factor.

On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday there was much reviewing of weather information and trying to anticipate what the information meant at a local level.

On Thursday evening, some staff returned home having passed overturned and abandoned vehicles.

On Friday morning at 6.30am I had communications from all staff who would be traveling into school; three of our teachers were unable to travel from their homes by car onto the treated roads. One of the staff who lives very locally was willing to walk the distance to a main road and be collected by another staff member. At 6.50am I became aware that Axe Valley Academy was closed. They provide our hot lunches. I was also aware that Axminster Primary had already announced their closure, as had All Saints Primary.

I was faced with two classes out of five not having class teachers and no school lunches as well as the uncertainty of the forecast of freezing temperatures and the impact of this on all families and staff.

I was aware that up to 7.00 am it was difficult to access the school website, presumably because parents were checking the update.

Having added the message to the website I then informed Devon on the school closures site. To let them know I am required to have a series of unique codes and passwords which ensures that the decision is made from an authorised person. I did not inform radio Devon as I discovered over the last few days that this does not have the same secure access.

I understand that parents then communicated by the St Mary’s parent Facebook page.

I am hoping that we are now on the right side of the winter weather and look forward to a snow and ice free February and March.

Best wishes,

Mrs Mannix