



SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS - ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF, PARENTS, CARERS AND TRANSPORT OPERATORS

INTRODUCTION

This advice and guidance is to make clear and consistent the expectations of school to staff, parents, carers and transport operators in the event of severe and adverse weather conditions. The intention is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all concerned.

The school will make every effort to make decisions about school closure based upon the best information available at the time. Risk assessments will need to be carried out and decisions made following these assessments.

Greenside School receives pupils from across the whole of North Hertfordshire and obviously weather conditions may well be different in other parts of the county. It follows that parents, carers and transport staff will need to make their own risk assessment in their local area, based upon the best information available to them.

PARENTS AND CARERS

If your child is at home and the weather conditions locally to you are severe, then you must decide first of all if you wish your child to be leaving home. It is your right to keep your child at home even if the school is open and the taxis are available, if you consider it unsafe for your child to be travelling, we would ask that you communicate this decision to the taxi driver and the school as soon as you are able.

COMMUNICATION

The school will make every effort to communicate its decision to close as soon as possible. Greenside subscribes to the Parent - Mail Service, which is available to all parents and transport operators who choose to register with this service.

TRANSPORT STAFF, DRIVERS AND ESCORTS

Firstly, your commitment to meet your obligation to transport the children safely to and from school is acknowledged, appreciated and unquestioned.

If, however the weather conditions locally to you and /or where you know you have to travel, are severe, then you will naturally make your own risk assessment of the situation and make a professional decision as to whether it is safe to travel or not.

It is important to consider the likelihood of getting the children home safely in the afternoon if you are able to bring them into school in the morning.

Every effort will be made to keep parents and the school informed of decisions and changes and that this will continue. In addition any decision to close the school will be communicate via the message on the school's answer phone.

The importance of the school and Parent - Mail having up to date contact telephone numbers of staff, vehicle operators, parents and carers is obvious. It is the responsibility of each person to ensure that the school office is notified of any change.

THE HEADTEACHER - SENIOR STAFF

If before the start of school in the morning, weather conditions in Stevenage are severe, the Head teacher and or a member of senior staff will make a risk assessment of the situation and determine if the school is to be open.

This decision will be made as early as possible and will firstly communicate this decision via the message on the school's answer phone and then all parents and transport operators who are registered with the Parent-Mail service.

If pupils are in school and the weather becomes severe during the school day, then the Head teacher, or in their absence a senior member of staff will again make a risk assessment of the situation based on local information and the weather forecasts, and make a decision as to getting pupils home safely while it remains safe to do so. This may well mean closing the school early. Taxi operators will be contacted and parents will be contacted as soon as we are able, following the decision to close the school.

SCHOOL STAFF

In the event of severe conditions, school staff should consider the school open unless a specific communication of closure has been received. Staff will need to make their own risk assessment of the situation based upon local information and determine if it is safe to travel. It is expected that staff make every effort to attend school. It is also expected that staff make every effort to come to school later if conditions have improved.

The school will take into account the need for staff to get home, particularly those with young families, if the weather becomes severe during the school day and after school meetings and extended activities will be cancelled.

CAR PARKING

A priority will be placed on ensuring that the home / school transport bays and main pathways are cleared. During periods of snow and icy conditions, it will not be possible for all the individual car parking bays to be cleared or treated, anyone who wishes to park their vehicle on the school site during periods of adverse weather do so at their own risk.