



From mountain to sea

Adverse Weather Conditions in Aberdeenshire

Guidance for parents and carers on school closure due to bad weather or other emergency



We want to work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the safety of children at all times. These guidelines outline the procedures for dealing with school closures during bad weather or other emergency.

Parental Role

We would like you to:

- Provide the school with your up-to-date contact information including emergency contacts to whom your child can be sent to or collected by at short notice if you are unavailable. **This is vital.**
- Ensure your child wears appropriate outdoor clothes throughout the winter, especially footwear.
- Decide whether it is safe for your child to travel to school in bad weather, either by school transport or on foot.
- Provide the school with a bad weather address within safe walking distance of the school. If you cannot do this contact the school who will provide you with a form to complete.

Also:

- If school transport is not running please don't take your child – or other children – to school yourself unless it is safe for you to do so.
- You will be responsible for ensuring that the children you



It is essential your contact details and emergency contact details are kept up-to-date to ensure we can contact you at short notice.

took to school are transported home again and therefore need to be available in the event that the school has to close early due to deteriorating weather conditions.

- In difficult weather conditions pupils should not wait any longer than 15 minutes past the normal pick up time before returning home. In case the transport doesn't arrive please make sure you have made alternative arrangements for your child.
- If your child travels by school transport you are responsible for their safety to and from the pick up/drop off point whether they use school transport or a public service vehicle. This is also the case for your emergency contact person.

School transport contractors have been told not to allow children to walk home alone from drop-off points *under any circumstances* during extreme weather conditions. If you can't meet or arrange for your child to be met, the school transport will return them to a designated location, which may be another school or Council establishment..

Public service vehicles – drivers of these vehicles follow a specified route and keep to timetables – they cannot make special arrangements.

When will schools be closed?

Head Teachers decide if and when schools should close or in some cases not open due to bad weather or another emergency. In bad weather they will decide this after receiving information about local weather conditions. This decision can be made during any time, day or night.

During bad weather some staff may not be able to get to school – so the school may have to close or in some cases not open because there are too few teachers present. Sometimes only part of the school will be closed or only some of the pupils will be dismissed early.

If you are concerned about local weather conditions contact the school. You may wish to collect your child yourself and are free to do so provided you make arrangements with the school.

Nursery, Primary and Special Schools

If your child attends a Nursery, Primary or Special School, which is to close early, the school will contact you by telephone. If this is not possible the school will contact your named 'emergency contact'. It is vital that the emergency contact

information is up-to-date and that this person is always available.

No child will be released from school without contact being made. It is important contact details are current and the people named are available – particularly during bad weather.

Secondary Schools

Because of the large number of pupils in Secondary Schools, it is impossible to inform all parents in advance of emergency closures and schools may dismiss pupils without first contacting parents.

Individual schools will let parents know of any local arrangements.

What education might my child be missing?

Some parents and pupils worry that important examinations or work is missed because the school is closed or conditions make it difficult to attend. But the *safety and welfare of children must take precedence* when making judgements about travelling to school in bad weather.

Arrangements can be made for lost time to be made up and examinations can be rearranged.

Some schools will have homeworking materials available electronically through eg GLOW and 'Show My Homework' website. Packs or information may also be provided in advance of anticipated closures.

Further Information

Outwith school hours, your local radio station is a good place to find out information on school closures. The following radio stations receive updated information every 30 mins from our website:

Northsound 1

FM 96.9

Tel: 01224 337000

Northsound 2

MW 1035 kHz

Tel: 01415 652200

BBC Radio Scotland

FM 92.4 - 94.7

MW 810 kHz

Moray Firth Radio

FM 97.4

MW 1107 kHz

Tel: 01463 224433

North East Community Radio

FM 97.1 - 106.4

Tel: 01467 632878

Waves Radio

FM 101.2

Tel: 01779 491012

Original 106 FM

Tel: 01224 293800

(On-Air Presenter)

Tel: 01224 294860 (Team)

Twitter

<http://twitter.com/aberdeenshire>

Aberdeenshire Council Website

<https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Apps/schools-closures/>

You have the option to sign up to receive email alerts when your school(s) updates their closure status:

<https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/myAberdeenshire/>

School SEEMIS text system or the School's social media being used.

School Information Line

Tel: 0370 054 4999 then 02 + your school's 4 Digit Pin. If you cannot get through first time, please do not put this number on redial. This will only lead to the line being busier.

Please note: Call charges from mobile phones and landlines to the School Information Line will depend on your contract with your telephone service provider.

Public Transport Unit (PTU)

Tel: 01467 533335 (9am-5pm only) - This is a limited source of information as contractors may make locally based decisions the PTU will be unaware of.

Education Offices (9am-5pm only)

Banff Tel: 01261 455838

Fraserburgh Tel: 01346 515303

Peterhead Tel: 01467 534362

Inverurie Tel: 01467 539651

Stonehaven Tel: 01569 690535

If you require the above information provided in large print or translated into another language, please contact Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services on 01224 472840.