

HIGHLAND COUNCIL EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICES

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL DURING ADVERSE WEATHER

It is the responsibility of parents or carers to decide if a pupil should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions. The Education Authority encourages full attendance at school but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important. Parents and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

The school updates its procedures for adverse weather closure annually, therefore:-

- **parents** should advise schools of an alternative address, as close as possible to the school, which may be used by their children in emergencies.
- **the school** will advise parents of normal local arrangements for school transport and any special arrangements in the event of adverse weather.
- **the school** will establish a system of communication with parents and transport operators and ensure that parents are fully informed of the arrangements. . A telephone service **0800 564 2272** will be updated for parents to access. The website <https://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures> will also be updated with information for individual schools.

When weather conditions are poor:-

- **Local radio stations** issue news and weather bulletins on traffic conditions and school closures. Transmissions may not cover all households and may be subject to re-scheduling but should be helpful. Parents are advised to remain "tuned in" to ongoing road weather, or school information updates.

Broadcast times

BBC Radio Highland

6.54 am – 7.00 am

7.54 am – 8.00 am

12.54 pm – 1.00 pm

4.54 pm – 5.00 pm

In extreme conditions Radio Highland will interrupt Radio Scotland transmissions, usually on the hour, to carry emergency bulletins. Nevis Radio will carry bulletins at roughly ten minute intervals between 7.00 am and 8.00 am and Lochbroom FM at quarter-hour intervals between 7.15 am and 8.45 am.

Moray Firth Radio

Normally hourly news bulletins and half-hourly summaries will carry local information on weather, roads and conditions affecting schools. In severe conditions normal programmes will be interrupted more frequently to carry emergency bulletins.

Please do not telephone local Radio for advice but listen to appropriate broadcasts.

For pupils using school transport

- **Parents** should note that the final decision on whether it is safe to operate rests with the driver of the school transport vehicle. Therefore there may be occasions on which a school is open but some routes, or parts of routes, are unable to operate.
- **Parents** should advise their children on how long they should wait at the pick up point for their transport. This will depend on the prevailing weather conditions and the availability of shelter at the pick-up point. During adverse weather conditions no pupil is expected to wait longer than twenty minutes past the normal "pick-up" time.
- **Morning** journeys may be delayed by an hour if road conditions are unsafe at the normal journey time but have improved within the hour. Before pupils return to a pick up point parents should check the schools telephone information line for updated messages from their schools Head teacher. Please note that for some routes the transport operator may contact the parent directly.
- **Drivers** are advised not to drop off children where there is a risk that they may not safely reach home or other place of shelter. This may involve children being taken to an alternative place of safety, agreed in consultation with the school.
- **Where parents** are concerned about weather conditions at "drop-off" points, they should contact the school as early as possible.

When weather conditions are poor, parents should ensure that children are met at the "drop-off" point, especially where public service transport is used.