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Dear Parent/carer,

Adverse Weather Arrangements

As you know, the weather during winter can become severe very quickly. I just wanted to take this opportunity to provide a reminder about our procedures should we have to make alterations to the school day as a result of adverse weather.

The Head Teacher and/or Senior Leadership Team have complete discretion to delay the start of the school day, or to close the school early and send some, or all, pupils home when they anticipate adverse weather conditions which would put young people and staff at risk. These decisions will always be made as promptly as possible, but please do be aware there are a number of steps we have to take first before making this decision and time is required for this. In the event of this decision being made we will contact parents/carers as outlined in the information below.

Please be advised, **we only make contact when there are to be changes** to the working hours of the school day or to transport provision. If everything is to run as normal, there will be no requirement for any additional communications.

School Day Starting Late

If in the morning we have severe weather conditions, there will be communication between the transport providers and the school to confirm whether school transport can operate safely and to time. This decision is made by each individual transport provider themselves and the school will respond to their decisions. We will then ensure we get communication out to parents/carers if a change is required as quickly as possible.

In some circumstances, it may be that we need to make the decision to delay the start of the school day. For those arriving to school by school transport, this will depend on the capacity of our transport providers to adapt to this change, so please ensure to check for communication from ourselves, as outlined below, regarding timings of buses. For pupils who travel to school independently, please aim to arrive at school no earlier than 15 minutes ahead of the announced school opening time.

Communication with parents/carers

On such occasions, a Groupcall will be issued to all parents/carers to advise them of the delayed start. A further Groupcall message will then go out to all parents/carers of pupils who use school transport to advise them of the specific arrangements for their transport provision if this is required. Information will also be put on the school website, the Aberdeen City Council School Closure Website, and the Aberdeen City Council School's Information Line. Please see information below:

Aberdeen City Council School Closure website – Please go to www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/closure and click on Dyce Academy.

Aberdeen City Council School's Information Line - The important feature of this is the Emergency Arrangements message for parents/guardians. Information on Early closures or transport

arrangements will be available and updated as necessary. You can access the Information Line by dialling **0870 054 1999**. You will then be asked for a six digit PIN number which is **011040** for Dyce Academy. You should then choose Option 1. The cost of the call from a landline is no more than 10p per call.

Please do ensure that the sources listed above are the ones that you refer to in relation to adverse weather arrangements, as these are the official sources of information which will be fully updated. We would ask that you access this information before making direct contact with the school to look for an update, as our phone lines will be very busy making all the necessary arrangements. We would also ask that on days of adverse weather, all parents/carers check their phone for groupcall updates regularly.

On the days when school transport does not run, some parents/carers may make the decision to bring their child to school themselves to join the local pupils. However, it is important you are aware that this will mean you are responsible for collecting your child and taking them home at the end of the school day, as there will be no return transport on days that school transport has been called off. It is also essential that you are contactable should the decision need to be made to close the school early as you will be required to collect your child at the point of closure.

It is also important to be aware that when school transport is running, there can sometimes be very localised issues which means buses may not be able to access all pick up points. If a bus does not arrive within 10 minutes of the usual or updated time for pick up, pupils should return to their homes.

Early Closure during the School Day

If weather forecasts are received which suggest that weather conditions are going to significantly deteriorate during the course of a school day, the decision may need to be taken to arrange for school transport pupils to be sent home early, if it is felt that this can be done without putting them at risk. The school will be in contact with school transport providers to request that we recall the buses and arrangements will be made for an early collection from school. Again this has to be done in negotiation with our transport providers as they will also be working with other local schools who may also be looking for early closures. Once confirmed school transport will then take pupils back to their normal drop-off points. A Groupcall message will be sent home to all parents/carers of school transport pupils affected by such arrangements as quickly as possible.

As we carry out our in-school procedures to prepare for early closure, it is extremely important that all pupils follow the instructions given to them by staff members and report to the locations as requested at the correct time. It is also important that no young person makes private arrangements with yourselves – for example to collect them at Dyce – without making sure that the school is aware. If you do feel this is necessary please ensure that as parent/carer you contact the school office to inform them and permission is granted. Pupils leaving the grounds without permission can lead to confusion and delays while staff look for a pupil who has already made arrangements to return home. This could endanger others as a result.

In cases where the weather is extremely severe, we may have to make the decision to have an early school closure for all pupils. This will be to allow staff and pupils to return home safely. A groupcall message will be sent home to inform all parents/carers in these circumstances.

If your child travels to school via **public transport**, they will simply be released at the point of school closure to make their own way to public transport pick up points. If you require any other arrangements for your child – for example you wish them to be released early to access public transport – please contact the school office to make this request. We cannot allow pupils to leave early without parental contact/permission.

In case the above scenario is ever required, it is important that arrangements are in place to ensure all young people can get access to their homes at an earlier time. Parents and young people should ensure that they have suitable arrangements in place to accommodate this.

Please be advised that for pupils in receipt of free school meals, we will make every effort to ensure your child has something to eat or to take with them in the event of early school closure.

Storm Address

There may be occasions when the weather is so severe that it may be prudent for pupils not to reach their homes, but rather to spend the night within Dyce boundaries. This is why we ask you to indicate a storm address in Dyce. Should the ACMS residence be closed, we advise pupils to have a storm address in Dyce.

As you are aware Groupcall is our primary source of communication with all parents/carers so please do ensure that any changes to contact details are shared with school at the earliest possible opportunity.

There will always be the unexpected situations that arise which may not be covered in this letter. I trust that you will accept decisions that have to be made to ensure the safety of our young people and staff.

Please also be reassured that in all matters relating to adverse weather, communication with parents is always a top priority in these circumstances and will always be carried out as quickly as possible by school staff.

Yours sincerely



Katie Arthur
Head Teacher