



# The King Edward VI School

## Severe Weather Policy



Information and advice on unavoidable school closures and travel arrangements in difficult weather circumstances

Issued in November 2011

## **When it snows**

On rare occasions, the weather can be so severe that getting to and from school becomes hazardous. A school like ours, which many students travel to on buses, sometimes over long distances, is particularly vulnerable. This is especially so if the weather worsens in the afternoon.

Really bad weather is disruptive and can cause anxiety and stress. Understandably, many parents ring the school if snow starts falling heavily during the day. It can be frustrating trying to get through when all our outside lines are engaged by other parents calling for the same reason! Jammed lines and answering queries can in turn delay office staff who are trying to get through to the bus companies to arrange for early collection of students.

We will ensure that our website [www.kevi.info](http://www.kevi.info) is updated throughout the day regarding any developments which might affect transport arrangements. In extreme circumstances, when very bad weather is predicted or has broken out, the school will allow students to call parents via a mobile phone.

Decisions about closing the school or sending students home early are always difficult to make. We need to gather reliable information before making a judgement. We check weather reports, get advice from the bus companies and try to assess what is happening elsewhere in the area. Some buses may not be available. Operators have to decide whether running vehicles on particular routes in snow and ice is too high a risk. Drivers are rarely available at times other than scheduled school runs. That is why schools often take their lead from the bus companies when deciding what to do.

## **If the school is to be closed due to adverse weather overnight**

Two possible scenarios might occur

- 1) The school will be closed, this will be posted on our website by 7am and will usually mean that Cottingwood Lane / and / or the school grounds are inaccessible. Opening the school would be deemed unsafe for staff and students. We would make every effort in these circumstances to ensure the school opens as soon as possible
- 2) The school will be open but lessons start later in the morning e.g. 9.45am to ensure all staff and students can travel to work safely. This will also be posted on our website by 7am. The building would still be open for staff and students arriving earlier from 7.30am.

## **If the weather deteriorates during the day**

1. The school will be closed early but **only in extreme cases**.
2. Students living farthest from school and requiring transport may be sent home. The school **may** remain open for students living locally. The closure may be staggered based on these principles.
3. The decision to close the school will be made by the headteacher and other key staff.
4. Any decision to close the school early will be passed on to staff and students as soon as we have arrangements in hand and posted on the website.
5. We will tell students if we know of any changes to normal routes for school buses so that they can decide the best way to get home.
6. Students collected from school or with other arrangements will be allowed to phone home for advice on what to do.
7. Students who can walk home will be sent, preferably, in family groups or in the company of other pupils who live near to each other.
8. School will be kept open with staff on hand until the last student has left.
9. It is **not** normally possible for students to be given lifts by staff.
10. Parents collecting their children are asked to meet them in Morpeth and **not** to use Cottingwood Lane in extreme weather.

## **How parents can help**

- Check the school website and listen to BBC Radio Newcastle.
- Plan ahead with your child what to do in a bad weather emergency.
- Keep looking at our website.
- Only call the school if you really have to – calls in prevent calls out!
- Do not use Cottingwood Lane in extreme weather.

**Closure notices will appear in the following places so please can you check these websites too:**

County Council – [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/nccalerts](http://www.facebook.com/nccalerts)

Twitter – [www.twitter.com/northumberlands](http://www.twitter.com/northumberlands)

Following is a list of some of the transport companies and their contact numbers.

**NOTE:** This list is not exhaustive and therefore you should make sure to ring the appropriate company. The King Edward VI School bears no responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

Rothbury Motors Ltd	01665 606616
Arriva Northumbria Limited	01670 854424
Snaiths Coaches	01830 520609
Mac's Private Hire	01670 853604
DDM Private Hire Ltd	01668 283023
Kensway Travel Ltd	01670 843773
N.E.E.D.	01665 605780
Sutton A & P	01669 621888
Stan Friberg Taxis	01670 816702
Bell's of Rothbury	01669 621532
Homerun	01670 511245
Broadway Cabs	01661 822200
Diamond Private Hire Ltd	01670 353535
Dial A Car Taxis Ltd	01670 828888
E. Caisley	0800 1185018
Highway Taxis	01670 514190
Ponteland Private Hire	07810 150138
Parkside Taxis	01670 735555
Sovereign Taxis	01665 602200
Mrs H Taylor	01665 572757

## Examinations

We will always do our best to ensure that school is open for students to sit examinations. However, there may be exceptional cases when this won't be possible. If our website states that school is closed to all students and they are meant to be sitting an external exam on the same day, don't panic! We may be able to enter students for a later sitting, for example in the summer term rather than in January. If this is not possible then we will apply for special consideration for all those students affected.

If school is open but the weather is bad students should still do their very best to get into school, as long as you, as parents, think that it is safe to do so. Don't worry if students have tried their best to get in for the start of the exam but have still been delayed as we can, in exceptional circumstances, allow students to start the exam a little later. However, we are not allowed to postpone the examination to another day. If it's not safe to travel to school, in most cases we can enter students for the next scheduled date for the module they have missed.

