



Dear Parents/Carers

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL EDUCATION SERVICE – ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS
GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS**

In times of severe weather conditions, the safety of pupils is the first consideration.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to decide if their children should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions.

The Council encourages full attendance at school but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important.

Parents/carers and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. We will make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

For all pupils who live within the school area	It is unusual for the school to close – parents/carers should assume that the school is open unless otherwise advised, as detailed in this letter.
For pupils using school transport	<p>Please 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.</p> <p>In extreme circumstances, it may be inadvisable to allow pupils to set out from home. Please tell your children 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.</p> <p>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 pickup point parents/carers should check the school’s telephone information line for updated messages from the Rector. Please note that for some routes the transport operator may contact the parents/carers directly.</p> <p>If during the school day the weather deteriorates sufficiently to cause concern about conditions in the vicinity of your home, parents/carers should contact the school in order to discuss either early release of pupils or alternative emergency arrangements.</p>
For pupils using school transport	<p>Parents/carers should note the different conditions under which drivers of contract vehicles and public service vehicles operate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers of contract vehicles are advised that they should not drop off children where there is any doubt about their reaching home or some other acceptable place of shelter. In most cases, this should not be a problem since pupils are normally conveyed directly to the home. • Drivers of public service vehicles, however, must travel by specified routes in accordance with scheduled timetables and cannot make special provision for individual needs. <p>The Cromarty bus falls into this category. In the event of an accident or breakdown we have been assured that the drivers can make contact with the school and members of the Senior Management Team.</p> <p>Parents/carers should make every effort to have the pupils met at the drop-off point if prevailing conditions so dictate. Where parents/carers are sufficiently concerned about conditions at ‘drop-off’ points, they should contact the school as early as possible.</p> <p>The most difficult situation to deal with is one where pupils have to be sent home early because of worsening weather during the school day. In this circumstance we rely on advice</p>



Fortrose Academy

Going Forward Together

Rector : Nigel Engstrand
 Depute Rector : Andrew Findlater
 Acting Depute Rector : Muir Morton
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	<p>from the bus companies that service our transport contracts. The most reliable way of passing on this information to parents and carers in this circumstance is to use our text messaging service and via our website and social media. Please ensure that if you have changed your phone number you let the school office know so your contact details can be updated. We will make every attempt to update our school website and social media as quickly as possible and we will also encourage pupils to contact home to advise parents and carers of the plan. We would advise you to regularly check our school website, Facebook and 'School App'.</p> <p>There is no problem with parents/carers contacting the school to enquire about the likelihood of pupils being sent home early if weather conditions seem to be deteriorating quickly. Often, as you will know, the prevailing weather conditions in one area of the school's catchment area can be very different to another area. It can sometimes be useful for parents and carers to advise us of conditions in their specific area and we know it can often be more difficult for families living in the most rural areas to travel safely.</p> <p>As per Highland Council guidelines we are required to ask parents/carers to advise the school of an alternative address, as close as possible to the school, which may be used by their children in extreme weather conditions. We would be grateful for this information by Friday 13th December 2024.</p>
<p>For all pupils/parents/carers</p>	<p>Public Broadcasts Local Radio Stations will issue news and weather bulletins on traffic conditions and school closures. Whilst it is recognised that such transmissions may not cover all households, and may be subject to re-scheduling, they will be helpful to many families. Parents/carers are therefore advised to remain 'tuned in' to ongoing road, weather or school information updates.</p> <p>Radio Stations request that, since telephone lines are busy at such times, parents/carers should not telephone in for advice but listen to appropriate broadcasts.</p> <p>Broadcast times BBC Radio Highland:- 6.30 a.m. 7.30 a.m. 8.30 a.m. 12.30 p.m. 4.30 p.m. 5.30 p.m. In extreme conditions Radio Highland will interrupt Radio Scotland transmissions, usually on the hour, to carry emergency bulletins.</p> <p>Moray Firth Radio www.mfr.co.uk Local news on the hour from 6am – 6pm In severe conditions normal programmes will be interrupted to carry emergency bulletins.</p> <p>Previous Telephone Information Service This service for schools has been withdrawn. Please instead, check the Highland Council Webpage https://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures which will be updated by the Rector in the event of severe weather. We also update our school website, Facebook with current information. We will also send text messages to update you on closures.</p> <p>The council's website www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures will be updated with information for individual schools. The Council's Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/highlandcouncil</p>

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	<p>will show updated posts on the latest news of school closures and weather-related problems. The Council's Twitter page at https://twitter.com/HighlandCouncil will list tweets of the latest news of school closures and weather-related problems.</p> <p>The school website has links to our Facebook page www.fortroseacademy.co.uk/ https://www.facebook.com/fortroseacademy/?locale=en_GB</p> <p>We are also about to launch our 'school app. When this becomes available, we would also urge you to download our school app which will have up to date information on school closures in the event of adverse weather as well as a wide range of other helpful information.</p>
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Yours sincerely,
Nigel Engstrand
Rector

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