



The Castle School

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Dear Parents and Carers

As you may know, heavy snow is forecast for Taunton at 5pm on Thursday 31 January. Please read the Adverse Weather and School Closure Procedure below – this is how we will contact you if we need to close the school. We will stay open as long as possible, but if the weather does deteriorate we may have to close a little early tomorrow.

Adverse Weather and School Closure Procedure

First of all I need to assure you that the school will only close if the building is not safe or routes home for children are threatened, ie bridges closed or routes flooded.

Closure before the start of the school day due to severe weather

If we were to close the school before school starts we will inform you in the following ways:

1. A message will appear on the school's website (www.castleschool.co.uk) and Twitter account (www.twitter.com/thecastleschool) by 7:30 am each day (although we will aim to be sooner) and we will update the website and Twitter with information, as far as possible, during the day.
2. A text message and email will be sent to all parents, whose details we have and that are up to date, by or shortly after 7.30am. Please let us have your up to date contact details if you have not already done so.
3. Broadcasts by the following Radio Stations –
Somerset Sound 1566MHz
Heart FM 102.6FM [96.5FM Taunton Area].

Closure during the school day:

Our priority is to keep all students calm and safe, therefore, please follow these instructions so we can keep the children calm and reassured that they are safe. **DO NOT** phone/text your child/ren as it causes them alarm and other children to panic.

If for any reason weather forces us to close during the school day we will inform you in the following way:

1. We will put information on our website and Twitter. Those parents who have given us their email addresses and text contacts, we will send you a message. This message will direct you to the school website which is where we will put all advice/instructions. Again, please **do not** text or phone your child at this point as it will cause panic and over-excitement. I have attached a flow chart which I hope will reassure you about what will happen. We do need to do things in an orderly and safe fashion, as I know you will appreciate.
2. Normally the school buses will arrive early to ensure that students who catch the bus are able to get home. This is at the bus company's discretion and we usually have a call from them telling us they will arrive early. We will let you know if this is the case.
3. Students will only be allowed to leave with a parent or guardian. Please make sure students sign out if you collect them. You will need to wait in Reception while we collect your child/ren; please be patient as we will be doing all we can.

4. As most of our students are able to walk to and from school, we will stay open for as long as we possibly can and, although there may not be enough teachers to teach lessons, we will provide supervised activities for Years 10 and 11 in the main hall and for Years 7, 8 and 9 in the sports hall, so that students can remain in school even though normal lessons will be disrupted. This is to allow parents the comfort of knowing their children are safe and supervised.
5. If it becomes clear, in the unlikely event of extreme and dangerous weather, that we are forced to close we will post this on the website and Twitter and text/email all parents for whom we have these details. However, we will provide a safe place for students to wait and this will be either the library or the main hall. I do not envisage this being anything but very unusual.

Transporting Somerset has set up a website to advise parents about bus routes out of operation or restricted routes. In an effort to improve communication with parents, Transporting Somerset has asked for parents to look at their website (www.somerset.gov.uk/badweathertransport) before phoning for information.

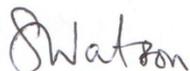
Everything reasonably possible will be done to ensure children's safety and well-being.

If you do not receive information from the school to the contrary, please assume that school will be open as usual.

In times of adverse weather, students are permitted to wear suitable footwear (eg wellington boots, trainers) on the way to and from school but will need to bring their school shoes to change into once in school. May I remind you that we ask parents not to drive down Longrun Drive to the front of the school because it adds to congestion and causes problems. In emergencies such as school closure, the drive to the school will be closed.

Thank you for your support with this. Our intention is to ensure all students are safe and are not alarmed in any way.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Watson
Headteacher