



HARROGATE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN INDEPENDENT ACADEMY TRUST

October 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

Bad Weather Arrangements

We have had bad weather arrangements in place for many years, for the safety of both the students and the staff. However, it is our experience that as soon as snow arrives, the school switchboard becomes jammed with messages and queries from anxious parents. This not only overwhelms our support staff, but also prevents bus companies from being able to get through and update us about any changes to student collection arrangements. We would therefore ask you not to phone unless it is an emergency, but to work with the arrangements set out in this letter:

Firstly, **whatever the weather conditions, please always assume that the school will be kept fully open as normal**, because we understand the complications that arise for parents if we have to close suddenly during the day. Therefore, if the school opens normally we will do all we can to ensure that it remains so for the full length of the day, including normal afternoon bus arrangements for students. With variations in weather forecasts and contrasting road conditions across our catchment area it will always be difficult to choose the right moment to close the school. We cannot guarantee that such a decision can be made in time to meet the expectations of all our families but we will try our best to keep you informed in as timely a way as possible.

If the school cannot open for whatever reason, this information will be broadcast as soon as possible after 7.00 am on the "Snow Line" features of Stray FM (97.2FM), Radio York (104.3FM) and Minster FM (104.7FM). **No message means that the school will be open as usual.** We will also send out an email message and further updates as required. You can also keep up to date and receive messages via Twitter @HarrogateGS and on the HGS website www.harrogategrammar.co.uk If you have not yet registered your email with us we would suggest you do so to facilitate better communication with you.

If the regular bus your child uses to get to school is not running on any day because of snow, **please do not** deliver your child by your own transport instead, unless you are also collecting him/her. In addition, if you live in one of the outlying villages around Harrogate, **please do not** send your child to school if there is a foreseeable possibility that they will have difficulty in getting home safely later in the day. Even if the school is still open do not send your child if you feel there is a risk to their safety in making the journey.

Bus companies will make every effort to honour their normal contracts, even if they arrive very late. However, if they have to advise us during the day that local roads are about to close, then sometimes there is no safe alternative to early closure of the school so that both students and staff can get home. Where this happens we will always use the local radio snow lines to advise you that we have got to close, and myself and senior staff will remain on the premises until the last child has been got away safely. We will telephone users of our Pateley Bridge minibus to advise if the service is not able to run.

In the exceptional cases where the school has to be closed early and your child cannot get home, or you cannot collect them, please have an arrangement in place with a relative or family friend so that your child has somewhere local and safe to go. *This is a vital arrangement to make for children who live in very rural areas.* Please ensure that your child knows what this arrangement is in advance, to avoid trying to telephone him/her on the day with this information!

I would be grateful for your assistance with these arrangements for ensuring everyone's safety.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R Sheriff
Headteacher