Arrangements for Severe Weather

If parents have concerns about weather conditions, they are asked to contact the School rather than their son in the first instance.

Any arrangement to collect pupils early must be agreed with the School. Pupils must under no circumstances dismiss themselves from school.

Decision-making and Communication
MGS monitors forecasts closely and has the following arrangements for decision-making and communication when severe weather warnings are issued in winter.

- Communication will be via email bulletins and the homepage of mgs.org. Whilst we have the ability to contact parents by text, in view of the cost, we shall only do so if a decision is taken to close the School.

- Decisions and arrangements will be made on site from 6:30am onwards and emailed to staff and parents. Decisions will be co-ordinated with Manchester High School for Girls, Withington Girls’ School and the bus companies.

- We cannot be precise about the time a decision will be published because of the number of consultations required and the many uncertainties. However, a message will be posted sometime between 6:30am and 7:00am. In the unlikely event that the situation remains unclear at 7:00am, a holding message will be published to that effect.

- Subsequent updates will be distributed via email and posted on the website around lunchtime. Updates on subsequent days will be published at the same times. In poor weather parents should monitor these communications in case of early closure.

- Whenever possible, we shall signal decisions for the coming days in advance to enable families to plan accordingly.

- In some circumstances we may have to close the School to enable the clearance of snow on site and a swift re-opening on the days that follow.

- All decisions will follow liaison with the bus operators, both in relation to their ability to offer a service and the implications for getting boys home. If bus operators cannot function, the School will communicate this to parents.

- Wherever possible, the School will remain open, even if transport from some areas is not operating.

- In winter we strongly recommend that pupils wear appropriate footwear, warm clothing, hats and gloves.

- Responsible behaviour, both when travelling and on site, is essential to minimise the risk of injury.

Boys must not dismiss themselves from school; if they are aware of a problem they should contact the pastoral office.

- Ultimately, it is for parents to judge whether it is wise and practical for their sons to travel to school in severe weather. Our experience is that the boys do cope well and we would expect them to show resolve. When the School is open and a pupil is unable to attend, absence should be reported in the usual way before 9:00am (pupilabsence@mgs.org).

- It can be necessary, because of heavy snow, to close early to allow for longer journey times and freezing roads, and to minimise the time boys are travelling in the dark. If we do, we shall communicate this via email and the website around or before lunchtime.
When unexpected heavy snow falls during a school day we remain in constant contact with bus operators. If necessary, we shall release early boys who travel on some routes. Those boys should alert their parents by mobile phone or with our assistance. If you observe heavy snow fall in your home area which is likely to present a problem, please help us by alerting the School via Reception. The school website will be updated in these circumstances.

If a decision is taken to close the School, we shall provide parents via email with all information we have about bus services and arrangements for parents who wish to pick up their sons.

We shall put in place supervision arrangements for any pupils who have to remain on site for collection by parents.

Vehicles, gritting and access to the school site

The bus park will not initially be cleared: buses will drop off and collect from Old Hall Lane until it has been cleared and gritted. The city centre shuttle will use Telfer Road, as normal. Late buses will be subject to review and may need to be cancelled. **No parental cars may come onto the site.** There will be no vehicular access via Telfer Road until clearance is possible, although pedestrian access will remain open.

On site, we grit gateways, slopes, junctions, corners and main pedestrian routes. Driveways and parking areas are not gritted.

Everyone should drive with great care, wear appropriate footwear and exercise caution.

**Junior School – Special Arrangements**

We may have to make different decisions for the Senior and Junior Schools, and for Years 3 and 4 in particular, because of our safeguarding obligations for our youngest pupils.

**We never allow a Junior School boy to leave the site early with an older brother, or put him on a bus leaving early, without parental permission.**

If we are able to anticipate a Junior School closure, we shall alert parents the evening beforehand so they can make plans for childcare, should it be needed.

If a decision to close has to be taken on the day of closure, it will be communicated in the morning, as described above. Any differences between Junior School and Senior School will be made clear. The Head of Junior School will email guidance on the arrangements for Junior School boys.

We cannot permit any parents’ cars on site for safety reasons.

**After-school and Saturday events**

- In extreme weather we have often needed to cancel after-school activities. We never take lightly the decision to cancel major events, and only do so to avoid committing parents, pupils and staff to long journeys in hazardous, dark conditions.

- **Saturday fixtures.** The status of Saturday fixtures and possible cancellations will be communicated by each sport using their usual mechanisms.

- **Saturday events (including PS).** If a cancellation is necessary, it will be posted on the website between lunchtime and 4:00 pm on the preceding day.

- **Weekend trips.** Should cancellation be necessary, we would expect to make a decision around lunchtime on Friday, and affected parents would be contacted either by telephone or via email.