

SEVERE WEATHER ARRANGEMENTS (WHAT CAN I EXPECT)

The safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate. Education and Lifelong Learning work closely with Roads Division and other Council colleagues to ensure the correct priority is given to treating routes to schools during severe weather. The Council's [website](#) hosts Angus Council's 'Get Ready for Winter' information. In addition on the same website under the Schools and Young People section, advice is also given on Emergency school closures and transport updates.

Notwithstanding this information, it is important to note that even if a school is open during severe weather conditions, parents are entitled to keep their children at home if they have any safety concerns whatsoever. As is the case generally it is the parent's responsibility to ensure the safety of their children to and from school. There is no compulsion to send children to school if the parent feels it's unsafe to do so.

To summarise parents and staff can expect Roads and other colleagues to clear roads and paths to school gates in accordance with the predetermined priorities as detailed on [website](#). From the school gates, Facility Assistants will clear a main route from the main pedestrian gate to the main entrance as their number one priority. They will then continue to grit and clear other main paths to allow pedestrian access in order of priority. Car parks and playground areas are not considered to be priorities and in, reality, most cases will not be gritted by Facility Assistants. Some schools have made local arrangements with contractors, parent groups and volunteers to assist in clearing car parks and playgrounds.

As the Facility Management Service is provided by Tayside Contracts, arrangements are in place for cleaning staff to carry out the same duties as Facility Assistants in schools that do not have access to a Facility Assistant. Again, schools can make local arrangements to have contractors, parent councils, volunteers etc assist in this task.

As with the journey to the school gate there is no compulsion to use footpaths, car parks, or other areas of the school if the user does not deem it safe to do so.

With regard to pupils transported to schools the School Transport Contractor will make the decision as to whether it is safe to run a vehicle. If the school journey has been cancelled that information will be conveyed to parents by the normal routes. As will the information to bring pupils home early in the case of school closure. It is important to note that as with pupils travelling on foot, parents are responsible for supervising their children to/from their designated pick-up point until they board or alight from the vehicle. It should be noted there may be occasions in exceptional circumstances when the school transport vehicle will be delayed or fail to arrive due to vehicle breakdown or extreme weather conditions.

Parents are responsible at all times for deciding whether it is appropriate to allow their children to wait at the bus pick-up point unsupervised. This is all the more important in extreme weather conditions when the vehicle is more likely not to make the journey.

The arrangements for dealing with severe weather are reviewed regularly and amended to meet the schools requirements. However, it should be noted that as with the treatment of main roads and footpaths needs are prioritised and action taken, resources, materials and human are not infinite. It would not be possible or practical for schools to gear up with machinery and man power to deal with the occasional heavy snow or particularly bad weather. School staff, school communities and the local community often wish to help when severe weather prevails. These arrangements should be encouraged and pre-arranged if possible. Schools should try to utilise school staff resources as much as possible to help in these extreme conditions.