



BOURNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL BULLETIN

Week ending Friday 4 January 2019
From Jonathan Maddox, Headteacher

EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL DUE TO BAD WEATHER

It is my habit at this time of year to brief parents and carers on the possibility that the School might have to close - quite possibly at very short notice - should there be extremes of weather over the coming winter. I hasten to reassure parents that closures of *our* School for this reason are rare. The default position is always that the School will be open and for many years we did not have to close at all. But last year it was necessary to close - for several days - due to snow, so there is recent experience to draw upon as I set out my advice for this year.

If we have to close then you can be certain that a difficult decision has been made with the safety of our students, and staff, uppermost. I make the decision in discussion with Delaine Buses and a senior governor, in full awareness of the sometimes considerable burden of inconvenience that a closure can place on family arrangements.

The circumstances and catchment area of the other local schools are, increasingly, very different from our own so in recent years we have tended to make any decisions on closure alone. **We will continue to make our own decision on closure, independently of other local schools.**

The 'easy' situation is when the School does not open at all on any given day and it is possible to make the decision very early on. When it snows, Delaines will telephone me very early in the morning, long before any student will have begun to prepare for their journey to School. I have an excellent and long-standing relationship with Delaines and my home in Stamford is in view of one of their routes, so together we are able to form an opinion on the conditions quickly and efficiently. If the decision is taken to close then that decision will be communicated as follows:

1. To all students using *Milk*. Students can access *Milk* from their phones or from any other Internet-connected device. If parents have *Milk* set up on their devices, then they will receive the same message.
2. By a notice on the front page of the School's website.

Experience from last year - the first for which *Milk* was available - demonstrated very clearly that the *Milk* message sent to every student ensured that none arrived at School. Last year I had to post a closure notice after I had set out on my own journey to School, and that, too, worked perfectly.

The much more difficult situation is where it is decided to open the School - so no closure announcement is made - but heavy snow falls once the morning commute to School has happened and parents have set out on their daily business. Only one such closure has been declared since I joined BGS in 2005. Should I have to close the School other than first thing in the morning then the same methods of communication will be used to let you know. **Please do not attempt to telephone the School as your call cannot be answered.**

On one or two occasions in the course of my headship I have had to close the School for other reasons, most recently due to failure of the electricity supply. In any case of closure, the procedure set out above will be followed.