



# Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

*Striving for Excellence*

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

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Dear Parents/Carers,

You will all know by now just how much I hate snow. Trying to second guess the winter weather is something that I dread. With the current weather warnings in place I thought it would be useful to talk you through my decision making process and give you an idea of my intentions as they stand.

As soon as there is the risk of snow we begin monitoring the weather across a number of UK weather sites. We use this information to attempt to gauge the likelihood of a forced school closure. The picture throughout the week has already significantly improved for the Newent area.

At present the information available to us suggests that there is a 35% chance of light snow starting at 6pm. The likelihood of light snow falling then drops steadily to just 17% at 9pm. This light snow if it indeed happens and settles is due to continue into the early hours of Friday where it disappears at 9am.

Therefore I am confident that we can get all children home safely on the school buses today. As the children will be home and the buses back at the depot by 5pm. However, for us this year the issue is further complicated by the performance of Beauty and the Beast. At this point in time it would seem premature to cancel the production given how hard the staff and students have worked since September, especially since the percentages given are so low and the forecast is only for light snow. However, it is something that we will continue to monitor and I will make contact accordingly.

In terms of opening the school tomorrow it is my firm belief that we will be open as normal. However, the final decision cannot be made until tomorrow morning. We begin at 5:30 am by calling around to our colleagues who travel long distances to get here to find out about the snowfall in their location. We do this to gauge any potential problems in staffing the school. Between 6:30 and 7:00 we make contact with the various bus and coach companies to assess the safety of the routes that our children travel on. Once we have this information I make a decision on whether to close the school or not. It is never one I take lightly as I am only too aware of the inconvenience that it causes for parents and the lost learning time. However, please rest assured that I will always err on the side of caution when it comes to the safety of young people.

If we do close or delay opening then information will be posted on:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/closures/>

Twitter @newentschool

In addition any updates will be announced on local radio.

Alan Johnson  
Principal