The Abbey School

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

RE: WINTER WEATHER ARRANGEMENTS

As winter approaches, we recognise that adverse weather conditions, such as snow and ice, can present challenges. However, regular school attendance is critical for students' education, well-being, and future success. At The Abbey School, we are committed to supporting all students to achieve good attendance, with an expectation that every student aims for 90% or above across the year, in line with national guidance.

The Department for Education advises schools to remain open during severe weather whenever it is safe and practical to do so. With this in mind, The Abbey School will make every effort to stay open, even if only a reduced number of students and staff are able to attend. On days when the weather limits attendance, teaching may take place remotely via Teams for those unable to travel to school.

The Department for Education's guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, highlights the importance of a collective effort between schools, parents, and local authorities in promoting high attendance. Together, we can ensure that students overcome barriers and access the education and support they need to thrive.

Attendance during severe weather
We expect students to attend school as normal during winter weather unless travel is unsafe. If your child is unable to attend due to hazardous conditions, please inform us through the usual absence reporting procedures. On such occasions, work will be made available on Teams to minimise disruption to their learning.

Due to the nature of our site, which includes multiple outdoor areas, steps, and slopes, there may be occasions when we must prioritise safety and close the school. Staff availability is also a key consideration, as many members of our team travel significant distances to work.

How will we notify you if the school is closed?
In the event of severe weather, updates regarding any closure will be shared via the Kent Closures website, our school website, and social media channels. To check the status of the school, please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk and search for The Abbey School. You can also register on this site to receive email alerts for school closures and other local services.

What can you do to help?

- Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/winter for updates on road conditions and gritting routes to assist with planning your journey.
- If significant snowfall or ice is forecast, we recommend sending students with a packed lunch in case catering services are disrupted.
- Ensure your child has a clear plan for getting home in case of sudden weather changes. This could involve arranging collection by car or staying with a trusted friend or relative if necessary. If students are being collected, they must remain on-site until their lift arrives.

The importance of attendance
Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve their potential and build the habits necessary for success in life. For many of our students, school offers vital structure, support, and opportunities to connect with peers and staff who can help them overcome challenges. Maintaining attendance above 90% is key to ensuring they remain on track academically and socially.

We are hopeful that this plan will not need to be enacted and that we will be able to maintain normal operations throughout the winter season. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Kind regards,

Dr Rowland Speller
Principal