# GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

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**CHANGES TO TRANSPORT / SCHOOL CLOSURE PROTOCOLS / EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS**

Dear Parents / Carers,

Following recent events, and disruptive weather, we would like to reiterate processes and how we communicate with parents when there is an adjustment to school transport, school opening, early closure, or emergency events.

**Transport / Route Closure**
This may occur if there is a specific transport or route issue, because of weather, mechanical failures or other problems.

- School is informed by Devon Transport or Stagecoach that route / transport adjustments are required.
- Route closures / adjustments can be viewed via the Devon Route Closure Website Route Closures Archive - Schools Information - Education and Families
- We would advise parents to register for alerts, as there will be a delay in the school informing you if routes are closed early in the morning. Devon County Council
- Parents / Carers will be informed via Parentmail and updates provided where possible.

Adjustments / cancellations to routes are dictated by Devon County Council and / or the bus companies. Where there is the potential risk of travel disruption due to weather, or other circumstances, we advise parents to monitor Devon County Council information carefully before assuming school buses will be running.

**School Remains Closed**
This may occur due to weather events such as snow, floods, storms, or because of power failure / building damage which prevent the school opening.

- Decision made as soon as possible in consultation with key staff and the Chair of Governors. Please be aware this could be first thing in the morning, not necessarily the evening before, depending on circumstance.
- Parents / Carers will be informed via Parentmail and updates provided as needed.
- GTS Facebook page and website will be updated.
- Devon County Council informed of decision, this is subsequently published on their School Closure Website School Closures Archive - Schools Information - Education and Families

In this situation, these are the primary sources of information, and we would not expect parents to be contacting school directly as this hinders our ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders.

**Early School Closure (Partial or Full)**
This may occur because of weather events, transport decisions or issues with buildings / school infrastructure.

- Decision made as soon as possible in consultation with key staff and the Chair of Governors
- General communication will be as above.
- Pupils will be dismissed from the premises dependant on transport, and the situation we are managing. In order for pupils to be dismissed early, consent must have been provided by parent / carer. For those without consent, pupils will be supervised until the end of the school day or lessons continue as normal (this will be dependent on the situation we are managing)
- Where possible we will use targeted Parentmail groups to inform parents / carers of those effected.

In this situation, these are the primary sources of information, and we would not expect parents to be contacting school directly as this hinders our ability to communicate effectively internally and with all stakeholders.

If pupils have not departed on school transport, due to not having provided consent for early school closure, they will need to be collected at a specified time, as transport will not return at the end of the school day. Please be aware that if early school closure consent has been given, your child will be allowed home if safe to do so at the appropriate time. Further communication is not possible, and we will respond according to the consents we hold. Without consent your child will remain, supervised, at school until the end of the school day.

**Emergency Events**

The school has planned responses to a variety of events; however, it is important to recognise not all events can be predicted therefore the response may need to be dynamic. There are a range of situations where we may consider enacting a partial or full invacuation procedure.

Partial Invacuation

This may occur in situations such as a gas cloud, external anti-social behaviour, civil disturbance etc.

- Pupils and staff all move inside the school building, lessons continue as normal.
- External doors are electronically locked, reception is locked.

Full Invacuation

This may occur when a significant risk is identified within the school grounds.

- Pupils and staff all move inside the school building, internal windows and doors are closed and locked. Pupils and staff remain inside of locked rooms, out of sight, until safety can be ensured.
- External doors are electronically locked, reception is locked.

In each of these situations, as soon as pupils and staff are safe and accounted for, we will communicate with parents / carers using our official methods of communication. It is essential that all stakeholders recognise that information needs to be managed accurately and effectively, online rumour / speculation is not helpful in these situations. Unless you are requested to do so, it is essential that parents / carers do not arrive at school to collect their children or contact school for any further information. It is vitally important that staff are able to manage the situation effectively.

In emergency events, such as those described above, advice from emergency services is very clear. Emergency services do not want parents attending school sites during their initial response to these situations. It has been clearly evidenced that parents arriving on school sites hinders their ability to respond effectively and potentially creates further risks. Therefore, as stated above, parents / carers should not arrive at school unless specifically requested to do so.

Yours faithfully

Andy Bloodworth
Headteacher