28th November 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

**Adverse Weather Arrangements**

The Severe Weather Information line is updated daily on days of adverse weather-contact details below:

School Information Service Line **0370 054 4999**

Fishermoss Pin Number **02 1730** (Press 1 for Severe Weather Information)

Aberdeenshire website https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Apps/schools-closures/

Should the school be closed the information will be posted on Aberdeenshire Council’s website.  Northsound radio uses the information on this website for their broadcast.  Please do, where possible, use all three services, namely Aberdeenshire Website, School Information Service line and Local Radio.  Should I be unable to access the Aberdeenshire website due to power failures etc. I will contact Northsound to add us to their broadcast.  When using the School Information Service Line, if you can’t get through, please do not leave your phone on redial as this apparently makes the line busier.

If the school is forced to close during the course of the school day, parents will be contacted by group text message or telephone. We know it is tempting to call Fishermoss School directly to establish if we will be closing but please avoid doing this as we need to keep the line free for other essential calls. If it is not possible to contact parents, the school will contact your named emergency contact.  No child will be released from school without arrangements being made with an appropriate adult.  It is important that contact, and emergency contact, details are current and the people named are available-particularly during bad weather. Please do inform us of any changes here.

Please be aware that on icy days a 2m path will be gritted immediately adjacent to the school building.  Be particularly aware of this when accessing the Nursery and taking pupils to and from school.  Walking across the playground should not be attempted on icy days.  For your own safety, please stay by the building where grit has been spread.  If you have other family members, or child-minders, collecting children from Nursery or school please advise them of this. On snow days it is more obvious which parts have been gritted but not so easy to see on icy days. As always, an assessment is made of the conditions in the playground before a decision is made about children playing outside.

As a Head Teacher, making school closure decisions in adverse weather is without question stressful and my least favourite responsibility.  It is never clear cut and is always an inconvenience to everyone concerned.  I do my best to reach a decision as early as possible but I am required to establish a number of factors before a school closure decision can be made.  Our teaching staff stay across Aberdeenshire and therefore it is not only the local weather conditions in Portlethen that have to be taken into account.  Conditions can also change in a very short space of time and the weather forecasters do not always get it right, as indeed I won’t either!  I make the decision if and when the school closes but ultimately parents must decide if it is safe for their child to travel to school, be it by family car or on foot.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Margaret M Ferguson

Head Teacher