Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach winter, I wanted to inform you of a change to how you will be able to find information on school transport cancellations or route amendments due to severe weather.

During the winter months our School Transport team will use the Scottish Borders Council website to provide updates on routes affected by weather or road conditions. The webpage can be found at www.scotborders.gov.uk/wintertransport and will be updated from 7.30am as and when required.

We anticipate that local radio will continue to highlight some cancellations, however our school transport operators will be contacting the School Transport team in the first instance, and the webpage will be the definitive source of information on affected routes.

Groupcall will be used to alert you to non-weather related school transport issues, for example breakdowns or delays.

It is important to remember that in normal circumstances children should not wait more than 15 minutes for the bus, but in severely cold weather please use your own judgement.

It is up to parents/carers to decide whether your child should wait for the school bus, and if you decide to take your child to school yourself, you will be expected to collect your child at the end of the school day.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to sign up to the region's free emergency messaging system – SB Alert – and to ensure you and your families are prepared for winter.

Getting accurate information as early as possible is crucial to enabling you to be prepared, and the best way to do this is to sign up SB Alert.

The SB Alert system enables partners including Police Scotland and Scottish Borders Council to get vital information direct to people who live and work in the Scottish Borders. This can range from weather warnings, road closures, crime alerts and scam information to missing person appeals, emergency advice and utility failure updates.

The earlier you receive these types of warnings the quicker you can respond and take action, potentially saving property from damage, or even saving lives.

Signing up is free and easy to do – simply visit www.sbalert.co.uk. When joining, you can choose what types of alerts you receive, and from which partners. Alerts can be received by phone call, text message or email, and information submitted is securely held and not divulged to any third parties.

To find out about other ways to prepare for winter, and how Scottish Borders Council responds to winter weather, please visit www.scotborders.gov.uk/winter.

The webpages available there provide a range of information, advice and links to other useful resources, such as the Ready Scotland website, which includes suggestions on what households should have prepared in an emergency kit.

Please make sure you are prepared for winter and encourage others within your family and community to do so as well. This can make all the difference when severe weather does strike.

Regards
Lesley Munro
Director – Education and Lifelong Learning
Scottish Borders Council