

12 February 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians

### **Emergency Evacuation / Bad Weather Procedures for The Grey Coat Hospital**

You may recall that we experienced two separate incidents involving the emergency evacuation of lower school students last term. The first involved problems with the electrical supply to the school building and the second involved a gas leak. In both cases both staff and students acted responsibly and safely.

I wanted to write to you to confirm our policy for such occasions, and to make you aware that **it is possible that an emergency might arise when there would not be time to arrange for students to phone home under supervision, but that our first priority might have to be to get students away from the vicinity of the school.**

It would be very helpful if you would discuss this eventuality with your daughter and talk over what you would expect her to do if a situation should arise when it was more important to send students home quickly than to go through the process described below. You should think about what she should do with regard to phoning you, who to phone if you are not available, alternative routes home, and where to go if she has no door key etc.

However, when we are advised that there is time to follow the procedure set out below, this is our usual policy:

- For all students in Y7-11 we aim to ensure that they call home to one of their parents to inform them of what is happening and to agree their means of travelling home safely. We give students permission to use their mobile phones for this.
- For those students who are not able to get in touch with their parents, we evacuate to our other building if appropriate, and students remain under supervision until 3:30pm.
- If the evacuation is due to travel problems where parts of London are cordoned off and transport is affected, then we ensure that each individual student has a sensible route home and if possible, someone who is going the same way to travel with.
- Any student without a suitable means to get home is kept in school until a parent comes to collect her.

By arranging these sensible precautions in advance, we can ensure that students feel confident they would know what to do in the unlikely event that they should be evacuated again.

**Please ensure that if you have changed phone numbers at home or at work, or have a new mobile number, then you should inform the school of the new details immediately.**

I would also like to clarify the school policy in relation to the recent closures due to the bad weather. In the unlikely event that we will experience a repeat of the recent **heavy** snowfall which **results in severe traffic disruption**, in which the majority of our staff and students are not able to get into school, then I *may* make the decision, based on the advice of the local authority, not to open the school for the day. If this happens then a voicemail message will be left on the main office number (020 7969 1998) informing parents that school is closed for the day, and a notice will be put on the homepage of the website by 7am that morning. Please note that this only applies where the snow is heavy and traffic is severely disrupted and that messages would only be in place if we were closed for the day.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Allard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'R'.

Rachel Allard  
Headteacher