

Give your child a helping hand and support their education

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Parents, carers and extended family are being encouraged to give their child a helping hand and support their education. A few simple things can make the world of difference to how children see schoolwork and the progress they make in their school years.

How you can help

Education opens up a world of opportunities for children and young people. Parental involvement and encouragement plays an essential part, from the very early years through to the vital exam stages.

Among the things you can do to help your child in the early years are:

When your child gets older you can:

- show an interest in their day at school
- talk to them about their homework
- help them make the best choices for their future
- help them plan their future education and career

You can find out more information about what you can do in this section:

Actively supporting your child can make a big difference to how well they do at school and to fulfilling their potential.

More useful links

Share this page

Feedback

Would you like to leave feedback about this page? [Send us your feedback](#)

Snow and ice weather warning – information and advice

Ice and snow could make surfaces, including untreated roads, pavements and cycle paths, difficult in some areas. Adjust your driving according to the conditions. Reduce your speed and drive with extra care, even when roads have been gritted.

Weather warning

A [weather warning](#) for snow and ice has been sent out by the Met Office.

Weather warnings from the Met Office let the public and emergency services know about potentially hazardous conditions.

You can find out more about weather warnings on [the Met Office website](#).

Plan your journey

You should always plan your journey and check the latest weather and travel advice.

If the conditions are bad or a weather warning is in place, ask yourself whether you really need to travel – or if you can delay your journey until conditions improve.

If you must travel, plan your journey carefully.

Emergency numbers

You should note the following numbers in case of emergency:

- Emergency services – 999 or 112
- Northern Ireland Electricity Networks – 03457 643 643
- NI Gas Emergency Service – 0800 002 001
- Northern Ireland Water Waterline – 03457 440 088
- Flooding Incident Line – 0300 2000 100
- Housing Executive – 03448 920 901

Report an issue with snow or ice

If you want to report an issue with snow or ice, you can do so online at this link:

Roads information

However carefully you plan your journey, things can go wrong. An accident or

bad weather could mean that a road is closed for a time.

You can get up-to-date traffic and roads information at the following link:

School closures

You can find information about school closures at this link:

Public transport

You can find the latest information about bus and rail services on the [Translink website](#).

Local councils

If local council services are affected by adverse weather, the latest information should be available on council websites.

Frozen or burst pipes

There is information about how to reduce the risk of frozen pipes and what to do if a pipe bursts at the following link:

Health advice and checking on elderly or vulnerable people

There is information about keeping warm, staying as healthy as possible, and checking in on elderly or vulnerable relatives, friends and neighbours during cold weather on this page:

Forests and country parks

You can find updates about forest and country parks on the [forest news and events](#) or [country parks](#) pages.

Power cuts

If adverse weather causes power cuts, you can get the latest information at this link:

If your power is off and you want to report it or get more information, contact:

Flooding

If any flooding happens, you can report it by phoning the Flooding Incident Line on 0300 2000 100.

There is general flooding advice on this page:

Contact numbers for agriculture or environment issues

If you have concerns about agricultural issues, animal welfare, water pollution, or rural support you can find contact details on the [DAERA website](#).

Drive to suit the conditions

During adverse weather, you should:

- clear ice off all windows, lights, number plate, and vehicle roof before you set off
- make sure the mirrors are clear and windows are de-misted thoroughly
- use at least dipped headlights in poor visibility
- keep well back from the road user in front
- be extra cautious at road junctions where road markings may not be visible
- be prepared for the road conditions to change over relatively short distances

Even after roads have been treated in winter, driving conditions may remain challenging, especially if the road location and layout mean there is a high risk of ice. Be aware that ice forms more easily on:

- hilly or exposed roads
- roads that pass under or over a bridge
- roads shaded by trees or buildings

Try not to brake suddenly in icy conditions – it may lock up the wheels and you could skid.

If you start to skid:

- release the brake pedal fully or ease off the accelerator
- steer into the skid
- as you straighten, steer back along the road

You can find out more about driving in wintry conditions at this link:

Check and service your vehicle

You can reduce your chances of breaking down by [regularly servicing your car](#). You should also:

- top up anti-freeze and screenwash
- check for wear and tear on wiper blades (replace them as soon as they start to smear rather than clean windows)
- make sure your battery is fully charged (batteries last between two and four years – replace yours if it's no longer reliable)
- keep tyre pressure at the manufacturer's recommended level and check you

have at least 1.6mm across the central three-quarters of the breadth of the tread and around the entire circumference

- wipe dirt and spray off headlamps and make sure all bulbs are working

You can find out more on the [vehicle maintenance page](#).

Winter kit

During winter you are advised to carry a winter kit in your vehicle. It should include:

- ice scraper and de-icer
- torch and spare batteries (or a wind-up torch)
- in-car phone charger
- warm clothes and blankets
- high-visibility vest or jacket
- boots
- first aid kit
- jump leads for the car battery
- empty fuel can
- a shovel (if there's a chance of snow)
- road atlas
- sunglasses (the low winter sun and glare off snow can be dazzling)
- two reflective warning triangles

If you're planning a long trip or if severe weather is forecast, you may want to also have in your car:

- any medication you need to take regularly
- food and a thermos with a hot drink

Driving and walking in flooded areas

Do not travel in heavy rainstorms unless absolutely necessary.

In flooded areas, drivers should not:

- enter flood water that is moving or is more than four inches deep
- under any circumstances, drive through fast-flowing water as the car could be swept away

In more shallow but passable water:

- slow down
- avoid creating bow waves which can damage your car engine; and
- remember to test the brakes after leaving the water

Do not attempt to walk through flooded areas. Even shallow water moving fast can sweep you off your feet and there may be hidden dangers such as:

- open drains
- damaged road surfaces

- submerged debris; or
- deep channels which can result in serious injury or, in the worst cases, death

If you do become stranded in flood water and you feel there is a risk to life, dial 999 for emergency assistance.

More useful links

[Snow weather warning – information and advice](#)

Snow and ice could make conditions hazardous in some areas. Adjust your driving according to the conditions and consider if your journey is necessary. Reduce your speed and drive with extra care, even when roads have been gritted.

Weather warning

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Weather warnings from the Met Office let the public and emergency services know about potentially hazardous conditions.

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Plan your journey

You should always plan your journey and check the latest weather and travel advice.

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If you must travel, plan your journey carefully.

Emergency numbers

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- Northern Ireland Water Waterline – 03457 440 088

- Flooding Incident Line – 0300 2000 100
- Housing Executive – 03448 920 901
- [Report a fallen tree or blocked road](#) – 0300 200 7891

Report an issue with ice or snow

If you want to report an issue with ice or snow, you can do so online at this link:

You can also report an issue by phone:

- DfI Roads Northern Division – 0300 200 7891 (emergency after hours 028 7035 3202)
- DfI Roads Southern Division – 0300 200 7892 (emergency after hours 028 3752 9500)
- DfI Roads Eastern Division – 0300 200 7893 (emergency after hours 028 9025 3000)
- DfI Roads Western Division – 0300 200 7894 (emergency after hours 028 8224 1999)

Roads information

However carefully you plan your journey, things can go wrong. An accident or bad weather could mean that a road is closed for a time.

You can get up-to-date traffic and roads information at the following link:

School closures

If schools are closed due to the weather, you can find information at this link:

Public transport

You can find the latest information about bus and rail services on the [Translink website](#).

Driver & Vehicle Agency test centres

There is some disruption to Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) test centres.

If you have an appointment, [contact your test centre](#) to check if it's open or to advise if you can't make the test due to the weather conditions. Your appointment will be rearranged.

Frozen or burst pipes

There is information about how to reduce the risk of frozen pipes and what to do if a pipe bursts at the following link:

Cold weather health advice

There is information about keeping warm, staying as healthy as possible, and checking in on elderly or vulnerable relatives, friends and neighbours during cold weather on this page:

Forest and country park closures

Some forests are closed to vehicle access due to the weather conditions. You can find details on the [forest news and events page](#).

Power cuts

If the adverse weather causes power cuts, you can get the latest information at this link:

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Drive to suit the conditions

During adverse weather, you should:

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- use at least dipped headlights in poor visibility
- keep well back from the road user in front
- be extra cautious at road junctions where road markings may not be visible
- be prepared for the road conditions to change over relatively short distances

Even after roads have been treated in winter, driving conditions may remain challenging, especially if the road location and layout mean there is a high risk of ice. Be aware that ice forms more easily on:

- hilly or exposed roads
- roads that pass under or over a bridge
- roads shaded by trees or buildings

Try not to brake suddenly in icy conditions – it may lock up the wheels and you could skid.

If you start to skid:

- release the brake pedal fully or ease off the accelerator
- steer into the skid
- as you straighten, steer back along the road

You can find out more about driving in wintry conditions at the page below:

Check and service your vehicle

You can reduce your chances of breaking down by [regularly servicing your car](#). You should also:

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You can find out more on the [vehicle maintenance page](#).

Winter kit

During winter you are advised to carry a winter kit in your vehicle. It should include:

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Driving and walking in flooded areas

Do not travel in heavy rainstorms unless absolutely necessary.

In flooded areas, drivers should not:

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In more shallow but passable water:

- slow down
- avoid creating bow waves which can damage your car engine; and
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Do not attempt to walk through flooded areas. Even shallow water moving fast can sweep you off your feet and there may be hidden dangers such as:

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More useful links

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Is your journey necessary?

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More useful links

Share this page

[Advice on staying well during cold and flu season](#)

With flu levels having risen in recent weeks and many of us experiencing coughs and colds, there is some simple advice to get through winter. Everyone is reminded that hand hygiene and self-care are essential when preventing and managing colds and flu.

Advice if you're unwell

[Washing your hands](#) regularly will help prevent flu and other winter viruses spreading.

If you do become unwell with [flu](#) or flu-like symptoms, you should stay at home. Most cases of flu are likely to be mild and can be managed at home with over-the-counter medication from a [pharmacist](#).

You should:

- rest up
- drink plenty of fluids
- blow your nose – catch it, bin it, kill it
- wash hands regularly
- clean hard surfaces (such as door handles) frequently using your usual

cleaning product

For most people it will have got better within a week – if not you should speak to [your GP](#).

Those in [‘at-risk’ groups](#) may be more likely to get a serious illness. They should contact their GP earlier for advice if they have a high temperature or shortness of breath.

Antibiotics

It’s important to remember that a course of [antibiotics won’t sort out your cold or flu](#). Cold and flu are viruses and antibiotics are useless against them.

Viral infections are very common and, as well as cold and flu, they can include many infections of the nose, sinuses, ears, throat and chest.

Most of these can be self-treated without the need for a visit to the doctor, and with no need for an antibiotic.

Get the flu vaccine

Getting the [free flu vaccine](#) is the single most important thing you can do to help protect yourself against flu.

Everyone who is eligible to be vaccinated against flu should see it as a positive step in protecting their health and the health of others around them.

Further information on how to help yourself stay well this winter is in the [stay well section](#).

More useful links

Share this page