



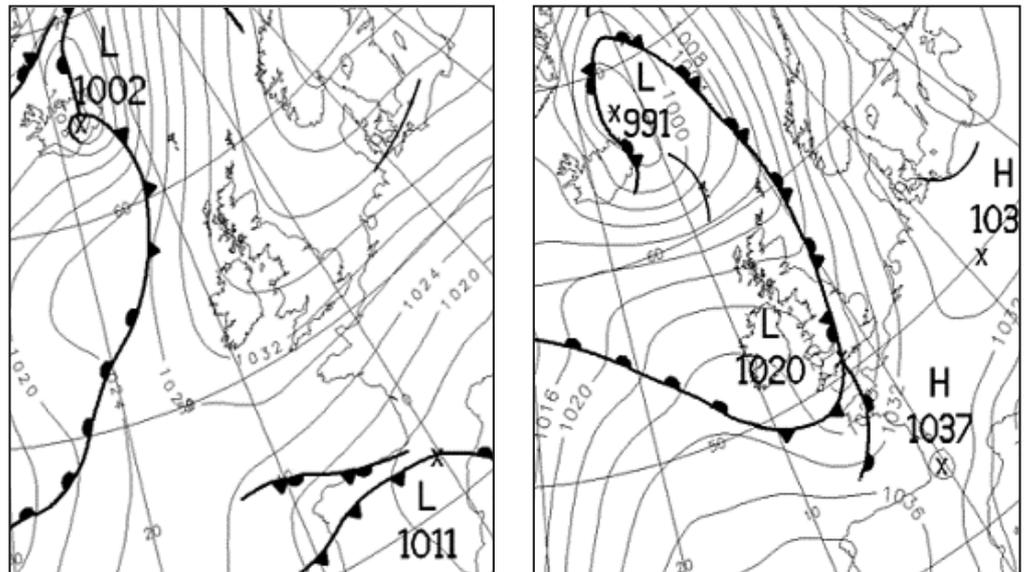
Met Office

## Education case study UK Snow 4 to 5 February 2012

4 to 5 February 2012, after a cold and settled spell, a significant fall of snow affected central and eastern parts of the UK. Some parts experienced 10 to 15 cm.

### Meteorological situation

Prior to this snow event on the 4 and 5 February 2012 the winter of 2011/12 had been relatively mild and free from widespread falls of snow. This event brought the first significant snow fall of the winter. This snow event followed a period of cold and settled weather. Prior to the snow event high pressure had been controlling the weather. The weather chart below left is for 1200 on 1 February 2012.



High pressure was centred over Scandinavia. The air flows clockwise around high pressure systems and in this situation cold, easterly winds were affecting the UK. The air mass was Polar Continental.

You can learn a lot about what weather to expect by looking at weather charts. With cold and dense air from Eastern Europe affecting the UK it will feel cold with widespread night frosts. In such a situation the odd snow flurry is possible near the east coast.

High pressure had dominated for several days. 4 February 2012 brought a return to more unsettled weather. In general, outbreaks of rain affected Northern Ireland, Western Scotland and Wales. Some of these areas saw some sleet or snow flurries initially but these soon turned to rain. For example, in Exeter there were a few snow flurries around mid-morning. As the rain moved eastwards against colder, denser air it turned to snow.

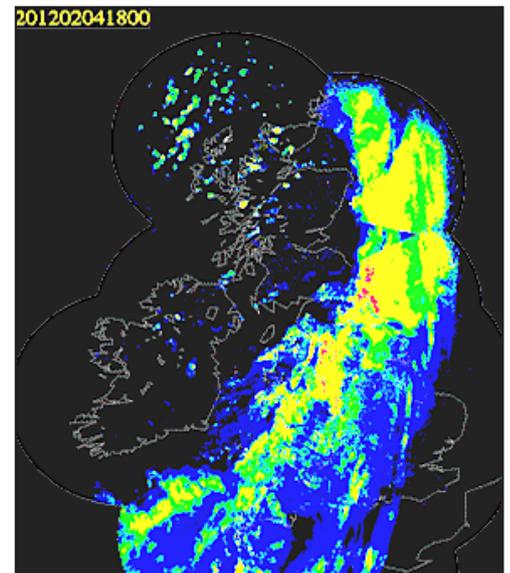
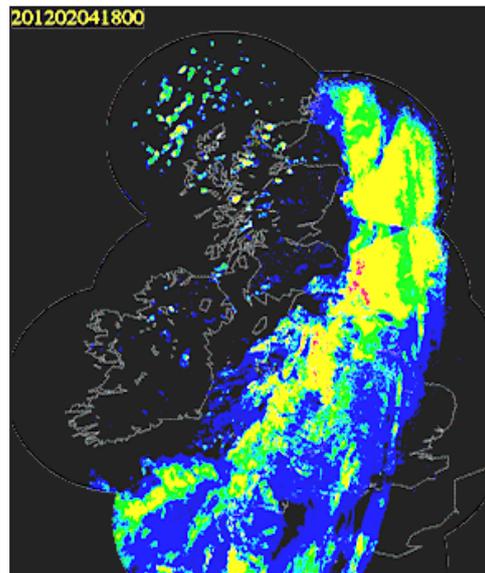
The weather chart above right is for 0000 on 5 February 2012. The weather fronts have not moved particularly far compared to 1800 on the previous chart.



Met Office

# Education case study UK Snow 4 to 5 February 2012

The weather radar images below show 1800 on 4 February and 0000 on 5 February with Central and Eastern England worst affected.



### Snow depths

The table below shows the recorded depths of snow for this weather event.

Location (County)	Height of station (m)	Depth of snow (cm)
Marham (Norfolk)	21	15
Wattisham (Suffolk)	89	15
Herstmonceux (East Sussex)	52	12
Bingley (West Yorkshire)	267	10
Wittering (Lincolnshire)	73	9
Eskdalemuir (Dumfries and Galloway)	242	8
Bridlington (East Yorkshire)	19	8
Coleshill (Warwickshire)	96	7
Heathrow (Middlesex)	25	7



**Met Office**

3

## Education case study UK Snow 4 to 5 February 2012

### Impacts

The BBC news links below show a selection of the impacts. Heathrow airport was affected and it is estimated that only 58% of their normal 1,300 flights operated on Sunday 5 February. In general when airports are affected by the snow the surrounding roads are too and often people are forced to spend the night at the airport.

Numerous roads were closed due to ice and/or snow and it is estimated that 100 motorists were stranded on the M40. A 25 mile long stretch of the A1 in North Yorkshire was closed on the morning of Monday 6 February. Numerous schools were forced to close on Monday 6 February and a few in Norfolk even had to remain closed on Tuesday 7 February.

BBC News – Drivers warned after accidents due to icy conditions

BBC News – Schools and roads affected by ice as cold week forecast

BBC News – Snow traps up to 100 motorists on M40 for many hours

Severe weather in London

