

Adverse Weather and School Closure Policy

St John's College

ADVERSE WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

This policy applies to all three sections of the School: the Senior School, Junior School and EYFS (Infants).

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1. Adverse Weather and School Closure Policy Introduction

- 1.1 In the event of adverse weather, hazardous travelling conditions, or any other circumstances beyond its control, the College will make every effort to keep the school premises open at all times. However, the health and safety of its pupils and staff is paramount.
- 1.2 The College recognises that conditions may prevent staff and pupils from travelling to school, and whilst there is an expectation that staff and pupils should make every reasonable effort to attend, personal health and safety should not be compromised as localised conditions may vary across our extensive catchment area.
- 1.3 In the event of any disruption to the course of the school day and in the absence of Reception staff, where possible, calls will be diverted to a senior member of staff during office hours.

2. Procedure for overnight adverse weather

- 2.1 The Headteacher will assess the weather condition before 7.00 am. In response, a message will be communicated to parents/guardians via the College website and social media pages.
- 2.2 A college-wide email will be sent to all members of staff.
- 2.3 The Director of Estates will contact the coach companies and school mini bus drivers to inform them of the whole School's position for the following 24 hours.

3. General Advice

- 3.1 The decision to send a pupil to school in adverse weather conditions lies with parents/guardians.
- 3.2 On arrival, pupils must register as normal with their Tutors or report to Reception to register their presence on-site.
- 3.3 Should weather conditions deteriorate during the day and it becomes necessary for pupils to leave school early, all parents/guardians will be notified via iSAMS and the College website/social media pages, as soon as is reasonably practicable. This system enables the School to communicate with all St John's College parents/guardians, and staff, keeping them informed during emergencies or advising of any last-minute changes. It is, therefore, imperative that parents/guardians and staff provide the School with an up-to-date mobile phone number or alternative emergency contact details.
- 3.4 Amendments or changes to the normal school timetable will be communicated via iSAMS, the College website, and social media pages.
- 3.5 If the College remains open during adverse weather, classes/year groups may need to be combined to account for staff absence. The College will do its utmost to minimise disruption to teaching and learning during periods of adverse weather. Pupils who are absent from school during adverse weather are expected to complete any work set by their class teacher(s), including homework.
- 3.6 Messages used by the College have been similar to the following:

"SCHOOL CLOSED due to..... Further messages will be posted throughout the course of the day. Full information on website <LINK – to local news pages>

"SCHOOL OPEN. The decision to travel, or not, must be made by you, dependent upon your local weather and road conditions. Full information on website <LINK – to local news pages>"

4. Policy for staff

- 4.1 The College recognises that adverse weather conditions can prevent employees from reaching their normal place of employment. All employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work, but without taking undue risks and compromising their health and safety.
- 4.2 In cases where the College is open but where particular staff cannot safely make it into work, the appropriate LOA (Leave of Absence) procedure must be followed.
- 4.3 If appropriate, a college-wide email will be sent to all staff and support staff to arrange a staff briefing for specific staff representatives. At this briefing, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will outline the situation and the plan of action.
- 4.4 Further meetings will be arranged as necessary.

Academic Staff

- 4.5 Academic Staff who are unable to make it in to work must inform their Head of Department/immediate line manager and the Cover Manager, Mr. Mark Edwards, **no later than 7:30 am.**
- 4.6 The Heads in each part of the school will inform all academic staff when adverse weather is expected and what action needs to take place to ensure that work is available for pupils. In the Senior School, this may include use of Gmail or Google Classroom. All academic teaching staff are expected to set work for pupils if unable to attend work or in the event of a school closure.
- 4.7 It is the responsibility of all teachers to make it clear to all pupils that it is the School's expectation that all work set this way should be completed. Teachers should check and give appropriate feedback on all work completed by pupils during these periods.

Support Staff

- 4.8 Support staff must report to their Line Manager **by 7.30 am** with an update of their situation regarding their ability to attend work.
- 4.9 This procedure must be followed for each day of absence to ensure the relevant SLT are aware of staff availability throughout the period of adverse weather.
- 4.10 In cases where the College is open but where particular staff cannot safely make it into work, the appropriate LOA (Leave of Absence) procedure must be followed.
- 4.11 The Director of Estates will liaise with the Catering Manager to update the team accordingly on a daily basis.

School Transport

- 4.12 The Director of Estates will contact the school's Transport Co-ordinator and then call the school's transport provider at **7.00 am** to discuss driving conditions and potential risks.
- 4.13 If deemed hazardous, the School buses will be cancelled and parents/guardians informed by the bus company directly and via iSAMS.

Catering

- 4.14** The Catering team will endeavour to have five days' food supply in store. The Assistant Head, Pastoral and/or the Director of Estates, having consulted across the whole School, will advise the Catering Manager no later than **9.45 am**, of the numbers expected for lunch on each day of adverse weather.

Grounds/Estates

- 4.15** The priority will be to clear snow and ice as quickly as possible, and to make walkways safe. In order to achieve this, the Director of Estates will assume the role of making the School safe, and the Maintenance Team will take instruction from them until such time as the area is safe.
- 4.16** At the beginning of the Advent Term, the Director of Estates will ensure sufficient bags of salt and grit are in stock and snow shovels are available, if needed. Every effort will be made to make any areas of the School adversely affected to be useable as soon as possible.

First Aid

- 4.17** The Cover Manager will be responsible for notifying the Headteacher if there is not a member of staff trained in First-Aid on site. The Headteacher will act reasonably in taking any decision on how to proceed in the absence of any trained first aiders to support the School's medical needs.

Safeguarding

- 4.18** The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be responsible for notifying the Headteacher if there is not a member of staff trained in acting as DSL onsite. The Headteacher will act reasonably in taking any decision on how to proceed in this case.

5. Absences

- 5.1** When the School has made the decision to close, all staff will be paid as per their normal working day.
- 5.2** The School expects that Line Managers and HoDs have a plan in place for work that can be undertaken remotely from home, in these circumstances.
- 5.3** If the School has made the decision to open, and a member of staff is unable to come in for any reason, then this will be deemed as Leave in Special circumstances for domestic (including family and dependant) emergencies and the Leave Policy will be followed. However, in all circumstances academic teaching colleagues have a duty to ensure that pupil learning is adversely affected and must act in accordance with clause 4.6 and 5.2.

6. Communication

- 6.1** There is an expectation for staff to maintain regular communication with Heads of Department/Line Managers, and parents/guardians. Accessing school emails remotely will assist with keeping lines of communication open, and staff should familiarise themselves with the correct procedure before the onset of adverse weather.

- 6.2 The School will communicate with staff and parents/guardians primarily via iSAMS. However, this will be supported with further information on the School's website. The School's email system will also be employed so that staff may check their accounts from home using the School's webmail access.
- 6.3 All staff have a responsibility to advise the School of changes to their contact details and to ensure mobile phones are switched on and thus able to receive calls from line managers/SLT, etc.

7. School Closure

- 7.1 The decision to close the school lies with the Headteacher.
- 7.2 A member of the Senior Leadership Team will contact staff and parents/guardians to inform them of the closure via iSAMS, the school's information management system. The school website and social media pages will also be updated.
- 7.3 Where appropriate, the Headteacher may take the decision to call staff into the College to set and organise work during the closure.
- 7.4 The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that regular updates regarding the closure are sent to the entire College community.

8. Distance Learning

- 8.1 In the senior school and Sixth Form, Heads of Department will be responsible for liaising with their teams to ensure that appropriate work is set for all pupils. All work will be set on Google Classroom **within 48 hours** of the school closure.
- 8.2 In the Junior and Infant school, the Head of Juniors and the Head of Infants will be responsible for collating work for all pupils. This work will either be sent by email, or using Google Classroom, as appropriate. All work will be set **within 48 hours** of the school closure.
- 8.3 In all areas of the school, parents/guardians and pupils will be sent a link via email to the relevant Google Classroom. All pupils are expected to subscribe to the relevant Google Classroom **within 72 hours** of the school closure.
- 8.4 Pupils are expected to complete all set work, including homework for the duration of the closure. The responsibility for the completion of work lies with the pupil. Work can be returned by pupils electronically (via Google Classroom) and marked work will be returned by teachers in the same way.
- 8.5 Work set in all areas of the school will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure continuity and progression.
- 8.6 Whilst the College will make every effort to minimise disruption to teaching and learning, there will inevitably be the need to amend the programmes of study in some areas of the school; for example, project based work may be set in some areas of the school.
- 8.7 Teaching staff and leaders will ensure that once the school reopens, any postponed work is completed at a later date.