

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Policy area: 7 – Health & Safety
Date last revised: January 2016

Date established: January 2016
Date of next revision: January 2018

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Head of College every two years, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Head of College January 2016. It is due for review in January 2018.

Signed

David Shandley
Head of College
Date: 22/01/2016

Overview

Policy statement

The safety of staff, students and visitors to Newland College is of paramount importance. This policy details the steps that will be taken during spells of severe weather (e.g. snow) to ensure that our college opens when it is safe to do so, and is closed when weather is deemed by the Head of College to jeopardise safety of staff, students and visitors. Every effort is made to minimise disruption to learning whilst ensuring that we keep the health and safety of staff, students and visitors at the forefront of our planning.

Purpose

We know that college closure due to severe weather conditions can be frustrating for parents, but the decision to close the college for a period of time is never taken lightly. We will always try to make a decision as early as possible to allow parents to make alternative arrangements/plans for their children if they are still going to try and get into work. We will do all we can to stay open, or, if we close, to re-open as soon as possible.

Applicability

All staff, students and parents at Newland College.

Statutory guidance

DfE – Emergency planning and response (severe weather)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings#severe-weather>

Access

This policy is available on the Newland College website and is available on request from the college office. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join Newland College, through our newsletters and the parent handbook.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our Code of Professional Conduct.

Severe weather policy

1 Evening/overnight severe weather conditions

- 1.1 If the weather is severe weather, e.g. if there is significant and heavy snowfall the evening before/forecast overnight that might either restrict access/make access hazardous to the college or prevent staff and students from being able to get to college safely then the following will occur:
- The Head of College will assess the conditions locally, and at the student pick up/drop off points, by 20:00 of the night before.
 - The Head of College will telephone, send an email and text the Security and Facilities Manager and Deputy Head to inform them of the decision regarding student transport by 20:00.
 - If the decision is that it is too hazardous, the Security and Facilities Manager will contact the Deputy Head. The Security and Facilities Manager will notify the transport companies and the Deputy Head will notify parents and staff by telephone, email and text as soon as the decision to close the college has been made officially.
- 1.2 The college status will be updated on our own website www.newlandcollege.co.uk, Twitter and Facebook accounts by the Registrar and/or the Marketing and Administration Manager. Parents are asked to check these sources before contacting the college.
- 1.3 If staff and students are able to come to college but road conditions mean that their journeys will take longer than normal then the Head of College will make the decision to open the college later or extend registration time to ensure that everyone can get to college safely. This information will be communicated, via the Head of College, Deputy Head and Registrar by email, text and social media to parents and staff.

2 Rush hour severe weather

- 2.1 If there is, for example, heavy snowfall, during the period when staff/students are travelling to college then they will follow the procedure below:
- Contact the Head of College a.s.a.p. to inform him of their ability to reach college safely and estimated arrival time.
 - Staff arriving before 8.45am to make arrangements to supervise those children who have made it to college until the Head of College (or Deputy Head) is able to assess the situation fully and reach a decision about whether or not to close the college.
 - Parents who transport their children to college must decide for themselves if it is safe and in the best interests of them and their child to attempt to make the journey to college. Having established the college is open late, safe arrival would seem the better option.
- 2.2 Students who have already been dropped off by parents or college transport must report to reception, where they will be supervised.

3 Severe weather during the college day

- 3.1 If there is, for example, heavy snowfall during the college day and conditions deteriorate so badly that journeys home may become unsafe or the heating in college is insufficient then the Head of College (or Deputy Head) will decide to close the college once all parents have been informed and collection/drop off arrangements have been agreed. The Security and Facilities Manager will contact transport companies and the Registrar/Deputy Head will contact the parents. Residential staff will remain on site to supervise students. This will allow other staff to leave before closure, particularly those deemed to have potentially hazardous journeys. The Head of College will have responsibility for overseeing this arrangement.

4 Snow/ice clearance

- 4.1 If there is snow or ice on the ground the Security and Facilities Manager will supervise the clearing of our college access paths as soon as possible. The access paths will be the path from the Newland College car park by the basketball court, and the steps and path leading to reception. In icy and snowy conditions, paths will be cleared and gritted.
- 4.2 All students, staff and visitors to the college must take extra care when paths are slippery or icy and ensure that they stay on the gritted/cleared access areas.
- 4.3 All staff/parents/visitors are requested to use the top car park during snowy or icy weather.