



NORTH LEAMINGTON SCHOOL

**Severe Weather / School Closure
Policy
for Staff**

January 2017

CORE PURPOSE

We are committed to keeping our students safe and giving them every opportunity to learn in a secure environment. This responsibility also extends to adults working at NLS as part of our overall aim to maintain excellence.

Rationale

It is our policy to keep NLS open and provide the best possible learning experience unless we are forced to close because there is a risk to the health and safety of students and staff.

ADVICE TO PARENTS/STUDENTS

In the event of **severe weather overnight** the decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with site management staff, as soon as possible after 6.00am.

- A Groupcall will be sent by the HR Manager to all parents, to the numbers recorded on the school system
- Information will immediately be posted onto the school's website by the Senior ICT Technician: www.northleamingtonschool.warwickshire.sch.uk, and the Warwickshire website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures
- Information will also be relayed immediately to local radio stations:
 - Free Radio Coventry & Warwickshire 97 FM
102.9 FM
 - BBC CWR 94.8 FM
103.7 FM
104 FM
- There is no need to contact the school to check whether or not we are open. Unless announced on the radio and published on websites, we are open.

If the weather **deteriorates during the day** the decision to close the school will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, the Chair of Governors (if available), and taking the bus companies' views and availability into account. The school will only close early in extreme cases and the decision will be passed onto staff and students as soon as arrangements are in hand.

What happens if the school closes during the day?

1. Headteacher consults with Senior Leadership team and the Chair of Governors (if available)
2. Headteacher will liaise with the bus companies and take their views and availability into account
3. Staff will be informed once arrangements are in place
4. Students will then be informed
5. A Groupcall will be sent to all parents whose mobile number is registered on the school system

6. Students will be allowed to use mobile phones to contact home once permission has been given by a senior member of staff (or the school phone may be used in exceptional circumstances as we will not be able to cope with large demands all at the same time)
7. A notice will be posted on the front page of the school website
8. The Warwickshire website will be informed by the HR Manager
9. Staff will remain with students until the last student has been collected (unless otherwise agreed with the Headteacher)

If we are informed that a bus service is running early, we will inform the relevant students and arrange for them to leave school at an appropriate time. We will put a notice on our school website and send a Groupcall to all registered parents. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to check whether buses are running/leaving early.

Worleys Coaches

02476 421421

enquiries@worleycoaches.co.uk

Bus No. 556

Ridleys Coaches Ltd

01926 430130

enquiries@ridleyscoaches.co.uk

Bus No. 551

Bus No. 552

Examinations

We will always do our best to ensure that school is open for students to sit examinations. However, there may be exceptional cases when this will not be possible. In the case of mock exams, they will be rescheduled. If the school is open for examinations, but the weather is bad, students should be sent to school only if parents deem it safe to do so.

ADVICE TO STAFF

Severe Weather Overnight: The Headteacher has the responsibility for the safety of students and staff. The Headteacher alone will take the decision to remain open or shut. **The Headteacher's duty does not extend to travel to and from school.** School has to provide staff with a safe environment in which to work. This is subject to a 'reasonable steps' limitation so, provided the school does everything it can to minimise the risk, indicate and warn of the risks, it should fulfil its duties.

In the event of severe weather posing a potential threat to school opening, we will follow the procedure below as part of our risk assessment:-

1. Site staff will assess the situation "on the ground" locally, in consultation with the Headteacher. The decision to close the school will be made based on factors posing a risk, such as: the severity of strong winds, snow and ice on the ground, traffic routes, provision of heating, lighting and electricity, facilities for general welfare. This should be done as soon as possible after 06.00am if, for instance, there has been a heavy snowfall during the night.

2. The Headteacher will call SLT members and the Chair of Governors to inform them of the decision.
3. If decision is **CLOSURE** the Headteacher will call the following:
HR Manager (to inform the LA Emergency School Closure line)
 - HR Manager to call Senior ICT Technician (to update the school website)
 - HR Manager to call Sam Perkins (to update bus companies)

This should be achieved by 07.00am, giving the duration of closure if possible.

4. If decision is closure all staff will be sent a Groupcall by the HR Manager.
5. Dependent on the type of closure, and its severity and impact, there may be a need to inform the Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Resilience Team (CSW), which has prepared new guidance on Emergency Advice & Support for Educational Establishments.
6. All staff should listen to local radio from early morning, or check on the WCC website, if there is any expectation of school-threatening weather. Normally, only lists of closing schools are broadcast, so no news is good news, i.e. school remains open!
 - Free Radio Coventry & Warwickshire 97 FM
102.9 FM
 - BBC CWR 94.8 FM
103.7 FM
104 FM

Warwickshire Website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schoolclosures

NLS Website: www.northleamingtonschool.warwickshire.sch.uk

Weather deteriorates during the day

Staff should not assume that they can leave school with the students, should we decide to close early. You should await permission from the Headteacher. In some cases you may be directed to stay in school. This decision can only be made by the Headteacher, who will inform the relevant staff. The Headteacher will use discretion in releasing staff and may allow those who travel a long distance to leave early. In any event, a fair and transparent system will operate:

- Staff unable to travel to school must report this by a phone call. Text messages can be used to update the situation. You may be required to report to school even when students have been sent home. Distance from school can only be considered as a factor at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Staff may well be asked to undertake appropriate alternative duties to teaching in the event that students are sent home. These duties will be in line with current role duties.
- Leave of absence is at the Headteacher's discretion, if requested by staff.

Follow up action after closure

- Attendance and Registration details will be recorded with the appropriate symbols (eg. the 'Y' symbol for student absence) by the Office Manager
- School will complete Form NUC/1, including the reason for the closure, the year groups and number of students affected, whether staff remained in attendance, and consultation with the relevant bodies. This will be done by the Office Manager and HR Manager. Once completed this form will be returned to the LA.
- The Chair of Governors and the Headteacher should ensure that the closure is reported at the next full meeting of the Governing Body. The Governing Body should ensure that:
 - The circumstances giving rise to the closure have been resolved
 - Arrangements made by the school in the event of unavoidable closures are reasonable and satisfactory in respect of students, parents/carers, staff, and the community as a whole.
 - Steps have been taken to fulfil the requirements relating to the attendance of staff and students at the school in the academic year.

Approval and Review

This Policy is reviewed in discussion with staff and governors.

Effective from: January 2017

Review date: January 2018

Review leader: Joy Mitchell, Headteacher