

High Tunstall College of Science



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Adverse Weather Policy

Revised	-	May 2018
Stakeholder Consulted	-	Finance and Staffing Committee
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Responsibility for Review	-	Headteacher

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Statement of intent

It is the aim of High Tunstall College of Science to ensure the college remains open during adverse weather conditions, when practically possible, providing that this can be done in a safe manner.

High Tunstall College of Science intends to, wherever possible, make the decision to close the college before the teaching day commences, rather than defer the decision and delay the opening of the college.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make the appropriate procedures clear, in relation to operating the college during adverse weather conditions.
- Make clear the grounds for a college closure due to adverse weather conditions.
- Advise and inform staff and parents of the systems and procedures in place in the event of a college closure due to adverse weather conditions.

1. College policies and procedures

1.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following college policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Snow and Ice Risk Assessment
- First Aid Policy

2. Decision to close

2.1. The decision to close the college will be made by the Headteacher.

2.2. The Senior Site Officer and the Chair of Governors will be consulted when making a decision about college closure.

2.3. In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher will assume the responsibility of the Headteacher in relation to the Adverse Weather Policy.

2.4. The college will be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Conditions on site are considered to be unsafe and are likely to present danger to users of the site.
- Staff numbers are insufficient for the college to be operated safely.

2.5. In the event of college closure:

- The Headteacher will inform staff and parents/carers via text message.
- The Administration team will post an update on the college website, Facebook and Twitter pages.
- The Senior Site Officer will display 'closure' signs on the college's entrance gates.
- The Headteacher will call the local radio stations. It is noted that parents/carers will have previously been made aware that announcements concerning the college will be broadcasted via Radio Hartlepool, BBC Tees and TFM Radio.

2.6. In the event of the college having to close during the day, parents/carers will be contacted via text message or telephone, using the number provided on the emergency contacts list, and asked to collect their child from the college if practicable or give permission for their child to make their own way home.

2.7. A closure of the college during the day and an early release of staff will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

3. Remaining open in adverse weather conditions

3.1. When deciding whether the college will remain open, risks will be assessed in line with the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment.

3.2. If the college remains open when there has been snowfall or the site is icy, access to the site for pedestrians will be restricted to the pedestrian gates only for visitors.

3.3. The Senior Site Officer/Site Officers will place health and safety caution signs to warn users of the increased hazards on site.

3.4. All pathways, wherever practically possible, will have been cleared and gritted.

3.5. A notice will be erected to inform that vehicles and pedestrians entering the college grounds do so at their own risk.

3.6. At the Headteacher's discretion, during periods of adverse weather conditions, the yard may be out-of-bounds to students.

3.7. All persons entering the college buildings are asked to ensure they wipe their feet thoroughly, in order to reduce slip hazards.

4. Health and safety

4.1. The college has a duty of care to anyone accessing the site and surrounding grounds.

4.2. The college will be liable if it is found that the college has been negligent in its responsibilities and has not taken all reasonable measures, given the circumstances, to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, visitors and parents/carers entering the college site.

4.3. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring safety on the college site, in accordance with the college's Health and Safety Policy.

4.4. Staff, visitors and parents/carers have the personal responsibility to express caution and take responsibility for their own health and safety whilst on the college grounds.

4.5. Individuals must take responsibility for the health and safety of any children under their supervision.

4.6. If anyone believes that the site is unsafe after the Snow and Ice Risk Assessment has been completed, it is advised that they do not enter

the college grounds and inform either the Headteacher or Senior Site Officer/Site Officers so the safety can be reassessed.

- 4.7. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the Senior Site Officer/Site Officer will assess the college site and inform the Headteacher at 7.00am of the state of site.
- 4.8. A risk assessment of the site will be conducted in order to assess any potential hazards due to the weather conditions.
- 4.9. Closing the college is a reasonable decision if students or staff are at risk of serious injury due to the weather conditions.
- 4.10. When roads are impassable, the health and safety issue is overridden by the practical issue of access.

5. Limited staff numbers

- 5.1. During periods of adverse weather conditions, staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, whether this means they will be late or not.
- 5.2. Staff members are expected to assess the availability of all public transport and consider the feasibility of walking to work, if they live relatively close and are fit and able to do so, in order to attend work.
- 5.3. The college understands that, whilst staff members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend work, it is essential to minimise personal risk.
- 5.4. In line with 5.3, it is therefore at the discretion of staff members as to whether they are able to attend work in adverse weather conditions.
- 5.5. Staff members are required to consider local weather conditions, distance, availability of public transport, and fitness to walk when making their decision.
- 5.6. Staff members are required to liaise with the Headteacher to discuss options of attending work.
- 5.7. In order to comply with health and safety regulations, different age groups may be brought together to be taught under the supervision of the available teachers and support staff:
 - No maximum class size limits are set out.
 - A limit of 30 students per class will apply.
- 5.8. The college will continue to strive to provide high-quality education in the given circumstances.

6. Attendance statistics

- 6.1. Where the college is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.
- 6.2. When a student cannot attend the college due to adverse weather conditions, the student will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will, therefore, not affect the college's attendance statistics.
- 6.3. If the Headteacher believes the student could have safely made it to college but did not attend, the student will be marked in the register as having an unauthorised absence.
- 6.4. Parents/carers acting on the assumption that the college would be closed, without gaining confirmation, or failing to inform the college of the circumstances that prevent the child coming into college, risk their child's absence being registered as an unauthorised absence.

7. Exam disruption

- 7.1. If the college has to close, or if a child misses an exam due to adverse weather conditions, the college will make alternative arrangements with the relevant awarding body.
- 7.2. The college takes full responsibility for informing parents/carers and students of any agreed changes concerning exams in adverse weather conditions. This includes:
 - Using alternative venues.
 - Exam results being generated by the awarding body, based on other assessments in the same subject.
 - The opportunity for the student to sit any missed exam later in the year.

8. Emergency plan

- 8.1. In the case of an emergency relating to adverse weather, the college will follow their planned emergency procedure, in accordance with the First Aid Policy.
- 8.2. High Tunstall College of Science's emergency plan will contain:
 - Information on where to find parent/carer contact details.
 - Staff contact details for out-of-hours emergencies.

- Details of which staff members have agreed to perform certain tasks during an emergency.

8.3. All nominated staff will be trained to:

- Contact and liaise with emergency services.
- Provide first aid.
- Move students to a safe place.
- Calm and comfort children.
- Contact parents.
- Deal with any media interest.

8.4. Each member of staff will have a copy of the emergency plan.

8.5. Paper copies of the plan will be kept at nominated staff members' homes in case of out-of-hours emergencies.

8.6. All parent/carers will be informed of their responsibilities via the parent planner in September of each year.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher, and any necessary amendments will be made during review.

9.2. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher.