



## **PCHS Severe Weather Policy**

**Updated November 2021**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and advice on unavoidable school closures and travel arrangements due to severe weather or other unforeseen circumstances. The decision to close the school is never taken lightly and will be made only if it is deemed unsafe for staff and students. Every effort will be made to ensure that school opens as soon as possible thereafter.

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **Severe weather overnight**

If the school is to be closed due to adverse weather overnight then this will be published via Schoolcomms and on the school website [www.pchs.org.uk](http://www.pchs.org.uk) and on the school Facebook page by 7.15am. An email message will be sent to all staff and a Schoolcomms message to parents/carers.

If the school will be open but lessons start later in the morning e.g. 9:30am to ensure all staff and students can travel to school safely, this will also be published via Schoolcomms and on the school website [www.pchs.org.uk](http://www.pchs.org.uk) and on the school Facebook page by 7.15am. An email message will be sent to all staff and a Schoolcomms message to parents/carers. The building would still be open for staff and students arriving earlier.

#### **Weather deteriorates during the day**

In these circumstances school may close early but only in extreme cases. Students living farthest from school and requiring transport may be sent home. The school may remain open for students living locally. The closure may be staggered based on these principles but will always have the safety of the students and staff in mind. Any decision to close early will be posted on the website and Facebook. Students collected from school or with other specific arrangements will be allowed to phone home for advice on what to do. Students who can walk home safely will be allowed to do so preferably in groups. School will be kept open with staff on hand until the last student has left. It is NOT normally possible for students to be given lifts by staff.

#### **How parents/carers can help**

1. Check your Email /Schoolcomms messages, the school website and Facebook page for updates
2. Listen to BBC Radio Newcastle
3. Check Northumberland County Council's website [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)
4. Only call school if you have to, calls in prevent calls out

## Arrangements for Staff

Staff who live locally should make their way safely to school.

Staff arriving at school in difficult weather conditions are requested not to approach the Site Team about gritting particular areas as they will be prioritising heavy traffic areas and will work their way around the school site accordingly. Please see **Appendix A** for the priority route.

NB - When making a decision to close your school, Heads must take into account those students who travel on Home to School Transport contracted routes and the fact those routes could be shared with other schools in your pyramid.

ALL students should be released for travel, as the prevailing weather conditions may make it impossible for the transport to operate later in the day.

Before releasing students take into account any feeder journeys, where students may be dropped off by a bus partway home, and need to use a taxi for the remainder of their journey.

Where feeder journeys exist you **MUST** ensure that **all** appropriate operators have been contacted.

Where parents have brought their children into school when transport is not running, they need to be made aware that they will be responsible for getting them home again.

## Emergency Planning

In the event of an emergency or weather conditions which affect a large area it is likely that the County Council's **Emergency Community Assistance Plan would be activated**. Decisions, including the issuing of advice on school closures would be taken by a team of Emergency Coordinators which would include senior officers from the Education Directorate.

Information will be circulated via the Northumberland website and the media.

The School Access Team will still be the contact source for Children's Services and will hold up to date information.

## Monitoring of this policy

What?	How?	When?
Reviewed by Leadership	Taking NCC recommendations into consideration.	Each Autumn term

Action	By whom	By when
Updated	Headteacher /Senior Site Manager	October 2020
Approved	n/a	
To be reviewed	Headteacher / Senior Site Manager	Autumn 2021
Reviewed	Headteacher/Senior Site Manager no changes	Autumn 2021

# Snow & Gritting Plan

