

The Attic
Severe Weather of Policy

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DR

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

POLICY FOR RESPONDING TO SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

AIM OF THE POLICY: To have a planned response to severe weather conditions.

This policy is formulated in conjunction with the school health & safety policy and written advice provided by Children, Young People & Families (CPY) at Suffolk County Council.

Statement of intent

Our aim is to keep The Attic open at all times and ensure students are able to undertake their studies without unnecessary interruption. We acknowledge the safety and welfare of our students, staff and visitors is important and any decisions made will ensure this commitment is not compromised. When deciding whether to close any of the sites at The Attic, due to severe weather, we would expect to make this decision before 7.00am; however, at times it may be necessary to change the decision during the day. The default position is that all of the The Attic's sites will be open unless the school's closure website says otherwise.

Advice and guidance

Our advice is as follows:

Parents/Carers

- Continually monitor the website www.schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk
- Listen to the local radio (Radio Norfolk and Heart FM)

Students

- Continually monitor the website www.schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk
- If the building is closed check your One email account regularly as staff will email your work individually
- Listen to the local radio (Radio Norfolk and Heart FM)

Staff

- Continually monitor the website www.schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk
- Headteacher will trigger Severe Weather Telephone Tree
- Check your work e-mail account Office 365
- If the building is closed for students, staff should still try to attend

Clearly parent/carers and others may have concerns. However, the most up to date information will be available on the above websites. It's also important that the telephone lines at The Attic are kept clear and used for emergency purposes only. Your understanding in this request will be appreciated.

In the event of any of the sites at The Attic closing early on the day, due to worsening weather conditions, we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to ensure parent/carers can make suitable arrangements.

Snow Clearance

Grit bins are available on each of The Attic sites. The Deputy or Assistant Headteacher on each site will assess the need for clearance of snow and where necessary will delegate staff to assist with the clearance of it.

Road Gritting

Responsibility for the delivery of the winter gritting service in Suffolk lies with Suffolk County council. The exception to this are the main trunk roads across the county (A11, A12, south of Ipswich, North of Lowestoft and A14) which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

The Suffolk County Council's Highways team provide up to date information via their twitter account: twitter.com/Suff_highways on their plans and routes being covered. Generally, the gritting routes attempt to cover schools where practicable but there many not be complete coverage.

Severe weather impact on transport

Taxi providers will make every effort to get students to The Attic. Because they start out at the same time of the day as decisions are being taken by the Principal they may not be aware whether students will be able to get into the school. Taxi providers are advised to listen to the local radio stations to check if institutions are closed however some students are picked up as early at 7.45am. It therefore has to be assumed that taxi providers will make the journey wherever possible when it is reasonable and safe to do so. The Deputy and Assistant Headteachers have contact details for the taxi providers to enable them to make contact on the day and establish whether transport will be running.

Making information available to parent/carers

The Headteacher or the Senior Leadership Team will notify the Suffolk County Council Zone Emergency Officer between 6:00am and 7:00am (Chris Denny 07860 834336 / 01473 260779) if they plan to close any of The Attic sites. Suffolk County Council will add this information to the Suffolk School Closures website www.schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk.

FAQ (Frequently asked Questions)

1. *The police often say that people should not go out unless their journey is essential. Does that mean that school workers should stay at home?*

No. The general advice from our contacts in the police have confirmed that getting to work and school are within the overall definition of essential – in other words, this statement is not in itself a reason why staff should not consider making the journey to work.

2. *What should students do if they are undertaking an exam that day?*

If exams are being undertaken, then the message will be that the building is 'Open for those students undertaking exams but closed for other students'. If your child is due to be undertaking an exam and are unable to attend they must contact the exams officer; Mrs Lucy Palmer Nortcliffe 01502 565646.

3. *What responsibilities does the Headteacher have towards staff in these situations?*

Staff are responsible for getting to work. Each person must ultimately make their assessment of the individual day's weather conditions and the risks that this may pose, within the context of the 'essential journey' definition given above. This guidance does not compel staff to take risks; it encourages everyone to make good plans in advance of bad weather.

The Headteacher's duty of care towards staff does not include the journey to and from school. This is the same policy that applies to staff across the whole of Suffolk County Council.

It is recognised that in certain circumstances staff will not be able to get to work and must make contact with the Headteacher to ensure arrangements can be made to cover their absence.

4. *How will parent/carers know if the school is open or closed?*

If a decision is taken to close one of the sites of The Attic this will be communicated to Suffolk County Council and they will add this information to the school's closure website (www.schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk). This information is available to local radio stations (Radio Norfolk and Heart FM) and broadcast for students and parent/carers.

