

Inclement Weather Protocols

In the event that there is concern regarding inclement weather the school follows an agreed set of protocols before making a decision that may involve an early closure during the course of a school day or closing the school for the entire day.

The concern for student and staff safety serves as the overriding factor when these decisions are made.

How do we make our decision?

In the days leading up to a possible weather incident, we monitor local forecasts, both in the evening before the incident and in the early hours. We may consult with the local authority, our local primary schools and our school bus providers.

We try to make the decision as early as possible and before 7.00 a.m. on the day. A site inspection will be carried out prior to this time by the Site Team, a representative of the school's Governing Body and a member of the school Leadership Team before any decision is made. An assessment will take place of the school walkways and outside spaces. We will consider whether or not snow is expected to continue, assess the degree of accumulation, our capacity to clear, treat and make safe parking spaces and walkways and the risk of any potential interruption to our heating or electricity supply.

Many of our students walk to school or face a long wait at a bus stop so consideration will also be given to the temperature and issues affecting pedestrian safety.

We must consider the risk to our least experienced drivers; our school students and travel conditions elsewhere in the borough will also be taken into consideration.

Our school requires a minimum number of staff to be able to operate safely so consideration will be given to how many staff are able to travel safely to school.

If conditions are such that child safety or the safety of staff are at risk the decision will be taken to close the school. We will notify local media, post relevant information on our school website, start our automated text system, tweet and email to confirm closure. We will advise Solihull MBC's Communications Department who will in turn publicise the school closure via their website and through social media. If we believe that the forecasts won't change during the night, we may make the decision to close school the night before. *(Please ensure your personal details are kept up to date via Insight.)*

Sometimes during the course of a school day conditions around the school can deteriorate quickly and we may have to make a decision to close in order to allow children to get home safely and in good time. We realise that some parents will be inconvenienced by a decision to close the school in these circumstances but we endeavour to make that decision based on the best possible information, taking into consideration the advice and decisions conveyed by the bus providers and with the welfare of students and staff as a priority.

In the most extreme conditions, parents can be assured that their children will remain in warm, safe and dry conditions until the safe collection of their child can be arranged. Parents should contact school to advise if someone other than themselves will be collecting their child.

If the bad weather continues, every effort will be made to re-open the school but we will continue to update you regularly following ongoing site inspections and advise of any further closures.

Whilst we may make a decision based on local weather conditions to leave our school open, the decision to travel to school rests primarily with the parent/carer

Appendix 1

JCQ Advice to centres - severe weather conditions

Awarding bodies have well-rehearsed processes in place to deal with disruption caused by severe weather conditions, which ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

It is important to note that rescheduling the examinations is not an option due to the consequences this would have across the system. For example, it would reduce significantly the amount of time schools and colleges have to teach, and students to learn, in preparation for the summer examination series. The integrity of the question papers could also be compromised, as the task of ensuring that all schools and colleges do not offer the examinations on the original scheduled date would be difficult to undertake and guarantee.

Taking all the factors in to account, drawing upon experience of previous years such as the disruption caused by adverse weather conditions in 2010 and 2011, and in consultation with the regulators, awarding bodies have agreed the following:

- Wherever possible the examinations should be conducted according to the centre's published examination timetable.
- If conditions are so severe that a decision is made to close the school or college, whether by the local authority or the senior leadership team, or where a school or college remains open but some individual candidates are unable to reach it because of extreme weather conditions, and no alternative arrangements can be made to take the examination at a different location, then the options are:
 - Where candidates are entered for examinations but this is not their terminal (final) examination series, they may be entered again for the June series.
 - Where candidates are sitting units as part of their terminal examination series or no further re-sit opportunity is available, then an application for Special Consideration may be made.

The candidate must meet the published criteria for Special Consideration as indicated in the JCQ publication, Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.

There is a published contingency plan for the examinations system

at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland> Additional guidance is also available on the websites of individual awarding bodies and students should contact their school or college for further information.

JCQ can be contacted on 020 7638 4132 or via email: info@jcq.org.uk