



ST. MARY'S COLLEGE ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

Introduction

In the event of adverse weather, St. Mary's College will try to remain open to ensure continuity of education. As long as the College buses are able to run as normal, the majority of staff can get into College, and the site is safe, then College will be open.

However, in the event of significant adverse weather, it may be necessary to close College and in such circumstances the following procedures will be followed.

These procedures would also be followed in the event of College having to close due to other issues such as a loss of water supply, electrical power or heating.

Closure before the start of the College day

If weather conditions or other circumstances are such that College cannot function effectively or if the health and safety of students or staff would be compromised by opening College, the decision to close will be made by 6.45am. This is because the first College bus leaves the depot at that time.

Any decision will be based on information from the bus company, the premises team and from staff who live in the vicinity of College. The decision will be made by the Principal (Interim) and communicated to staff via an all staff email. The Communications Co-ordinator will send a text to students, parents and carers and also post the information on social media and the SMC website.

Closure during the College day

Any decision about early closure will be made by the Executive after consultation with the bus company, taking into account local traffic and weather reports and the conditions at College.

An all staff email will be sent by the Executive stating the closure time. In addition, senior staff will go to each classroom to ensure that all staff and students are aware of the closure. Students using College transport will be notified of any change to their route and the departure time from College.

If buses are delayed, students will be asked to wait patiently in their classrooms or social space and will be collected when their bus arrives.

Students who are collected from College or who have special travel arrangements will be asked to contact home to discuss alternative arrangements.

College will remain open and staffed until the last students are able to leave the site.

Action to minimise disruption to learning

In the event of a closure, staff may be able to continue teaching and conduct classes virtually through use of MS Teams if they have the I.T. equipment to support this, and providing the weather has not disturbed the internet service provision.

Teaching staff can also make learning materials available on Pearltrees or through the College email. It is the responsibility of all students to check for work and to complete this work during the closure period. If adverse weather is forecast staff may be able to set work in advance and can follow e-learning protocols, but must stress that College will be open unless students are informed otherwise by the College by text and social media.

Adult Evening Classes

In the event of a closure, adult degree classes will be suspended and students will be contacted individually by the degree office. The degree office will also contact Liverpool Hope University to prevent staff travelling.

Disruption to external examinations

If at all possible College will open so that any students who can attend get the opportunity to take their exam.

Once an external examination has commenced, the candidates will be allowed to complete the exam even if College closes before the stated finish time. If necessary, the situation will be discussed with the students before the exam begins.

Arrangements will be made to ensure that if at all possible a locally-based member of staff will be able to act as an emergency key-holder to access the examination store in the event of a general College closure.

A text/Cedar/Facebook/Twitter message will stress that, where safe and practicable, students sitting external examinations should make every effort to get into College.

After the end of the examination session, the procedure would be as for an early closure.

If the College closes due to adverse weather during the internal exam week, then those exams affected will be held as soon as possible and details will be posted on Cedar/Facebook/Twitter

Reopening after weather related closure

The default option is that College will reopen as usual following a day of closure. If College is to remain closed a decision will be made and communicated.

Staff and students should therefore assume that College will reopen the next day unless they are told otherwise via an all staff email and on social media.

Procedure if students/staff are unable to get home

In the event that College buses are unable to collect students, or if other students are unable to get home, staff including senior staff will remain at College to supervise

and co-ordinate. Students will be asked to remain in their classrooms or social space and will be kept up-to-date with developments.

Any staff member who is unable to get home should notify the Principal.

The premises staff will be asked to ensure that the heating remains on.

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