



Adverse Weather Policy

Policy Type: Non-Statutory
Policy Owner: SHINE Academies CEO
Policy Date: March 2024
Policy Review Date: Policy will be reviewed in line with SHINE Academies internal review schedule in adherence to DfE guidance on statutory policy review
This policy has been agreed as being fully consulted on with the following trade unions ASCL, NAHT, NASUWT, UNISON, NEU, GMB and UNITE and was implemented by SHINE Academies on the above da

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 SHINE Academies recognise that employees may face difficulties attending their place of work and returning home during periods of adverse weather conditions such as heavy snow falls, flooding or other adverse weather conditions which may result in journeys to and from work being extremely hazardous. The Trust is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its employees and it will ensure that this is not compromised. However, the Trust must ensure that disruption caused is minimal to the delivery of teaching for pupils.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of all employees and leadership when considering attendance at work during adverse weather conditions, and to outline the appropriate procedures.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Employees should make every reasonable effort to attend work during adverse weather conditions without putting their personal safety at risk. This may include leaving extra time for the journey and/ or taking an alternative route or using an alternative means of transport. However, it is not the Trusts intention that employees put themselves at unnecessary risk when trying to attend their place of work. Employees should use their own judgement and, if unable to attend work, contact the designated point of contact in the Trust as soon as possible.
- 2.2 This policy shall apply when extreme adverse weather conditions occur or when there are significant disruptions to public transport. There may be other circumstances where individual school closure is appropriate. In such event, employees will be notified and the necessary provisions put in place to minimise disruption to teaching.
- 2.3 In the event of a Met office red alerts regarding weather conditions which cover some or all of the Trust sites, the sites will normally be closed. Employees will not be expected to travel to work in this circumstance.
- 2.4 This policy applies to all Trust employees on permanent, temporary and fixed term contracts. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 2.5 Any alleged abuse of this policy may result in an investigation being conducted and, if necessary, action being taken under the Trust Disciplinary Policy, which can be located on the Shared Policy Area.

3. Equal Opportunities

- 3.1 The Trust recognises that the Equality Act 2010 covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation and it is unlawful to discriminate against someone with such characteristics.
- 3.2 Where an employee has a protected characteristic that could disadvantage them in adverse weather situations, the Trust will ensure that reasonable adjustments are

considered so they are not discriminated against.

4. Responsibilities of Employees

- 4.1 Employees should not put themselves at unnecessary risk when attempting to attend work.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the individual employee to make every reasonable effort to attend for duty at their normal place of work, in accordance with their contract of employment. This includes adapting their means of travel if necessary, or using a combination of travel options, even if this results in arriving late for work. It should be noted that where additional expense is incurred because of using different travel methods these expenses cannot be reimbursed by the Trust.
- 4.3 In the event of adverse weather conditions employees will take all reasonable steps to report their inability to attend work to their manager as soon as is practicably possible. This should be in line with Trust normal arrangements for reporting sickness absence or other unanticipated absence and this will apply for each day that the employee is unable to attend work. Please note that failure to comply with reporting arrangements may amount to unauthorised absence and could therefore be unpaid.
- 4.4 All employees should be aware that when areas have had salt grit/ other materials applied it is not a guarantee that the paths are completely safe or slip proof; caution when moving around site should be applied.
- 4.5 All employees should ensure appropriate footwear is worn to reduce the risk of slips, trips, and falls.
- 4.6 All employees should report any internal/ external wet or icy areas to the designated site manager or designated point of contact.
- 4.7 Throughout a period of adverse weather, the above points in paragraph 4.4 – 4.7 will apply consistently across the whole Trust from site to site and all necessary health and safety compliant signage will be in place and there will be clear communication to all employees with regards to each of these points. All Trust sites will comply with the health and safety requirements on each of these points in line with health and safety regulations.

5. Responsibilities of Trust and School Leadership

- 5.1 The Trust will ensure that all employees are made aware of the Trusts Adverse Weather Policy, and that all employees are treated fairly and proportionate to their needs considering individual circumstances.
- 5.2 The Trust should ensure that reporting arrangements are clearly communicated to all employees. This should be consistent with information already provided to employees for reporting sickness absence or other unanticipated absences.
- 5.3 In the event of adverse weather conditions, the Trust will endeavour to provide employees with regular updates regarding the Trust sites and share links to useful

resources regarding local weather conditions and travel information, to help inform employees of the current situation.

5.4 There are a range of factors which should be considered (see section 5.5 below) when deciding how time away from the workplace should be categorised and it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to use a consistent and fair approach. While accepting that employees should not take unreasonable risks in attempting to get to work in difficult or extremely hazardous conditions, there should not be a disincentive to employees who do make a particular effort.

5.5 The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- The employee's safety
- The operational requirements of the School
- Distance travelled to work
- Prevailing weather conditions and their expected duration, both at the employee's place of work and the employee's home
- Information and guidance from the AA, police and/or local radio, e.g., about safe travelling
- Modes of transport available to the employee
- The degree of effort exercised by employees and whether they have made attempts to make alternative travel arrangements
- Working from home; this may be considered, dependant on the nature of employment and where circumstances permit. Any working from home arrangements for prolonged periods should be closely monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is productive
- The use of existing on-call arrangements in order to establish contingency arrangements where adverse weather conditions are foreseeable
- The health of the employee; for example, where it is known that they have a mobility or other health/medical condition special care should be taken in reaching a decision relating to attendance
- Other factors pertaining at the time

5.6 Taking into consideration the factors outlined in 5.5, employees should make requests to the Headteacher if they feel that they should leave work early as a result of current or prevailing adverse weather at their work or home location. The Headteacher should decide on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate to grant the employees request to leave work early. In making the decision, they should consider the factors outlined in section 5.5 above.

5.7 In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for the Trust to consider closing a whole school or department.

5.8 Taking into consideration points 5.4 to 5.7 in all circumstances employees would receive normal pay and where possible expected to do work from home.

6. Communication with Parents and Pupils

- 6.1 If a general closure is necessary, the Trust will communicate on the Trust website, or on the individual schools website.
- 6.2 All Headteachers are to ensure that parents know how any decision of closure will be notified to them.
- 6.3 If it is necessary not to open a school, or to close a school early, every effort must be made to inform parents/ carers and other agencies of the decision at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- 6.4 Headteachers should ensure that appropriate supervision is in place if a significant proportion of teaching staff fail to reach school on time. Employees who are on the Trust/School site should inform parents and pupils who do arrive at the school of the situation and supervise any pupils who arrive unaccompanied until such time as they can be collected or returned home safely.

7. Other Considerations

- 7.2 Employees who are already on leave (annual, maternity, paternity sickness etc.) will not be entitled to a day off in lieu if their school is closed.
- 7.3 Advice will be sought from the Trusts HR provider where appropriate.