



## Llantilio Pertholey Church in Wales Primary School

# EXTREME BAD WEATHER GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES

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# **EXTREME BAD WEATHER GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES**

## EXTREME BAD WEATHER GUIDANCE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

During periods of extreme bad weather, all employees have a duty to attempt to attend their place of work, unless specifically instructed not to do so by their supervisor or manager/Head-teacher.

The duty to attend will be related to the weather conditions where employees live, how close an employee's workplace is to their home and, to an employee's ability to work remotely.

The following conditions apply to all employees of the Council.

In cases where it is impossible to attend work because of hazardous road conditions brought about by snow or flooding, employees must contact and notify their line manager and discuss their situation. Whilst considering Health and Safety, employees should make all reasonable attempts to find alternative means of transport, e.g. obtaining lifts from other employees whose cars are on the road, using public transport where available etc.

Employees will need to decide whether it is safe or reasonable for them to walk or use alternative transport to attempt to attend work.

Employees need to ask themselves the following questions:

- Is public transport running / available? (E.g. bus, trains etc)?
- Is there a colleague with whom you could get a lift?
- Is it safe and reasonable to walk?
- Could you work from an alternative location? If there is an MCC establishment within safe travelling distance, in the event of extreme bad weather give them a ring and see if they are open and if you can work there or help them out.
- Could you work effectively from home?
- Have you contacted your line manager to discuss your situation?

Employees should consider using annual leave or flexi if they need more than 2 days. Where flexi arrangements are in place, managers should consider extending flexi arrangements to allow additional time to be made up over a longer period. This needs to be mutually agreed with the employee at the time.

Any employee attending work will receive a full days' credit.

Employees requiring time off due to childcare arrangements (e.g. nursery/school closure) need to apply through the Special Leave Policy.

Upon returning to work each line manager should discuss the employee's absence with them using the form in Appendix 1. Upon completion of this form the line manager should state what their recommendation is (i.e. how many days should or should not be paid). This form should then be submitted to the Head of Service who may make the decision on behalf of the Chief Officer.

Reasonable consideration should be given to the employee's circumstances, including their state of health, the nature of the weather conditions and the job role.

Where an employee is instructed to carry out duties from a different location to their normal place of work, or is instructed to be on standby for call out for emergency work they won't be regarded as being absent from duty.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHMENT MANAGERS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SNOW/ICE AT COUNCIL PREMISES**

### **External to the Site**

The Highways Unit have responsibilities for the clearance of ice/snow and gritting on the main road network and adopted highway. This is undertaken on a priority basis, the hierarchy commencing with main roads and then onto side roads and other areas depending on resources.

If the roads leading to your premises are affected by snow or ice, you may contact the Operations Department (Landscape Unit) 01633 644136 – [nigelleaworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigelleaworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk). This request will be prioritised accordingly.

### **On Site**

Advice on clearing snow and ice from footpaths, internal roads, car parks etc cannot be prescriptive. The standard expected will be – 'what is reasonable under the circumstances.'

Duty holders have responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and associated Regulations, and the Occupiers Liability Act to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to reduce risks from snow and ice on pedestrian/vehicle traffic routes. These duties are towards those who work on the premises, those who visit, and others where there is an assumed invitation onto the premises by way of offering a service.

Prioritising via the risk assessment process should always prevail. The priorities are to take reasonable steps to clear ice/snow and apply grit/salt to the Primary Routes include:- main entrances, main footpaths, routes in regular use, routes used by vulnerable persons.

Establishment Managers will need to use their discretion in determining other priority areas, such as escape routes, footpaths, on-site roads, car or vehicle parking areas, and other areas that staff and visitors may need to use. Factors to consider will include the use of the routes and their characteristics, for example any slopes or bends. If Primary Routes are identified and treated, consideration should be given to signing or 'cordoning off' the routes which should not be used.

Consideration should be given as to when to clear routes. An early warning of snow or icy conditions may allow for priority areas to be salted and gritted in advance, for example, during the previous evening or afternoon.

Concerns are sometimes raised by Establishment Managers relating to liability and fear of litigation if an accident should occur to persons using a 'treated' access route. The advice is that it is better to make reasonable attempts to improve the situation, and record it, rather than do nothing. The Local Authority could be liable in situations where there is proven negligence in the duty of care. If a claim for compensation is made, it would be for the Authority to demonstrate what was done in an attempt to make the access/egress route safe, was reasonable given the circumstances at the time.

Establishment Managers are required to:-

- Undertake an assessment of the site to determine what routes will be a priority, and devise a hierarchy of which routes should be treated first.
- Arrange for provision for the supply and storage of grit/salt, based upon the risk assessment. Supplies can be ordered from the Operations Department (Landscape Unit) 01633 644136 – [nigelleaworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigelleaworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk)
- Arrange for provision for snow/ice clearance, the following are considerations:-
  - Competent on-site personnel with clear duties and equipped with the following:-
    - Instruction (training if required)
    - Personal Protective Equipment (warm weatherproof outdoor clothing, high visibility clothing if required, non-slip footwear – preferably Wellington boots, gloves etc)
    - Appropriate tools – consider the use of a grit spreader/spinner, as excessive spreading of grit can be laborious and wasteful.
  - Operations Department. It may be possible to engage Operations Staff if resources are available. The cost for this is rechargeable.
- Record actions taken to reduce risks.
- Implement monitoring systems.

## APPENDIX 1

### MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### RETURN TO WORK FORM – EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

To be completed by all employees returning to work following a period of absence due to bad weather conditions.

SURNAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FORENAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM/DEPT: \_\_\_\_\_ PAYROLL NO: \_\_\_\_\_

*I certify that I was unable to attend work due to bad weather conditions (please state the inclusive dates)*

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

NO OF DAYS ABSENT: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL HOURS ABSENT: \_\_\_\_\_

**Specific reasons for non-attendance:**

For the absence above, I would like to request:

- Annual Leave
- Unpaid Leave
- Work time back for lost hours
- Discretionary bad weather days

Employees signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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To be completed by the Line Manager on the employees first day of return to work.

Checklist for Managers at return to work meeting:

- If you were unable to use your own vehicle, was public transport available? E.g. buses/trains  
Yes/No
- Was there a colleague with whom you could have obtained a lift to work? Yes/No
- Could you have walked to your place of work? Yes/No
- Could you have attended an alternative location? Yes/No
- Could you have worked effectively from home? Yes/No
- Did you follow notification procedure as detailed in this guidance and inform your Line Manager of your intended absence before your shift started? Yes/No

**I confirm that I have had a meeting with the above employee in accordance with the Extreme Bad Weather Guidelines. I recommend to approve / not approve the above request**

Signature of line manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Send completed form to your Head of Service for approval.***

Approved / not approved by Head of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If not approved, reason for Non-approval \_\_\_\_\_

**Line manager needs to be notified of outcome of decision in order that employee is notified. If unpaid day – line manager will need to submit a Payroll Amendment Form for the number of hours to be deducted from employees pay. Completed forms need to be forwarded to People Services.**

## APPENDIX 2

### SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES – GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

In Monmouthshire, we are fortunate that spells of severe weather are few and far between. However, Governing Bodies are strongly advised to have a clear procedure in place for the rare event when some pupils may have to be sent home early or when a whole school may be forced to close because of severe weather in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

This document outlines Monmouthshire County Council's policy in relation to severe weather and exemplifies good practice – it is for Governing Bodies to determine how this procedure will be adopted within the school and to ensure that all employees are clear about their roles and responsibilities in the event of severe weather.

1. The decision to close a school should not be taken lightly. Children have an entitlement to 190 days schooling annually and may in some circumstances have an entitlement to a free midday meal.
2. The responsibility for deciding to close a school because of severe weather lies with the Head-teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. The judgement should be made in light of local circumstances. The Chief Officer Children and Young People Directorate will not normally make a decision to close all schools as he will not necessarily be aware of the weather conditions prevailing in different parts of the County.
3. It may be the case that certain children living in certain areas should be permitted to leave school early, rather than the whole school be closed. Head-teachers should therefore consider alternatives to closure before sending all pupils and staff home. It may be the case that only those pupils travelling by bus or those living in rural areas should be sent home early.
4. **The Head-teacher must inform the County Council as soon as a decision to close the school has been reached.** It is the schools responsibility to notify the media and Monmouthshire's communications department will notify schools of this procedure if severe weather is expected.

5. In the event of notification by a bus company or other transport provider that they wish to transport certain pupils early, the Head teacher must comply with the request. It is the bus operators' responsibility to convey pupils home safely (in such circumstances, the operators will be responding to meteorological warnings). This does not necessarily mean, however, that all pupils should be sent home early. Where a transport contractor or provider is unable to provide transport in the morning, because of severe weather conditions, no contract transport will be provided in the afternoon. Parents who are able to convey their children to school in the morning in lieu of the normal transport arrangements should be advised that they are also responsible for getting their children home in the afternoon, as no contract transport will be available.
6. The Head-teacher should also contact the Passenger Transport Unit so that the Section can advise contractors and take account of any transfers from buses to minibuses or cars that often occur in rural areas. These transfers often affect pupils from other schools of which the Head teacher may not be aware.
7. The Head-teacher should also consider who else might need to be informed of the closure, for example, parents of children with special needs. In the case of small schools, it may be relatively easy to ensure that parents are contacted before sending pupils home; in the case of large schools, this would not necessarily be the case. The Head-teacher should, therefore, consider particularly in the case of young children, whether it is preferable for all children to be kept on the premises until they are collected.
8. A school may, in rare circumstances, be closed to pupils, but remain open to staff. All employees have a duty to attempt to attend their place of work, unless specifically instructed not to do so by the Head Teacher.

In cases where it is impossible to attend work employees are under an obligation to contact the Head-teacher and report their absence. All decisions made by the Head-teacher must comply with the Monmouthshire County Council policy on guidance to staff on extreme bad weather conditions. (Please see Annex 1).

9. Schools should be aware that in the event of a school closure before lunch, the local authority might incur meal costs. The cost of which will be made against the schools budget should this not be identified to the authority in a timely manner.

Should the Head Teacher make a decision to close the school, notification to the local authority (Chief Officer/ Passenger Transport Unit/ Access Unit) should be made at the earliest opportunity.

Head teachers should be aware that home to school transport contracts will be entitled to claim the daily / journey rate, should they have completed an unnecessary journey. The cost of which will be made against the schools budget should this not be identified to the authority in a timely manner.

10. Throughout any prolonged period of bad weather the Chief Executive or his representative will hold regular meetings (sometimes daily if required) to monitor the overall situation for the County and discuss / agree priorities. Any updated information will be sent to Head-teachers electronically and it is imperative that up to date email addresses are provided.

Head-teachers of secondary schools should provide a list of exam dates so that this can be referred to when discussions are taking place in relation to priorities. It is important that any changes to this information are forwarded to the Chief Officer for Children and Young People.

11. Annex 2 provides guidance and information to Head teachers on the management of snow and ice on school sites. This guidance should be referred to when making decisions to reopen school premises.



## ANNEX 1 FOR SCHOOLS

### GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS TO BE ADOPTED DURING PERIODS OF EXTREME BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS

1. During periods of extreme bad weather all employees have a duty to attempt to attend their place of work, unless specifically instructed not to do so, by their Head-teacher or other representative. The duty to attend will be related to the proximity of employees home to his or her place of work. The following conditions apply to all employees of the Council.
2. In cases where it is impossible to attend work because of hazardous road conditions brought about by snow or flooding, employees are under an obligation to contact their Head-teacher/line manager and report their absence. Taking due regard to Health and Safety, employees should make all reasonable attempts to find alternative means of transport, e.g. obtaining lifts from other employees whose cars are on the road, using public transport where available etc.

However, if an employee is unable to attend their normal school but are able to attend another Monmouthshire School, which is open and is closer to their home then this is the course of action they should take, with the agreement of the relevant Head Teachers.

3. Where an employee is instructed to carry out duties from a location other than his/her normal place of work, or is instructed to be on standby for call out for emergency work he/she will not be regarded as being absent from duty.

## ANNEX 2 FOR SCHOOLS

### HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR HEADTEACHERS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SNOW/ICE AT COUNCIL PREMISES

#### External to the Site

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If the roads leading to your premises are affected by snow or ice, you may contact Nigel Leaworthy. Highways will be notified, and the request will be prioritised accordingly.

Head teachers must be aware that the priority for the Highways Department is health and life and for the Grounds Department and Refuse workers to clear footpaths in town centres to hospitals, doctors surgeries etc. This part of the work force cannot be diverted from these priority areas and Head teachers where possible should make arrangements to have their sites cleared as soon as they can rather than wait for the above work forces to complete the priority areas.

Head teachers should also note that the Highways and Grounds Department will not automatically arrive to clear the school grounds or entrances. Therefore, if Head teachers require their assistance they should contact Ground or Highways and they will be added to the list and prioritised accordingly.

#### On Site

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Head teachers are required to :-

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