

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE

Purpose

From time to time there may be occasions when weather conditions or other circumstances mean some staff may be prevented from attending work or will be late arriving and/or require to leave early. Conditions may require a decision to be made and communicated on School closure. This document sets out the procedure to be followed to ensure a standardised approach is taken in such circumstances.

Scope

The procedures regarding non-attendance, late attendance and early departure apply to all staff. Separate procedures apply in relation to student attendance.

The procedures in relation to School closure apply to all staff and students.

For the purpose of this document, adverse weather is defined as weather such as snow, ice, fog, floods, which render journeys by to work extremely hazardous.

Responsibilities

It is the duty of each employee to attend work and all staff have a responsibility to make every reasonable attempt to reach their normal place of employment.

Where an employee is unable to attend work at their normal start time due to adverse weather or other conditions, they have a responsibility to notify the School as soon as is reasonably practicable of their late attendance.

Employees should not, however, put themselves at risk where severe weather warnings have been issued.

Where an employee requires to finish work earlier than their normal finish time, to enable travel in adverse weather conditions, they have a responsibility to obtain the permission of the Heads of Schools.

The Heads of Schools will be responsible for ensuring 'business as usual' as far as is reasonably practicable where the School remains open during periods of adverse weather.

The Heads of Schools will be responsible for the fair, reasonable and consistent application of the terms of this procedure where staff are prevented from attending work, arrive late or request to leave early due to adverse weather or other conditions.

BeyondAutism's Senior Management Team will be responsible for making decisions on School closure informed where appropriate by information from the AA, the Police, the local radio or the Met Office, and taking into account reasonable operational requirements. The Senior Management Team will be responsible for ensuring that notice of School closure is conveyed to staff, students and families using the Emergency Phone Tree.

Where a School closure has been announced, all staff and students have a responsibility to check for announcements on re-opening/resumption of normal School operations.

Procedure

Late Attendance

Where an employee has genuinely been prevented from attending work at their normal start time due to adverse weather conditions, the employee must contact their line manager at the earliest (safe) opportunity to notify their late attendance.

The period shall not be counted as an occasion of lateness.

Non-Attendance at Work

Where an employee is unable to attend work due to the adverse weather conditions, they must contact their line manager as soon as possible to notify their absence.

The absence shall not count as annual leave, sick leave, compassionate leave, time off for emergencies or similar time off.

Leaving Work Early

Where adverse weather conditions arise during the working day, employees should be released only where there is evidence that they will encounter difficulty in reaching their home. Weather information, where the employee lives and their mode of travel should all be taken into account. Managers should consider requests sympathetically but will need to balance the operational needs of the School and the impact on its students, other staff and parents when considering such requests.

Employees must request to leave early, making the request to the Heads of Schools. Where the request to leave early is approved, the absence shall not count as annual leave, sick leave, compassionate leave, time off for emergencies or similar time off.

Employees must not leave work early without such approval. To do so may constitute an unauthorised absence.

Closure of School

The decision to close the School due to adverse weather or other conditions will be made by the Senior Management Team and communicated to staff and students primarily through the Emergency Phone Tree, website and any other appropriate means.

Information on School closure will be publicly available through a message on the School website and answering machine.

School re-opening announcements will be made through the same communication methods. All staff and students have a responsibility to check the announcements for School closure and re-opening.

Abuse of Procedures

Employees who are found to have abused these procedures will either be required to work the hours missed or will have payment for the hours deducted from their salary. They may also be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Linked Policies/Related Documents

BeyondAutism Procedure for Snow Disruption

Last review: July 2014

Date of next review: July 2017

Review group: Senior Management Team