

Early Closure Guidance & Procedure

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1 Purpose

Unforeseen circumstances which may cause the academy to close occur rarely, however, when they come they are disruptive and can cause anxiety and stress. Understandably, many parents/carers ring the academy, for example if snow starts falling heavily, to seek advice. This guidance sets out the academy's response to unforeseen circumstances including adverse weather conditions, should they occur.

2 Application

2.1 Remaining open

It is our intention to remain open unless we are forced to close because there is a risk to the health and safety of staff and students. This event of academy closure is highly unlikely and will be avoided where possible. There is no need for staff or parents to contact the school to check whether or not the school is open.

2.2 Academy closure before the school day

Decisions about closing the academy or sending students home early are always difficult to make. We need to gather reliable information before making a judgement.

In making this decision we will gather information from a variety of sources including checking weather reports (if relevant to the decision) and assessing what is happening elsewhere in the area.

The decision to close or partially close the academy will be made in the morning by 7.30am, by the Principal in consultation with site staff.

If we are closed, there will be an announcement on:

- The following radio stations, in cases of closure due to snow:
 - Radio Cambridgeshire (95.7 FM)
 - Heart Radio in Peterborough (102.7 FM)
 - The academy website www.gputc.org immediately. If there is no message to the contrary, we are open as normal.
 - The academy Facebook page: Greater Peterborough UTC

Parents who work are urged to always have a contingency plan for their children which covers an event such as a school closure so that they are assured that the children will be in a safe environment should normal arrangements be curtailed. Parents are reminded that closure could happen at any time and is not always weather related.

2.3 Academy closure part way through the school day

If unforeseen circumstances, such as heavy snow or power failure occur during the day there are three possible decisions to be made by the Principal:

- Keep the academy open
- Send children and staff home early;

- No students will be allowed to leave school early without reassurance from the student that they can gain access to their home.
- If we believe that any student is at risk of being unable to travel home safely, we will either contact their parent/carer or facilitate this contact for the student through the use of a school phone.
- Close academy the next day (staff to attend if possible). This decision will be based on the risks involved to students in travelling to and from home and the probability of large numbers of staff and students not being able to reach the academy the next day.

We will use the procedures above to announce such an event and also make phones available for students who may be concerned that they will not be able to get home or gain access to their home for whatever reason. Where possible, students will be given a letter containing the necessary information. Radio stations and the academy website will be updated as necessary. We will provide running updates via social media as far as is practicable.

3 Students sitting a formal examination

3.1 Students sitting a formal examination on a day when the academy is forced to close must contact the main reception (details on website [Contact Us – Greater Peterborough UTC \(www.gputc.org\)](http://www.gputc.org) by 8.30am to be given further instructions as to what course of action has been decided.

3.2 In the majority of cases if a student is able to get into the academy, safely, even if it is closed to other students, they should do so and the examination will take place as scheduled. If a student is unable to attend, the academy will report the matter to the relevant Examination Board who will decide on the future action to be taken.