

## Northstowe Secondary College

# Emergency School Closure

<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Applicable To:</b>	Northstowe Secondary College
<b>Approved by Governors On:</b>	March 2024
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	Biennial
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	March 2026

## **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 ring the College, for example if snow starts falling heavily, to seek advice. This guidance sets out the College'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 College 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 College 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 College will be made in the morning by 7.30 am, by the Headteacher 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 (Cambridge) 103 FM
- The College website [www.northstowesc.org](http://www.northstowesc.org) immediately. If there is no message to the contrary, we are open as normal.
- The College Facebook page: Northstowe Secondary College
- The Cambridgeshire County Council website also operates a complete list of schools closures, due to snow, which can be checked:  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20059/schools\\_and\\_learning/281/school\\_term\\_dates\\_and\\_closure\\_s/3](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20059/schools_and_learning/281/school_term_dates_and_closure_s/3) . There will be a link to this page from the front page of [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

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 College 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 Headteacher:

- keep College 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 College 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 College 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 College 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**

Students sitting a formal examination on a day when the College is forced to close must contact the main reception number 01223 343800 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 College, 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 College will report the matter to the relevant Examination Board who will decide on the future action to be taken.

CMoss (Updated September 2023)

Headteacher

This guidance will next be reviewed in September 2025