



## UNEXPECTED SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

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Next Review	March 2025
UCC Governor Approval Committee	FGB
UCC Staff Role Responsible	Principal

## **AIMS**

The aim of this policy is to identify how UCC will respond to unexpected scenarios that may result in the temporary closure of the school.

## **POTENTIAL CAUSES**

Using our experiences of working in education, we know that the most likely causes of school closures are severe weather, or problems with the heating, energy supply, water supply or sewage systems in school. In recent years, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused school closures and robust systems for the continuation of children's education have been established as a result.

The school will always work diligently to stay open and will only announce a temporary closure as a last resort if the health, safety and well-being of staff, students and their families are compromised by unexpected circumstances.

## **DECISION TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL TEMPORARILY**

Snow and severe weather can mean that it is unsafe to travel to or from school. When severe weather conditions occur or are predicted, the Principal is the only member of staff with the authority to make the decision to close the school. This decision will be taken following the collection of information from key stakeholders such as the Site Manager and other senior leaders. The school may also have to close or partially close due to facilities or staffing levels becoming compromised to an extent that the safe education of students is at risk.

If the decision to temporarily close is taken by the Principal, it will be communicated as soon as possible in the following format:

- Message on the homepage of the school website (sometimes the website will crash due to significant increases in traffic; please use one of the other methods below if this occurs)
- School social media account sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Text message to all parents
- Text message and email to all staff and governors
- Phone calls to all bus service providers
- Messages will be sent to **Rutland Sounds and Radio Leicester** however we are not in control of whether these are read out.

UCC will always endeavour to communicate any temporary school closure to the community as quickly as possible.

## **TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

Students who normally travel to the College by bus or coach should not attempt to come in if their bus or coach does not turn up because of **severe** weather. If a bus doesn't pick up in the morning, it should be assumed that they won't in the afternoon. We would suggest that students wait no longer than 15 minutes after the published pick-up time before returning home.

We cannot assume that it is due to a bus not running or bad weather conditions that your child is not in College. Please ensure you contact us to let us know if your child will not be coming in as you would normally do for an absence. If we do not hear from you an absence text will be sent home to notify you that your child is not here.

Parents would be unwise to try to get their children to College if a bus does not turn up. Whilst this may be possible at the time, particularly for those with 4 wheel drive vehicles, it may present real problems later in the day when students attempt to return home.

The College **will be open** unless it is announced that it is closed. It should be noted by parents that if the College provides a limited day during bad weather it may be impossible to provide normal lessons. This is due to the fact that many staff will also have problems reaching the

College. Equally the College cannot guarantee a full day - deteriorating weather conditions may necessitate an early closure.

In outlying areas you may feel it necessary to collect your child early. It is **your** decision to do so and you should contact the College **in advance** of your request.

If the College has to be closed, buses will be summoned early. Parents will need to make contingency arrangements in the event of their son/daughter arriving home earlier than expected if an emergency arises. Those students who do not have a 'safe haven' to go to should advise their form tutor or another member of staff immediately and they will remain at the College until suitable and safe arrangements can be made to get them home. Parents who have specific requests regarding students being sent home must make prior arrangements with the College. Please contact Student Services immediately to discuss details.

Therefore please ensure that your child has a place to go if they are unexpectedly sent home during the day due to college closure. We always ask students if they have a safe place to go to and unless we have heard from you to the contrary we will accept the word of the students that they do have somewhere to go to that has been approved by parents.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

When the school is temporarily closed there will be instructions sent out for students regarding what school work is expected of them. Students will normally be expected to do school work in line with their normal timetable, with instructions via Satchel:One. During extended periods of closure, UCC will utilise Oak Academy resources as well as delivering some lessons, where appropriate, using MS Teams.

## **SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING**

UCC staff will make regular contact with vulnerable students during periods of extended closure. These checks will be made via phone calls, emails where appropriate, and in the most extreme

cases, home visits. Safeguarding checks will take place with families where external agencies are involved, or where the school is aware of particular safeguarding or wellbeing issues.