

Weather warnings issued by Met Éireann

The school will monitor weather forecasts in order to be prepared for any severe weather which may affect the school. During periods of severe weather, the school will assess the situation.

In recent years Met Éireann has introduced colour coded weather warnings as follows:

Status Yellow – be aware

Status Orange – be prepared

Status Red – take action

Where a Red Status issues for the entire country or area in which the school is located, the school will close, and parents and the school community will be informed accordingly.

Where Status Orange or Status Yellow warnings apply, the decision to close a school rests with the board of management. In making a decision whether to open or close the school, the board of management will take into account the factors outlined below.

Unforeseen School Closure

The decision to close the school rests with the board of management with authority delegated to the Principal taking into consideration the full guidance and direction available from the main response agencies including An Garda Síochána, Dublin Fire Brigade, Dublin City Council and other appropriate services.

Any decision to close the school is taken in the interest of safety, having assessed the local risks and having consulted, as appropriate, with relevant authorities. Schools will take into account:

- Conditions in the school itself
- The capacity of the school to ensure the health and safety of students and staff whilst in school
- The ability of parents, students, staff and school transport services to safely negotiate local road conditions to reach the school
- Guidance and direction from the main response agencies
- Direction from the Department of Education

Being prepared

The school will conduct a pre-event evaluation of what should be, or could be, in place to ensure the opening of the school in the event of severe weather. Areas for consideration are maintenance of school premises and utilities, salting and gritting and transport to and from school. Access in the school to flashlights are in place.

The school will also conduct a post-event evaluation of what should be, or could be, in place to ensure the re-opening of the school in the event of an unforeseen school closure.

Contingency arrangements in the event of unforeseen school closures

Guidance for schools on time lost due to unforeseen closures as a result of severe weather is set out in Circular 0072/2022, Standardisation of the School Year in respect of Primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26.

It is generally agreed that there is a need to include flexibility and to provide for contingency arrangements within the standardised school year to deal with unforeseen school closures.

In the event of unforeseen school closures, the school will, in the first instance, quantify the number of school closures that have occurred.

The school will, in consultation with staff, assess the effect of the loss of tuition and identify any shortfalls that have occurred as a result of the unforeseen closures.

The school will, in consultation with staff, strive to ensure that the curriculum for each class/year group will be completed before year end.

A non-exhaustive list of possible examples of how this might be achieved include:

- Teachers posting work for students online through Google Classroom
- Prioritising tuition over other non-tuition activities later in the year
- Reducing where possible the length of mock/house examinations
- Consideration of whether learning in the classroom should be prioritised over any scheduled school tour or out-of-class activity etc.
- Ensuring examination classes attend all classes to the end of May etc.

If necessary, the school will review the school calendar with a view to identifying any available discretionary days that the school had planned to close that could be made available to make up the loss.

In cases where the school has been affected by extensive or prolonged school closures (e.g. due to weather, etc.) and where the school considers that the above measures will not adequately address the loss in tuition involved, the school may, in consultation with staff, provide a series of online lessons, subject to available resources and the circumstances involved.

Furthermore, in cases where the school has been affected by extensive or prolonged school closures (e.g. due to weather, etc.) and where the school considers that the above measures will not adequately address the loss in tuition involved, the school may, in consultation with staff, agree that the February mid-term break may be reduced by up to three days' subject to the requirement that all schools must be closed on the Thursday and Friday of the week in which this break falls. It is anticipated that in the above rare cases that the Department of Education may also be involved in directing the school on the necessary course of action.

Ardscoil Rís policy on Unforeseen School Closures

The school will consider the implications of any measures identified for students, teachers, parents and other staff and also other parties such as school transport, traffic wardens, visitors to the school, etc.

The school will consult and communicate with the school community as early as possible on these matters.

Role of Parents

Parents should ensure that they are familiar with the school's policy on Unforeseen School Closures and have their own arrangements in place in the event of a school closure due to severe weather or otherwise.

Communications

The school uses the School App to communicate with parents, who should ensure they have downloaded the App and that the school has their up-to-date details. Email, the school's website or social media may also be used to alert parents and students to school conditions and closure should they arise. In an emergency situation, text messaging may also be used.

The school will communicate with staff through email, text messaging, phone calls or online communications, whichever is more appropriate in a given situation.

Guidance on time lost due to unforeseen closures as a result of severe weather is set out in circular 0072/2022 which is available on the Department's website www.education.ie.

Additional information, where relevant, may be obtained from:

www.education.ie

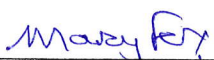
www.emergencyplanning.ie

www.winterready.ie

www.met.ie

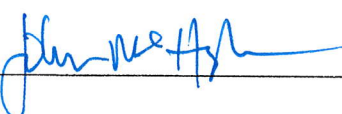
www.buseireann.ie/StatusRed

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 23rd January 2024.

Signed: 

Date: 23rd January 2024

Mary Fox, Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: 

Date: 23rd January 2024

John McHugh, Principal