



Severe Weather Policy & Procedure

Introduction

All employees are under an obligation to get to work. There is no automatic right to payment for time lost due to severe weather conditions. The school however recognises that on occasions employees may be unable to attend work, arrive at work late or be allowed to leave early due to severe weather conditions. The Head Teacher will determine those days on which the Severe Weather Policy will apply and the Stuck Not Sick Policy can be used to provide flexibility to affected employees.

Payment of Leave

Consideration for time away under the Stuck Not Sick Policy or for paid leave of absence will be given to those employees who genuinely cannot attend work during periods of severe weather where the Head Teacher in consultation with the Corporate Lead, HR is satisfied that the employee lives in an acceptable location, was available and made every attempt to get to work (including the use of public transport) and no other employee from a similar location got to work on that day. If Stuck Not Sick or payment is refused, the employee will be allowed to take flexi-leave or the day from any outstanding annual leave.

Where an employee is able to undertake meaningful work from home, this can be agreed between the employee and the Head Teacher/manager.

Training Courses

Employees attending training courses outside of the authority will be paid their normal hours for the day of training if, after attending, the course tutor/leader decides to finish the course early as a result of severe weather conditions.

Employees on Flexible Working Hours

For employees participating in the Flexible Working Hours Scheme the normal rules will apply in that they must key in and out at the actual time they arrive at or depart from work. At the discretion of the Head Teacher, employees may be credited with the standard working hours they were genuinely unable to work

as a result of the severe weather. No employee will be credited with any time outside of their working hours, unless it is actually worked.

Where employees are in a debit situation in excess of ten hours at the end of the accounting period as a result of being unable to attend work due to severe weather, they will be allowed to make up the required time in the following four week accounting period.

Employees Not Eligible for Flexible Working Hours

Employees not subject to flexible working arrangements that arrive late for work, owing to severe weather conditions, shall receive a normal day's pay provided that the extent and reason for the lateness is accepted as reasonable in the circumstances by the Head Teacher. Where the extent and/or reason for the lateness are not reasonable, an appropriate deduction will be made.

Where the Head Teacher considers it reasonable to allow an employee who is not subject to flexible working hours to travel home early because of severe weather conditions (subject to the needs of the school), the employee will receive a normal day's pay, excluding any overtime that may have been worked on that day.

Leaving work early

Head Teachers should decide on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate for employees in their area to leave work early. When making this decision, they should account for the employee's circumstances (e.g. distance from his/her home to work, caring arrangements, mode of transport and the needs of the school).

Health and Safety at work

It is not the intention of the school that employees put themselves at unnecessary risk when trying to attend work. The school will not encourage employees to travel in dangerous weather, either travelling to and from work or during working hours.

The school recognises that severe weather particularly affects employees whose job involves driving or working outdoors. The school will undertake regular risk assessments to ensure that employees working in these conditions are properly instructed, provided with the appropriate clothing and equipment and given sufficient rest breaks. The school will also take steps to ensure that work premises are hazard free and appropriate measures are implemented to reduce incidents of trips, slips and falls during poor weather.

Whilst the school has an overriding responsibility for protecting the health and safety of employees who may feel anxious about travelling across the Borough during severe weather conditions, this must be balanced against the need to provide essential services that protect our most vulnerable service users. Where appropriate drivers will be provided with additional training and guidance on safe driving in

hazardous conditions and all appropriate technological solutions will be applied to minimise risk of accidents. Where drivers experience undue anxiety in relation to driving for work all attempts will be made to plan for this when allocating appointments and dual staffing will be instigated as deemed appropriate.

Closure of schools and nurseries

If schools or nurseries are closed, for example due to heavy snow, making it difficult for employees and children to get in, individuals who do not have alternative childcare options may be in the position that, while they could get into work despite the weather, it is necessary for them to spend the day looking after their children.

Such a situation is covered under the unpaid dependent leave provisions of the Employment Rights Act 1996 where the employee has the right to take a reasonable amount of time off because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependent. Employees will not need to suffer any financial detriment as the Stuck Not Sick Policy will apply in these circumstances but will only be approved for a time period deemed sufficient for the parent/guardian to make alternative childcare arrangements.

Reasonable circumstances

The decision of what is reasonable shall be taken after consultation between the Head Teacher and the Corporate Lead HR. The decision to close schools will be the responsibility of the Corporate Director Children, Adults and Health in consultation with Head Teachers. The decision will take into account factors such as distance from home to work, road conditions, physical fitness of the individual and the availability of public transport.

The closing of premises

Where the Council decides to close premises or a worksite on account of severe weather conditions and employees are not required to work, they will be paid those hours up to a basic day's pay or credited with up to a standard day for the day(s) of closure.

Equality and Diversity Statement

South Tyneside Council and the Governing Board are committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity. An equality check this policy was carried out in 2018 and no equality check implications were identified.

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