

SHIMNA INTEGRATED COLLEGE ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

Adverse weather conditions can happen at any time, and sometimes with little warning. We aim to deal with adverse weather conditions through:

- thorough risk assessment;
- careful decision making;
- good communication.

We will prioritise avoiding:

- Students and staff being stranded at school;
- Students and staff taking unnecessary risks to travel to school;
- Negative impact on students' learning;
- Accidents in school.

Our policy is that the school will open on all normal school days even when some poor road conditions exist. However, in the event of adverse weather, we cannot guarantee that all staff and students will be able to attend, and a decision to close or to restrict access or to restrict opening may have to be taken.

If weather conditions are severe enough to force school closure, the decision will be communicated through the following channels:

- A message will be posted on the school website www.shimnacollege.org.uk
- A message will be posted on Shimna Integrated College FaceBook page
- A message will be posted on ShimnaIC Twitter
- A message will be sent through SchoolComms
- A message will be broadcast on Radio Ulster, 94.5 FM, using the BBC adverse weather service

The school phone is likely to be very busy in this situation. Please only use the phone for emergency calls. Please be aware that in very serious conditions, staff will do their best to use all of the channels above, but if one channel proves impossible, please try another.

Protecting Learning

All students are aware that learning materials are available on the Shimna Fronter, through the school website Myschool button. Many departments also use a class FaceBook page, Twitter feed, subject websites such as mymaths etc. and email arrangements.

All students have their textbooks and learning materials, and students in years 11-14 in particular will want to make good use of this support to ensure that their progress towards their examinations is not jeopardised by adverse weather closure. Should a lengthy closure ever become necessary, students should keep in regular touch through the website and FaceBook.

Students in years 8-10, if they do not have classwork to complete, should take time to do some reading – read anything – read websites, read newspapers, cosy up and read novels or some poems. Research the adverse weather conditions!

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

1. Will I be **contacted in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather conditions?**

No. Parents are advised to check the channels of communication listed above for news. We will send a SchoolComms message if possible, but the website, FaceBook, Twitter and Radio Ulster are likely to be the first channels available.

2. Do I need to **contact the school if my child is unable to travel due to adverse weather conditions?**

Yes, **unless** a full school closure has been announced. Our catchment is very wide, and conditions might be passable in Newcastle, but not where you are.

3. How do I know whether it is **safe to travel to school or not?**

Always check the Shimna website, FaceBook or Twitter to find out if the school is open. Then, the decision has to be yours as to whether the journey is feasible. We will do our best to ensure a member of staff is present in school whatever the conditions in order to meet students and ensure their safety.

4. Will students be registered late if weather causes a delay in arriving at school.

No. In adverse weather conditions, we appreciate the efforts families make to ensure students do not miss school, and nobody will be marked late.

5. What if I had an appointment or meeting at school on a day of closure?
All meetings and appointments will be rescheduled.

6. What if my daughter/son has a public examination on a day of closure?

Please check the website, FaceBook or Twitter for information about arrangements for public examinations affected by adverse weather conditions. We will work with advice from the examination boards, as exams cannot be delayed or rescheduled by an individual school for any reason.

School telephone number: 02843726107

School website: www.shimnacollege.org.uk

School Facebook page: www.facebook.com/shimnaintegratedcollege

School Twitter feed: www.twitter.com (ShimnaIC)

The Board of Governors agrees with, and fully supports the contents and implementation of this policy.

January 2014