



Severe Weather – Information for Parents and Students

(Endorsed by the Parents' Advisory Group – February 2013)

Sandwell Academy is different to most schools insofar as the catchment area for the Academy covers the six towns of Sandwell. This is a very wide area and we provide coach transport for about 900 of the 1250 students that attend the Academy. All of these issues have to be carefully considered when decisions are made to close the Academy and this is particularly difficult when adverse weather arrives when the Academy day has commenced.

During anticipated adverse weather periods there will be daily announcements using the website and twitter feed that are already in place. If necessary, we will use the Keep Kids Safe text service.

If the weather were to suddenly deteriorate after school has started then updates about what action the Academy is taking to secure the safety of the students will be made every 30 minutes on the website and the twitter feed.

It should be remembered that when students are in the Academy they are safe, warm and can always be fed. The Academy would never ask students to leave the premises in adverse weather conditions even if it meant keeping the Academy open overnight.

These arrangements also mean that parents do not have to panic and put themselves at risk by travelling in adverse weather conditions. In Sandwell, our experience is that the roads clear quickly after the initial rush when local companies release employees early and then it is much safer to travel.

Key points for parents' to consider:

- It is for parents to decide whether or not their child should attend the Academy during adverse weather conditions and not the Academy.
- It is for the Academy to ensure that students are safe once they arrive even if this means they remain in the Academy building long after normal closing time.
- Only use the Academy website to obtain accurate information, it will be updated every 30 minutes, do not rely on hearsay.
- If the weather deteriorates suddenly, we will provide advice on the website regarding revised arrangements for coach travel, early or late release of students using public transport and students using their cars.
- Please do not telephone the Academy.
- Please do not telephone or text the students who will be in lesson, it causes a major disturbance.
- Although it is against Academy rules for students to telephone and text parents during the normal Academy day without permission, it is possible that some students may breach these rules. If this happens, work with us and verify their opinion by visiting the Academy website and then take sensible action.
- If you have to come to the Academy to collect your child please park outside the Academy grounds.
- Cars will not be allowed on the premises as this prevents the Academy from clearing snow and making the perimeter road around the Academy safe.
- There will be a senior member of staff at the Academy gates wearing a high visibility jacket to communicate with the Academy reception on your behalf and you should meet your child at the Academy gates. This can take up to 10 minutes when there is a high demand.
- Treat staff with respect and not in an aggressive manner, they will be helpful and co-operative to you.

Simon Topper

Head

February 2013



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In the event of closing the Academy due to severe snow, Parents and Students will be informed as follows:

A statement will be posted on the Academy website (www.sandwellacademy.com) and on twitter (@Sandwellacademy) by 6.30am, clearly stating that the Academy is closed due to heavy snow.

A message will also be posted on the website when the school is due to reopen.

If the Academy is closed, further confirmation will be announced as soon as possible after 6.30am on:

<http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

Free Radio Birmingham	96.4 Fm
Heart	100.7 Fm
BBC Radio WM	95.6 Fm

Every attempt will be made to keep Sandwell Academy open.

Please do not telephone the Academy.

If there is no announcement, the Academy is open as normal.