

Limerick Educate Together National School Policy/Procedures In Event of a Status Red Weather Warning From Met Éireann.

Rationale:

In developing this policy, account was taken of the 'Be Winter Ready' booklet produced by the Office of Emergency Planning and developed in association with other organisations including the Department of Education & Skills, the RSA, An Garda Síochána, the Health & Safety Authority, and Met Éireann.

In addition, the Department of Education and Skills has issued guidelines to schools in relation to dealing with severe weather. <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/National-Emergencies-Public-Health-Issues/Schools-and-Severe-Weather.pdf>

The weather can be very dangerous during winter and on occasion exceptionally intense meteorological phenomena have been forecast by Met Éireann. In these circumstances major damage and accidents are considered likely, with a possible threat to life and limb, over a wide area.

When a Status Red Weather Warning is announced it is important that everyone stays informed about expected meteorological conditions and risks, and follows instructions and any advice given by the authorities.

Weather warnings are intended to protect the lives and livelihoods of all of the nation's citizens. **A Status Red Weather Warning is the most severe weather warning and calls for all citizens to take appropriate action in order to protect themselves from the anticipated conditions.**

Met Éireann recommends that in the event of a Status Red Weather Warning families "take action to protect themselves and/or their properties; this could be by moving their families out of the danger zone temporarily; by staying indoors; or by other specific actions aimed at mitigating the effects of the weather conditions".

Following this advice means children should not be exposed to such weather conditions to travel to or from school.

Any decision to close the school due to severe weather conditions is taken in the interest of child safety, having assessed risks to pupils, staff and the wider school community. The decision must and will be consistent with the spirit and intention of a Status Red Weather Warning.

On the rare occasion that Met Éireann declares a Status Red Weather Warning, the following operating policy will apply:

1. Limerick Educate Together National School will remain closed until the weather warning has been downgraded and it is deemed safe to re-open the school.
2. Parents, staff and members of the Board of Management will receive a text message stating that the **SCHOOL WILL REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**. For the duration of the school closure, staff members should not visit the school. Neither should anyone in the school community take risks by entering onto the school premises.

Please note this will be the only text message sent in this regard. We will NOT be issuing a daily update and there will be no further communication from the school until the weather warning has been downgraded and we are in a position to advise as to when the school will re-open.

3. Once the warning has been downgraded, the Principal, Caretaker and Safety Officer from the BOM will meet at the school and assess any possible damage. **Once it has been decided that it is safe to re-open the school, a text message will be sent to parents, staff and members of the BOM informing them of the date on which the school will re-open.**
4. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that they inform the school of any change to their contact details in order to be assured of receiving important messages from the school.

Date	30.01.18
Chairperson	Jane Harris
Principal	Michael Quealy