

## **Adverse Weather and Travel Disruption Policy**

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| Policy Code:        | HR26           |
| Policy Start Date:  | September 2026 |
| Policy Review Date: | September 2029 |

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR8 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy
- HR13 Annual and Special Leave and Absence Reporting Policy
- HR15 Time Off for Dependents Policy
- HR18 Staff Sickness Absence Policy
- Critical Incident and Business Continuity Plan

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## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 This policy applies where it is not possible / appropriate or dangerous for members of the Trust community to attend or travel to site because of:
- Extreme adverse weather;
  - Industrial action affecting transport networks;
  - Major incidents affecting travel or public safety; or
  - Full or partial closure of an Academy/associated site.
- 1.2 On these occasions, The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (the Trust) recognises that a flexible approach to working/learning arrangements may be necessary to accommodate the difficulties the school community face and to protect health and safety, while still keeping the Trust's business running as effectively as possible.
- 1.3 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire ITT.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

## **2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation**

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Pay, Performance and HR Committee delegates day -to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Trust Services.
- 2.2 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

## **3 Aims**

- 3.1 The policy aims to be applicable to a broad range of disruption, including severe weather, disruption to public transport due to a variety of reasons, and the emergency full or partial closure of a site. However, it is recognised that the policy cannot anticipate or address every potential event that might have widespread impact on the ability of individuals to attend or remain on site.

- 3.2 This policy is not intended to deal with sickness absence or unforeseen issues with childcare arrangements, which fall within the scope of HR13 Annual and Special Leave and Absence Reporting Policy, HR15 Time Off for Dependents Policy and HR18 Staff Sickness Absence Policy.

#### **4 Travelling to Site - Staff**

- 4.1 Staff should make all reasonable efforts to report for work at their normal time. This may include leaving extra time for the journey and/or taking an alternative route. Alternative forms of transport should be considered, where appropriate and safe.
- 4.2 Staff who are unable to attend work on time or at all should report their absence in line with normal absence reporting procedures.
- 4.3 Staff who are unable to attend work should check the situation throughout the day in case it changes. Information may be available from the Trust website, local radio stations, the police, transport providers or the internet. If the situation changes sufficiently, staff should report this to their Line Manager/relevant manager and attend work unless told otherwise.
- 4.4 Staff who do not make reasonable efforts to attend work, or who fail to follow absence reporting procedures without good reason, may be subject to disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The Trust will consider all the circumstances, including the distance they have to travel, local conditions in their area, the status of roads and/or public transport, and the efforts made by other staff in similar circumstances.

#### **5 Travelling to Site – Pupils**

- 5.1 If a site is fully or partially closed this will be communicated via the website/Academy communication systems as early as possible.
- 5.2 If a site needs to close early the Trust's emergency closure procedure will be followed.
- 5.3 Where normal public or private transport arrangements are not possible and a pupil cannot travel via another means their absence should be reported and recorded in line with Academy guidance.

#### **6 Alternative Working/Learning Arrangements**

- 6.1 Staff may be required to work from home, where possible, or from an alternative place of work, if available. Line Managers or the Human Resources Team will advise them of any such requirement. In these instances, staff will receive their normal pay.

- 6.2 Staff who are able to work may sometimes be expected to carry out additional or varied duties during such periods. However, staff should not be required to do anything they cannot do competently or safely.
- 6.3 Remote learning for pupils, where a site is partially or fully closed, will be considered / implemented as required.

## **7 Late Starts and Early Finishes**

- 7.1 Staff who arrive at work late or who ask to leave early may be expected to make up any lost time. Managers have the discretion to waive this requirement in minor cases or, in the case of lateness, where they are satisfied the staff has made a genuine attempt to arrive on time.
- 7.2 Managers have the discretion to allow staff to leave early and should have regard to the needs of the business and the staff member's personal circumstances.
- 7.3 Where half the normal working day or more is lost, this will be treated as absence and dealt with as set out below (see Section 8).
- 7.4 For pupils, the Headteacher or designated member of staff will make the decision in line with Trust and national guidance as to how the attendance of those pupils arriving late or leaving early will be recorded. A decision to allow groups/all pupils to arrive late/leave early will be made by the Headteacher, or a Deputy Headteacher in their absence.

## **8 Absence and Pay - Staff**

- 8.1 Staff who are absent from work due to extreme weather (where the site remains open) or other travel disruptions, are not generally entitled to be paid for the time lost. However, as a gesture of goodwill, the Trust will treat up to three days of absence caused by disruption in any annual leave year as special paid leave. Staff will only be eligible where their line manager or the Head of Human Resources is satisfied that they have made all reasonable efforts and could not reasonably be expected to attend work or work from home.
- 8.2 Absence in all other cases can be treated in a variety of ways. Staff should discuss their preference with their line manager, who retains overall discretion in the matter. A number of options are set out below:
- treating the absence as annual leave if the member of staff has annual leave entitlement remaining for the current leave year;
  - treating the absence as time off in lieu;

- making up the lost hours within a reasonable time; or
- treating the absence as special unpaid leave.

8.3 If, in exceptional circumstances, the Trust decides to close the workplace, staff will be paid as if they had worked their normal hours.

## **9 School Closures and Other Childcare Issues - Staff**

9.1 Where adverse weather or a significant incident leads to a school or nursery closures or the unavailability of their childcare provider resulting in childcare arrangements being disrupted, staff may have a statutory right to reasonable time off without pay. For further information, see HR15 Time Off for Dependents Policy.

## **10 Trust/Site Closure**

10.1 The Trusts default position is that we will remain open, however, if there is a decision to close this will be decided by the Headteacher in consultation with The Director of Trust Services and/or the Chief Executive Officer. Where this is the case, relevant Trust and local/national guidance and policy will be followed.

## **11 Policy Change**

11.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.

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# **The Priory Federation of Academies Trust**

## **Adverse Weather and Travel Disruption Policy**

This Policy has been approved by the Priory Federation of Academies Trust's Pay, Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.