

Sonas

**Special Junior Primary School
Carrigaline Education Campus
Ardnacloghy
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Roll No. 201620

Policy on Procedures to follow in the case of Severe Weather

Introduction

In the event of a severe weather warning, school management will assess the potential impact of such weather taking into account past experiences and advice on the current event from the principal response agencies in the area, including An Garda Síochána, the fire brigade, local authorities and other appropriate services. The local forecasts from Met Eireann will also be carefully considered.

Status Red Weather Warnings

All weather warnings of Status Red will require some action on behalf of the school:

1. A Status Red weather warning for **heavy rain** may be particularly relevant if the local area is prone to flooding.
2. A Status Red warning related to **ice or snow** which may compact may cause local issues due to the location of the school and/or the routes taken to reach the school.
3. When there is a Status Red weather warning where **strong winds or storm conditions** are forecast the school will carefully assess the potential consequences of such, given the high degree of unpredictability as to the impact of a Status Red Wind Warning. A Status Red weather warning for wind related conditions may be given by Met Eireann in advance of a school opening or it may arise during the school day. The DES, in consultation with the Office of Emergency Planning and the management bodies for schools, advise that schools should consider not opening where a Status Red weather warning related to wind in the immediate locality is forecast to coincide with the period/s during which students and staff would be expected to be travelling to and from school.

Communications

The relevant contact/information details pertaining to the local principal response agencies are as follows:

An Garda Síochána, Carrigaline: 021 4919370

Cork City Fire Brigade: 021 4966333

Cork County Council: 021 4800048 / www.corkcoco.ie

Met Eireann: www.met.ie

These details will be checked regularly in the event of a weather warning by the Principal.

The Principal will also establish communications with neighbouring schools to ensure, as far as practicable, a unified local response to severe weather events may be implemented.

However, unlike most other schools in the area, the pupils and staff in Sonas come from a wide catchment area. Therefore, while the schools in the locality may try to co-ordinate their decisions, the circumstances may vary between individual schools and may on occasion lead to different decisions being taken by the different schools in Carrigaline.

The school may take the decision open later in the day where an improvement is forecast – such a decision will be taken in consultation with the appropriate agencies based in the local area.

The text messaging service, schooltext.ie, will be used to communicate with parents, staff, escorts and taxi-drivers.

Procedure to follow where a Warning of Status Red arises during the school day

Where the Status Red weather warning related to wind is issued when the school is already underway with students and staff present, the school management should immediately contact An Garda Síochána, the school transport services and other appropriate agencies for advice on whether it may be safe to undertake journeys from the school or when such journeys should commence. Consideration should also be taken as to the safety of parents undertaking journeys to the school to collect children.

Where a decision may have to be taken on health and safety grounds based on the advice available to the school for students and staff to remain on the school premises during a Status Red warning related to wind, then schools should plan for such an eventuality by considering how students and staff can be accommodated within the school while awaiting an improvement in the weather. Such decisions should be taken based on the health and safety of all concerned taking account of the prevailing and forecast weather conditions in the vicinity of the school.

Parents, escorts and taxi-drivers will be contacted by text, as above, in such cases.

Policy reviewed on 29th January 2020