

## St Nathy's College



## Procedures to be followed in the event of a **Status Red** Weather Warning

### School Ethos

St Nathy's College is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Achonry and the Bishop of Achonry is our patron. St Nathy's is a voluntary secondary school and is Catholic in character, inclusive in its intake, and comprehensive in its curriculum. The ethos of St Nathy's College reflects the legacy of three schools which came together in amalgamation in 1995: St Joseph's Secondary School (Sisters of Mercy), Ballaghaderreen Vocational School and St Nathy's College. As a community of faith, friendship and learning, St Nathy's reflects the best of human values profoundly rooted in the values of the Gospel. We are especially mindful of the disadvantaged and those with special needs.

### Creating the Procedures

The **Status Red Weather Warning** Procedures were created in accordance with St Nathy's Vision Statement and in accordance with DES Circular 0016/2014; JMB Bulletin 16/2015-16; and the *Be Winter-Ready* booklet issued by the Office of Emergency Planning.

*St. Nathy's College was established to act as a Centre of Learning. We strive to achieve this within a fostered Christian environment which equally provides for the faith and personal development of each student.*

*All of our school endeavours and activities are directed towards these objectives.*

Further information on **Status Red Weather Warnings** available from:

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

[www.emergencyplanning.ie](http://www.emergencyplanning.ie)

[www.winterready.ie](http://www.winterready.ie)

[www.met.ie](http://www.met.ie)

[www.buseireann.ie/StatusRed](http://www.buseireann.ie/StatusRed)

## WEATHER WARNINGS FROM MET ÉIREANN

St Nathy's College will monitor weather forecasts in order to be prepared for any severe weather which may affect the school. During periods of severe weather management will assess the situation. St Nathy's College will be prepared, keep Parents/Guardians, Students and Staff Members informed and remain vigilant.

In recent years Met Éireann has introduced colour coded weather warnings as follows:

- Status Yellow – be aware
- Status Orange – be prepared
- Status Red** – take action

St Nathy's College will respond appropriately to such warnings using the above guidance and the link <http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/National-Emergencies-Public-Health-Issues/Schools-and-Severe-Weather.pdf>

### **BE PREPARED, BE INFORMED, BE VIGILANT.**

St Nathy's College will conduct a pre-event evaluation of what should be, or could be, in place to ensure the opening of the school in the event of severe weather. Areas for consideration are maintenance of school premises and utilities, salting and gritting and transport to and from school. Access in the school to a battery-operated radio and flashlights is in place.

Members of the Teaching and Ancillary Staff should refer to these procedures in order to ensure that every member of staff is clear as to their role and responsibilities during severe weather, including in the event of a school closure. A member of senior management will monitor weather conditions and will contact the principal response agencies and school transport services where required.

Parents/Guardians should ensure that they are familiar with these emergency procedures and have their own arrangements in place in the event of a school closure or school transport disruption due to severe weather.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The school has the relevant contact details of the principal response agencies for our area.

An Garda Síochána  
Fire Brigade  
Ambulance Service  
Local Authority Office  
Local Authority (Roads)

St Nathy's College also has contact details for the transport services serving the school. These details are checked regularly and kept up-to-date.

The College uses a text messaging service to communicate with parents/guardians and staff, all of whom should ensure the school has their up-to-date details. The College also uses local radio and the school's website ([www.stnathys.com](http://www.stnathys.com)) to alert parents and students to school conditions and closure should this arise.

Shannonside FM  
Mid-West Radio  
Ocean FM

## PROCEDURES FOR CLOSING THE SCHOOL DUE TO A STATUS RED WEATHER WARNING

The decision to close a school rests with the school management authority taking into consideration the full guidance and direction available from the principal response agencies, especially An Garda Síochána. Any decision to close is taken in the interest of child safety, having assessed the local risks and having consulted, as appropriate, with school transport operators.

### 1. Severe Weather Checklist

Some of the issues that St Nathy's College will take into account include:

- conditions in the school itself and how they are affected by snow/ice and/or high winds and/or flooding and/or the operation of lighting and heating.
- the capacity of the school to ensure the health and safety of students whilst in school.
- the ability of parents/guardians, students, staff and school transport services to safely negotiate local road conditions to reach the school.
- guidance and direction from the principal response agencies .
- Guidance on time lost due to unforeseen closures as a result of severe weather is set out in Circular 0016/2014 which is available on the Department of Education and Skill's website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- The teaching staff of St Nathy's College undertake to ensure that tuition time lost due to severe weather conditions will be made up for to the best of their ability such that the school's curriculum is fully delivered.

## **2. School Closure for ONE DAY:**

In the event that the College has to close for a day due to severe weather conditions, when the school re-opens:

- tuition will be prioritised over non-tuition activities.
- where possible the length of mock/house examinations will be reduced.
- consideration will be given as to whether learning in the classroom should be prioritised over school tours, etc.
- Examination classes will attend all classes to the end of May.

## **3. School Closure for TWO OR MORE DAYS:**

In the event that the College has to remain closed for a number of days due to severe weather conditions and to make up for tuition time lost:

- the school will remain open on the occasion of a planned-for school closure (e.g. Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April)
- and/or the next mid-term break on the school calendar will be reduced by up to three days.

## **4. Status Red Weather Warning the EVENING BEFORE:**

In the event that a **Status Red Weather Warning** has been issued on the evening before and the Bus Éireann School Transport Office has advised that the bus services will not be operational the following day:

- School Management will invoke these procedures and inform parents/guardians, students and staff members via the group messaging service, local media and the College website ([www.stnathys.com](http://www.stnathys.com)) that the school will remain closed. This communication will also indicate when the school will re-open, all things being equal.

## **5. Status Red Weather Warning EARLY MORNING:**

In the event that a **Status Red Weather Warning** has been issued by 06:00 and the Bus Éireann School Transport Office has advised that the bus services will not be operational that day:

- School Management will invoke these procedures and inform parents/guardians, students and staff members via the group messaging service, local media and the College website ([www.stnathys.com](http://www.stnathys.com)) that the school will remain closed. This communication will also indicate when the school will re-open, all things being equal.

## **6. Status Red Weather Warning WHEN CLASS IS UNDERWAY:**

In the event that a **Status Red Weather Warning** is issued when class is already underway, with students and staff present:

- the school will hold students in the school while awaiting an improvement in the weather.

### **6.1. Status Red Weather Warning DOWNGRADED BEFORE NOON:**

In the event that a **Status Red Weather Warning** in place in the morning is downgraded at or before noon, bus services should operate as normal at school closing time.

### **6.2. Status Red Weather Warning DOWNGRADED IN THE AFTERNOON:**

If the **Status Red Weather Warning** is not downgraded until the afternoon or later in the evening and the school bus service is not operational, the school will endeavour, where possible, with the assistance of Emergency Services, if necessary, to assist in having children brought home safely.

Approved by the Board of Management on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Date of Review: One year hence.