

Inclement & Extreme Weather Procedure

Introduction

Our Lady of Good Counsel School cares for the physical welfare of all school community members including students, parents, staff members & visitors. In times of inclement or extreme weather such as heat, cold, wind storms and/or extreme rain events, consideration will be given to the protection of all community members and the maintenance of a productive learning environment.

Purpose

From time to time inclement or extreme weather may pose a threat to the physical well-being of members of the school community and interfere with learning programs. This Inclement & Extreme Weather procedure and the supporting Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) provides guidelines to be followed in the event of these conditions.

Scope

This procedure applies to all of the school's campuses where inclement or extreme weather are forecast.

Responsibilities

Members of Our Lady of Good Counsel School's Principal & Leadership Team are responsible for the well-being of all within the school community. The Leadership Team are responsible for the overall implementation of this Procedure.

All staff members are responsible for the well-being of students & visitors under their care. They are responsible for following all reasonable instructions provided by the Leadership Team in the event of an inclement or extreme weather event.

Contractors are responsible for ensuring the safety & well-being of all workers under their direction. They are also responsible for following all reasonable instructions provided by the Leadership Team in the event of an inclement or extreme weather event.

Inclement & Extreme Weather Guidelines

Inclement weather is defined as 'abnormal conditions', whether they be of hail, snow, cold, storm, wind or high temperatures that may affect normal activities of the school.

Extreme weather is defined as weather events that are at the extremes of historical distribution (the range that has been seen in the past). Extreme weather events occur only at 5% or less of the time.

In the event of *inclement weather* conditions occurring whilst the students are at school the school's Leadership Team will:

- » Make an announcement via the Public Announcement (PA) System advising teaching staff & students that the Inclement & Extreme Weather Procedure is to be implemented until further advised;
- » Staff members & students are to remain inside until further notice;
- » Academic classes will run as normal with staff members varying learning activities accordingly;
- » Physical education classes will be conducted indoors where possible or postponed;
- » During break periods, staff members will be assigned supervisory duties & students are to participate in 'passive' play activities.

Where *extreme weather* conditions have been forecast the Leadership Team may consider closing the school for the period of the event. In this instance, where possible, the Leadership Team will ensure that the following occurs:

- » Up to 3-days notice is provided to all within the school community of a planned closure; parents and carers should, however, expect that in some instances fewer than 3-days notice may be provided.
- » The decision to pre-emptively close the school will be made in consultation with the Department of Education based on warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Excursions, Camps, Sporting Events& Off-site activities

Where an off-site activity has been planned and there is a forecast of *inclement weather* the Leadership Team in consultation with attending staff will make a decision as to whether the activity will proceed.

Where sporting or other events are planned & members of the school community may be exposed to prolonged temperatures of 30° or greater the event may be postponed. A decision will be made by the Leadership Team 24 hours prior to the event and all members of the school community will be informed.

In the event that weather conditions deteriorate whilst staff & students are participating in an off-site activity, the attending staff members in consultation with members of the Leadership Team will decide if the activity is to proceed. If the safety of students, staff, parents or others in attendance is placed at risk an immediate decision will be made to terminate the activity & return to school.

Where an *extreme weather* event is forecast the Leadership Team will postpone all Excursions, Camps, Sporting Events & Off-site activities until it is safe to proceed. All members of the school community affected by postponing the event will be informed of this occurrence up to three days prior to the event or by notification via the school website.

Extreme Heat

If weather temperatures are forecast to be over 36° the school's Leadership Team will:

- » Make an announcement via the PA system advising teaching staff & students that the *Inclement & Extreme Weather Procedure* is to be implemented until further advised;
- » Students & staff are to remain inside until further notice;
- » Students are encouraged to regularly drink water and water bottles are to be kept at student desks;
- » Academic classes will run as normal with teachers varying learning activities accordingly;
- » If academic classes cannot be held in air-conditioned environments, then they should be relocated to an area where air-conditioning is available or the activities are to be altered accordingly;
- » Physical education classes will be conducted indoors;
- » During break periods staff will be assigned supervisory duties& students are to participate in 'passive' play activities;
- » School sports activities that involve participation for prolonged periods outdoors such as sporting & swimming carnivals, picnics & outdoors excursions will be postponed;
- » A decision to postpone these events will be made by the Leadership Team in consultation with relevant teaching staff 24 hours prior to the event;
- » Where Physical Education & other outdoor classes are to be held outdoors during Terms 1 & 4 the following safety practices must be implemented;
 - Students are to wear hats at all times.
 - Access to shade should be considered at all times.

- Students will be encouraged to regularly drink water.
- Staff members will role model Sunsmart behaviours.

Extreme Cold

In the unlikely event that temperatures of 5° or below are expected for a prolonged period the school will:

- » Announce that the school's *Inclement & Extreme Weather Procedure* is to be implemented until further advised;
- » Students & staff are to remain inside until further notice;
- » Academic classes will run as normal;
- » Physical education classes will be conducted indoors where possible or postponed;
- » During break periods staff will be assigned supervisory duties & students are to participate in 'passive' play activities;
- » Students will be encouraged to wear winter uniform during Terms 2 & 3. Students will also be encouraged to wear coats, beanies, gloves & scarves, of a school colour, to and from school and whilst in the yard;
- » Students who attend school without a jumper on days anticipated to be of extreme cold will be provided a jumper from lost property. Their parents will be notified to inform them of this occurrence & they will be reminded of the school's uniform policy;
- » Parents of students who present for school with cold or flu symptoms will be notified and they will be encouraged to seek medical advice before returning their child to school.

Major Reference: SWMS Inclement & Extreme Weather

This procedure has been developed in accordance with a Risk Assessment completed by staff members at Our Lady of Good Counsel School's for Inclement & Extreme Weather. Consideration must be given to reviewing this procedure in accordance with control measures identified in this Risk Assessment.

Other relevant references include Our Lady of Good Counsel School's Wet Day / Inclement & Extreme Weather Timetable & the school's Uniform Policy.