

C1 Adverse Weather and Disruptive Conditions Policy

1 Policy

- 1.1 The London Borough of Barnet Council recognises the requirement to safely maintain services during adverse weather and other disruptive conditions, which include public transport strikes, petrol shortages, major disasters such as fires, gas leaks, bomb alerts or other acts of terrorism, whilst properly discharging the duty of care to employees.
- 1.2 All employees are expected to make a genuine effort to report for work at the recognised start time, which may entail having to make special arrangements, where it is safe to do so.
- 1.3 The above forms the Council's policy as at March 2011, it should be noted that: -
 - the policy does not confer any contractual rights
 - the Council will retain the right to review the policy at any time. Changes may result from employee, management and trade union feedback and/or from changes in employment legislation. The Council, following consultation with recognised Trade Unions, will implement revisions and updates.
 - The policy will cease on the 1 April 2013.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Council employees, including Head Teachers, Teachers, Chief Officers and the Chief Executive.
- 2.2 The policy is recommended for implementation for staff directly employed by schools, for example those based in Academies.

3 Principles

- 3.1 Employees are required to contact their line manager, or nominated alternative, as a matter of urgency if they are unable to attend work, or where they know they will be late.
- 3.2 Employees are not automatically entitled to pay if they are unable to attend work.
- 3.3 There is no automatic entitlement to work from home.
- 3.4 Only in very exceptional circumstances will the Council issue a direct instruction to employees in respect of closing buildings and / or reducing service provision due to extreme weather or other emergency conditions. In these circumstances full instruction will be provided as to how lost time should be accounted for.
- 3.5 In all other circumstances employees will be expected to present themselves for work appropriately. Services may need to co-ordinate mutual displacement of employees to support their business continuity arrangements, for example less time critical work may be suspended to support higher time-critical work and joint arrangements for sharing employees. This may mean with line management guidance working differently and / or from an alternative work base.
- 3.6 In accordance with the Council's employment contract in the event of a civil emergency declared by the Government, the Council reserves the right to temporarily alter or change job roles, hours, location and/or reporting line within the employee's skill set and competencies. This may mean that employees will be required to work in a non-London Borough of Barnet location and/or with a partner organisation, which may or may not be a public sector organisation. The employee's employment remains with the London Borough of Barnet. Failure of an employee to cooperate could mean the need to take annual leave or unpaid leave and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

4 Employee Responsibilities

- 4.1 Employees have a duty to report to work at their normal workplace if it is safe to do so.
- 4.2 In the event of unforeseen circumstances employees will take all reasonable steps to report their inability to attend as soon as is practically possible to their line manager or nominated alternative.

- 4.3 Where normal travel arrangements are disrupted employees should make reasonable efforts to attend work in the bounds of safety. Each employee has a responsibility to make their own judgement about the particular circumstances and whether it safe for them to travel from home.
- 4.4 Where an employee is unable to attend their normal place of work they are expected to take the following course of action:
- Endeavour to reach another suitable Barnet Council workplace and report for work there, or
 - With the prior agreement of their manager and where the employee's work is of a suitable nature they may be permitted to work from home.
- 4.5 Where neither of the above courses of action is possible employees will take time off as either flexi or annual leave, request unpaid leave or agree to making up the lost hours.
- 4.6 Where employees with carer responsibilities could attend work themselves but are unable to do so when adverse weather or other disruptive conditions affect their child care or other carer arrangements this will be classed as unpaid dependants leave, take flexi leave, annual leave or agree to making up the lost hours.
- 4.7 Employees will not unreasonably refuse to comply with temporary redeployment to an alternative base or to undertake other duties.
- 4.8 Failure to make an adequate attempt to report for work or failure to telephone without good reason will be dealt with as breach of conduct.

5 Line Managers Responsibilities

- 5.1 In the event of unforeseen circumstances line managers will ensure that adequate and appropriate communications and reporting mechanisms are in place to enable employees to discharge their responsibilities.
- 5.2 Line managers will, in liaison with their colleagues and the agreements of their Chief Officer or Head Teacher, consider redeploying employees to enable essential services to continue.
- 5.3 Where an employee is not able to attend for duty a range of options may be considered and discussed with the employee, which might include:
- Temporary redeployment to an alternative work place
 - Use of annual leave

- Use of lieu time where extra hours have already been worked or by agreement in respect of how and when these hours will be worked back
- Use of flexi time, where the employee is in credit
- Working from home, including the monitoring of output delivered
- Remote working where suitable technology is in place
- Use of unpaid leave

Managers should be flexible in agreeing an appropriate option with individual employees.

- 5.4 Where a line manager decides that an employee has presented him or her self for duty at their normal base after their usual starting time but due solely to adverse weather conditions, payment will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 5.5 Where a disruptive situation arises during an employee's period of duty, line managers will exercise their discretion to enable staff to leave their place of work early or be redeployed to an alternative base in order to maintain service delivery and a safe system of work.

6 School Based Employees

- 6.1 Each school will need to make site specific plans dependent on its particular circumstances. Where a school closes to both the children and the staff as a result of bad weather or other disruptive condition, employees may not be expected to attend school during the closure period.
- 6.2 However if an employee operates in a role where they are able to carry out all or some of their work at home they would normally be expected to do so during this period.
- 6.3 All employees will receive normal pay during the closure.
- 6.4 Individual schools have flexibility and may choose to vary this advice.

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