



UTC South Durham Closure Policy



Date of adoption	June 2022
Approved by	Governing Body
Signed: (Principal) 	Date: 10 June 22
Signed: (Chair of Governors) 	Date: 10 June 22

Date to be reviewed by	June 2025
Review History	Reviewed – Jean Bell Oct 19 Reviewed – Jean Bell Nov 21 Reviewed – Catherine Purvis-Mawson, April 2022
Responsibility	Business Manager

1. Introduction

It may be necessary to close the UTC for a variety of reasons including:

- Severe weather including snow, flooding or storms
- Disruption to transport, for example through petrol or diesel shortages
- Accommodation and utility problems, for example loss of power supply, heating failures or fire damage. External factors outside of UTC control e.g. instruction from public authorities and police.

The UTC will, however, endeavour to remain open where possible.

2. Guiding principles

The aims of this Policy are to:

- Provide a learning environment that is safe during adverse conditions and to take appropriate actions when it is not
- Ensure that the decision to close UTC South Durham is understood by and communicated to students, staff, parents/carers and Governors
- Keep to a minimum the amount of time the UTC is closed during adverse conditions.

3. Closure before the start of the UTC day

The decision to close the UTC will normally rest with the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal. The decision should be made where possible before 6.15 am and on the basis of information received from:

- The Media about the weather, condition of the roads and paths and public transport;
- The local bus provider;
- On the spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such observations;
- Through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office;
- Factors involved in reaching the decision to close the UTC are likely to be:
 - Access to the UTC, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc.);
 - Breakdown of UTC essential services (heating, electrical services, water, storm damage etc.);
 - Specific advice received from the Local Authority, Police etc.;

The Principal will advise staff through the emergency communication tree or other communication media (such as WhatsApp at time of writing).

Parents/carers will be advised via e-mail and, Parents/carers and students are asked to check the UTC website homepage on www.utcsouthdurham.org where further information specific to the UTC will be made available. Announcement may also be made via other social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook as appropriate. They can also listen to the local radio stations, or monitor the Local Authority's webpage www.durham.gov.uk which publishes details of closures.

4. Staff Attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for some staff to get to and from work, the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work unless advised to the contrary by the Principal. Those staff with a UTC laptop are able to access their home drives and will be asked to adhere to the remote learning guidance. Other staff can use the time to complete planning or directed tasks. In alignment with the remote learning guidance for students, staff will be asked to facilitate online remote learning in accordance to the guidance ensuring that learning can still take place off site. Staff will follow their usual timetable of teaching.

5. Exams

Any students who are unable to attend an exam session due to adverse weather conditions must contact the UTC at the earliest opportunity to inform them of the absence. (see also the UTC's Exam Policy regarding the consequences for students) Where there is an external exam which cannot be retaken the Exams Officer will inform the exam board and apply for special consideration which is up to the discretion of the exam board.

6. Closure during the UTC school day

The decision to close the UTC will normally rest with the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal. The decision shall be made on the basis of information received from:

- The Media about the weather, condition of the roads and paths and public transport;
- The local bus provider;
- On the spot observation, either personally or from staff members better placed to make such observations;
- Through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office;
- Information received from external authorities such as the LA or police
- Factors involved in reaching the decision to close the UTC are likely to be:
 - Access to the UTC, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc.);
 - Breakdown of UTC essential services (heating, electrical services, water, storm damage etc.);
 - Specific advice received from the Local Authority, Police etc.;

The Principal will advise staff on-site and recall staff who are off-site and initiate the closure procedure see appendix 1.

Parents/carers will be advised via e-mail or electronic text if this is available, with responses being monitored.

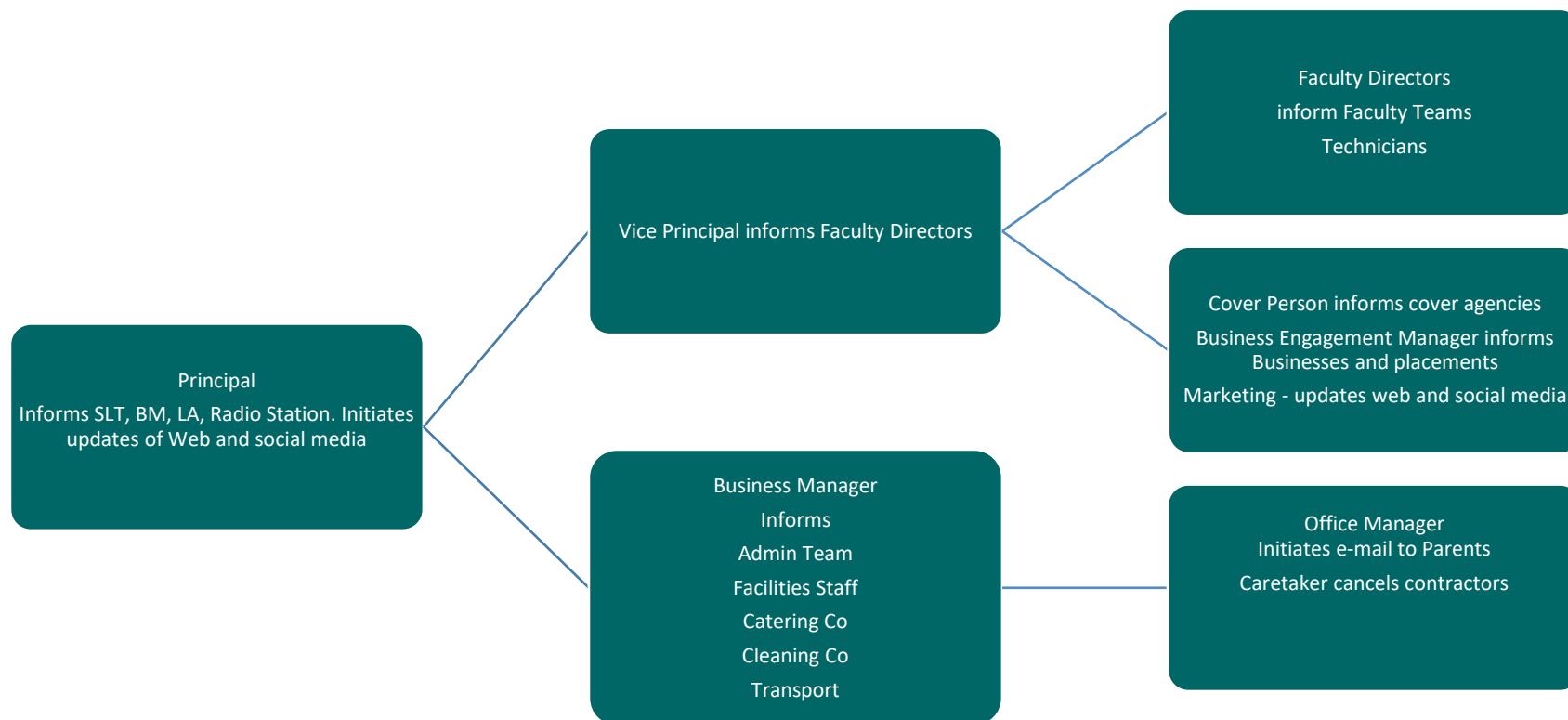
Parents/carers and students are asked to check the UTC website homepage on www.utcsouthdurham.org where further information specific to the UTC will be made available. Announcement may also be made via other social media platforms (such as Twitter and Facebook) as appropriate. They can also listen to the local radio stations, or monitor the Local Authority's webpage www.durham.gov.uk which publishes details of closures.

7. In the Event of UTC South Durham being closed

If the UTC is closed it is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the following events happen:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors
- The UTC Website is updated
- The communication tree is activated
- The information is passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible

Appendix 1 – Closure Procedure



Appendix 2 – School Day Closure

