

Severe Weather Policy

January 2025



Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of staff, pupils, parents and visitors whilst entering, leaving and moving around the school site during severe weather conditions.

Policy

During severe weather periods the Site Manager or nominee is responsible for monitoring the current weather conditions and obtaining a 12/24 hour weather forecasts from the Met Office via the BBC website or local radio station. Severe weather warnings are also provided to schools by Cheshire West and Chester Council. The forecast must be reviewed with the Head Teacher to determine if any follow up actions are required to ensure the safety of people moving around the school site.

When determining any follow up actions consideration should be given to preventative actions to prepare for the following school day. If gritting is required the Gritting Plan will be used to identify authorised routes around the school site. School employs S A Ward to provide a gritting service to school as and when required.

Gritting Plan

In the event of icy weather conditions it is not practical to grit the entire school site therefore selected authorised footpaths will be gritted and alternative access points will be introduced. The Gritting Plan indicates the authorised footpaths which will be gritted. The junior playground gates will remain locked and the junior building will have just one entry point which is under the Red canopy. The plan will be displayed on various noticeboards adjacent to the school entrances and included on the school web site. Gritting will not be done on the pavements outside school or the church paths.

Procedure

Prior to the start of Winter Term the Site Manager will review stocks of rock salt and order supplies as necessary, the Site Manager will ensure the grit spreading equipment is fully functional and sufficient severe weather equipment available.

Upon arrival at school at 6:00am the Site Manager will survey the main footpaths around the site and complete the necessary gritting. If the Site Manager suspects the conditions are serious and there is a possibility it may be unsafe to open the school the Head Teacher shall

be contacted immediately and informed of the conditions.

If the decision is made not to open school, staff and parents will be notified immediately by text message.

At various times during the school day the Site Manager and caretaker will monitor the current weather conditions and obtain the 12/24 hour forecast from the Met Office. The Site Manager will review the current status and forecast with the Head Teacher to determine if any follow up actions are required and what those actions should be. Following these reviews it may be found necessary to grit at other times during the day or prior to children leaving school. During these reviews the Head Teacher will assess the conditions and make a decision as to whether children are to be allowed to play outside and which areas they are allowed to play.

The Head Teacher will also use these reviews to monitor the safety risk of keeping the school open; in extreme conditions it may be deemed safer to close the school early rather than risk injury if conditions are forecast to get worse. If school does close early parents will be notified by email and Arbor app message, including a reference to the Gritting Plan which is on the school website. The chair of Governors will also be advised.

At approximately 2:00pm each day the Site Manager will get the latest 24 hour weather forecast and meet with the Head Teacher to determine if any actions are required to address the immediate situation or if any preventative measures are required as preparation for the following morning.

If there is a snowfall which requires clearing the Site Manager is responsible for discussing this with the Head Teacher and requesting assistance, if required.