



ADVERSE WEATHER

SNOW AND ICE

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Guidance

Children's Services Department

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CLOSURE OF EGGINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL DUE TO SNOW

Every year many schools are faced with the difficult decision of whether to close during periods of snowfall. The decisions are often accompanied by adverse publicity or complaint. Equally other establishments due to the nature of their operation must remain open. The following guidance aims to address both situations.

Whilst it goes without saying that every effort should be made to keep schools open during periods of snowfall, the following advice indicates the health and safety issues we will need to consider if there is significant snowfall.

1. Will sufficient staff be able to reach the school to ensure pupils can be adequately and safely supervised? This will depend on such factors as location of the school and where staff live in relation to it. Availability of public transport, state of roads to/from sites.
2. Can access routes to and from the school's gate(s) to entrances be maintained e.g) do we have sufficient staff to clear routes and grit them as necessary?

If the answer to either of the above is no, then the school will not be opened as the safety of pupils and staff cannot be guaranteed

Whilst safety on the public highways is not the responsibility of the school, this may well play a part in the decision on whether to open. It is certainly likely to play a part in any decision on whether to close early if snow should start to fall heavily, especially when coupled with up-to-date weather reports. As travel on the public highway is discouraged unless essential during periods of heavy snowfall, schools whose pupils predominantly must travel a significant distance to attend the school may choose not to open or to close early during such weather. This is unlikely to be as much of an issue for schools whose pupils and staff predominantly live within walking distance.

Other options which we may wish to consider may include delaying opening until a later time than normal when routes may have been cleared/gritted.

General Winter Precautions for Schools When Not Closing or Who Cannot Close.

There is a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure safe access and egress routes to, from and around the premises for staff, pupils and visitors. The following precautions will help us to meet this duty:

1. We have a suitable supply of grit/salt on the premises to deal with the areas we need to grit during icy/snowy weather.
2. We have a plan and suitable risk assessment detailing which areas are to be cleared/gritted based on the risk of people slipping/falling. This pays particular attention to areas at most

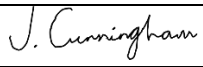

risk. At least one designated access/ egress route is gritted (and re-gritted throughout the day as necessary). The timing of the gritting is considered as gritting takes place before people arrive and in time for it to work but not re freeze. Where temperatures remain at or below freezing throughout the day, those routes which have been gritted will be checked periodically and especially before times of regular usage and re-gritted as necessary.

3. All users of the school (including members of the public and visitors) are made aware of which the designated gritted/cleared routes are. For regular visitors e.g. parents, this is via Parentmail, Class Dojo and newsletters. We also take measures to prevent anyone using non-gritted routes by using signs or barriers and/or by locking gates to those routes.
4. We have people designated to carry out the gritting/clearing and that they have appropriate equipment; personal protective equipment, boots, gloves, coats etc, training and sufficient time to carry this out. They are fully familiar with all the risk assessments relevant to this work and be given suitable instruction on how to carry out the work, including use of equipment.
5. Car parking areas may only require the access routes (not individual bays) gritted.
6. Access to other areas which have not been gritted/cleared are restricted (it is not sensible to grit playgrounds and so in icy conditions access to playgrounds may be restricted).
7. It may be appropriate to let pupils out to play in playgrounds covered in fresh snow if it is not icy underneath and pupils have on appropriate footwear and over clothing and are suitably supervised.
8. Staff are advised to wear appropriate footwear during icy/snowy conditions.

Staff routinely required to work outside during periods of adverse weather wear appropriate personal protective equipment to keep them dry and warm. They also have suitable footwear to minimise the risk of slipping in snowy/icy conditions.

Further Support

If we are in any doubt about any issue relating to adverse weather, we will contact Corporate Services & Transformation, Advisory & Specialist Services.

Headteacher:	 J. Cunningham	Date:	November 2024
Chair of Governing Body:	 A. Farrow	Date:	November 2025