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Occupational Health & Safety



Adverse Weather Policy

Hillside Primary and Nursery School

September 2026

Overview

During severe weather conditions, you should keep your setting open and let as many children, pupils or students attend as possible, where safe to do so. Severe weather conditions include:

- extreme heat
- flooding
- storms
- snow

However, it might be necessary to close temporarily due to inaccessibility or risk of injury. You should do all you can to reopen as soon as possible. (HSE Guidance - Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings Updated 10 May 2023)

Use the Met Office's severe weather warning system to check for severe weather conditions in your area.

Extreme Heat

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations require employers to provide a reasonable indoor temperature in the workplace.
This depends on the work activity and the environmental conditions. (HSE Temperature: What the law says (hse.gov.uk)

There is no maximum temperature for workplaces. The school has a duty of care to ensure that the environment for staff and pupil/students is as comfortable as reasonably practicable.

School should ensure that there is adequate ventilation in classrooms and other populated areas such as staffrooms, halls during assemblies/performances.

School should investigate ways to circulate the air: -

- Provide fans, such as desk, pedestal or ceiling-mounted ones
- Provide air-cooling or air-conditioning
- Ensure windows can be opened to keep air circulating
- Shade staff and pupils/students from direct sunlight with blinds or by using reflective film on windows

If equipment is used for ventilation, this should be risk assessed and equipment should be placed in the room safely, away from pupils/students, with all cables tidy and not in walkways/escape routes.

Staff and pupils/students should be encouraged to drink water regularly (water is better than caffeine or carbonated drinks).

Specific risk assessments should be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils/students with health conditions that may be exacerbated by hot weather conditions. For example, asthma and Thunderstorm Asthma, pregnancy/menopause and diabetes.

School should make an assessment in advance, using the Met Office weather reports, to determine whether specific activities/events should take place. This can include PE, Sports Days and local walks.

School should ensure that an assessment is made on a daily basis for break times and lunchtimes. If staff/pupils/students will be going outside during breaks, ensure that hats are available to provide protection, and that suncream is applied, according to the UV levels. Encourage pupils/students to play/gather in shaded areas where possible and ensure that adequate supervision is in place at all times.

The school's high risk areas of heat are: Top Playground due to high quantity of glass windows and no areas of shelter.

Flooding

The school may be aware of areas on the site where flooding may occur. Precautions should be taken to limit the amount of damage that can occur. For example, positioning sand bags in areas where water will enter the building.

If flooding is a common occurrence, school should consider drainage upgrades in collaboration with their property maintenance contractor.

The school's high risk areas for flooding are:- Nursery. Year 1 and Year 2 due to the slope of the playground.

Flooding can cause a range of health problems. There may be direct effects such as physical injury, or an increased risk of developing skin or gut infections through contact with contaminated food water. Longer-term effects can include chest problems due to exposure to mould and damp. (Guidance **Flooding and health: advice for the public** Updated 13 March 2024)

School should ensure that flooded areas are cordoned off immediately and take further advice from property maintenance/contractors. An assessment will be made regarding structural safety of the area affected and remedial works needed.

It may be necessary to close affected areas of the school, or the whole school. The School should contact the Trust for guidance and ensure that the insurers are aware of the situation as soon as possible.

A cleaning programme will need to be established. Useful information can be found in the Government guidance Flooding and health: advice for the public - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Strong Winds / Gales / Storms

School should ensure that regular tree surveys are carried out, to assess the safety of trees/bushes around the school site. A programme for regular inspections should be implemented and documented.

School should regularly check wind speeds that are expected by using the Met Office website.

Where trees overhang property/equipment or areas of fields or playgrounds, school should ensure that these areas are not used during strong winds/gales/storms.

School will ensure that regular inspections of the building and grounds are carried out and any defects will be reported for remedial works. When strong winds/gales are expected, any known loose items such as tiles, roof coverings should be checked and action taken to prevent debris/loose items flying around the site.

The school's high risk areas for wind damage are: The school fields due to the number of trees.

Snow / Icy Conditions

The school has a duty to ensure that all on site external areas where pedestrians walk are maintained in a safe condition at all times. These include footpaths/walkways, emergency doorways and routes, carparks and delivery & drop off points.

The school have completed a gritting risk assessment and the findings of this assessment are to be shared with those completing the task. Assessment controls to be implemented during completion of task.

Grit/salt is stored in the bin store and the yellow grit bin between years 2 and 3 on the playground.

When to Grit

Salt can stop ice forming and cause existing ice or snow to melt. It is most effective when it is ground down, but this will take far longer on pedestrian routes than on roads.

Gritting should be carried out when frost, ice or snow is forecast or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the floor temperatures are at, or below freezing. The best times are early in evening before the frost settles and/or early in the morning before employees arrive. Salt doesn't work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the floor.

The weather will be monitored by The site manager and the head teacher. The weather will be observed visually through the day/night and monitored using local and UK based weather forecasts.

Gritting is to take place either:

- Early afternoon/evening before snow/frost settles
- Or early morning before employees arrive (salt will need time to dissolve). *This is guidance only and the daily weather reviews will identify best times for gritting.*

Due to the physical nature of the task, persons completing will be capable of lifting bags of salt/grit and using any relevant equipment. Staff are not to lift beyond their capabilities at any point and correct manual handling techniques will be adhered to at all times when handling bags of grit/salt or gritting equipment. Manual handling risk assessments are to be reviewed in lone with this procedure.

When gritting is not effective

High traffic areas or routes that cannot be gritted effectively (e.g., due to compacted snow or ice) will be clearly marked off with warning cones and when possible, made safe. (All warning cones and are to be removed as soon as the area is made safe to avoid confusion.)

On completion of the gritting procedure, any areas not gritted for this reason are to be communicated to the Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher/School Business Manager/Site Manager) and the reason why. This will then be further communicated to school staff and shared with persons such as parents and visitors to site to advise them of safe pedestrian routes to use, or to avoid the site until conditions improve.

If you grit when it is raining heavily, the salt will be washed away, causing a problem if the rain then turns to snow. Compacted snow, which turns to ice, is difficult to treat effectively with grit. Be aware that 'dawn frost' can occur on dry surfaces when early morning dews form and freezes on impact with the cold surface. It can be difficult to predict when or where this condition will occur.

Areas to be gritted minimum

St Patricks Road to main school reception.

St Patricks Road to hall entrance.

Roberts Lane to main school reception.

Roberts Lane to hall entrance.

Pedestrian crossing points in car park.

Car Park.

Secondary areas to be gritted

Main school playground gate around to Nursery, years 1,2 and 3.

Greenwood gate around to years 4,5 and 6.

Green gate by hall entrance up slope passed the hall to years 6,5 and 4.

Lighting levels of areas to be gritted

During winter months the days are shorter and there is a lack of natural light. The lighting on communal areas both internally and externally should be of a sufficient level to allow safe access and egress from the building. As highlighted in the risk assessment,

there are no areas of concern as all areas of school are sufficiently lit from 7am giving adequate time for gritting of main routes.

Pedestrian/Vehicle Contact

Gritting is to take place in shared areas when there are low numbers of vehicle movements happening at approx. 6.30 am to limit pedestrian/vehicle contact. The person completing the gritting has been provided with a high visibility jacket and this is to be worn at all times when gritting areas where contact with vehicles is possible.

Controls required internally during inclement weather

Inclement weather can create additional hazards including additional water being brought into the building on footwear. Entrances have matting in place for persons entering to remove additional water off their footwear. There are sufficient wet floor signs to alert staff, parents, visitors and children to the school.

Lone working

No one would be alone on site when gritting. The cleaning staff would be present on site when the site manager was gritting. Site Manager and cleaning staff both have radios for communication.

PPE provided

As per risk assessment, PPE to be worn when gritting:

- Warm waterproof gloves
- Hat
- Waterproof Hi Vis jacket
- Safety boots

Other controls identified in risk assessment to be in place before gritting

None identified

Responsibilities Table	
Task	**Who**
Checking weather and deciding to grit	Site Manager – Jonathan Cook and Headteacher – Rhian Richardson
Gritting walkways & traffic routes	Site Manager- Jonathan Cook
Monitoring grit levels and ordering more	Site Manager – Jonathan Cook and Office Manager- Kerry Cliffe
Completing Winter gritting/snow clearing record	Site Manager- Jonathan Cook
Communicating issues with gritting	Site Manager- Jonathan Cook to Headteacher – Rhian Richardson. Headteacher Rhian Richardson to staff, parents, carers, visitors and pupils.
Writing and review of risk assessment	Site Manager- Jonathan Cook
Review of this document	Site Manager- Jonathan Cook

Appendix 1 – Toolbox Talk

Winter slip & fall safety tips

It's near that time of season where slips and falls occur at an increasing number. Facilities planning and Management's Grounds Services Departments need to do a very good job of keeping the sidewalks and steps clear of snow and ice. However, there may be icy patches they may not have had a chance to get to before you've walked to your office, lab, etc. The links below provide some good advice on being aware of your surroundings during the winter months and ways to prevent slips and falls.

How to prevent it:

- Wear the proper foot gear.
- Take small steps to keep your centre of balance under you.
- Walk slowly and never run-on icy ground.
- Keep both hands free for balance, rather than in your pockets.
- Use handrails from start to finish.
- Avoid carrying loads on stairways; or carry loads that you can see over.
- Keep your eyes on where you are going.
- Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them.
- Step - Don't jump from vehicles and equipment.
- Keep walkways clear of debris, water, ice, and slippery materials.

When these helpful hints don't work, and you know you are going to slip, try to reduce your potential injury when falling by:

- Roll with the fall. Try to twist and roll backwards, rather than falling forward.
- Relax as much as possible when you begin to fall.
- Toss the load you are carrying. Protect yourself instead of the objects being carried.

Appendix 2 - Winter gritting/snow clearing record

Hillside Primary and Nursery School
Winter gritting/snow clearing record

Date:	Person(s) undertaking the task:			
What time did gritting/snow clearing take place?				
Describe the weather conditions? What is the outside temperature (approx.) and time of measurement?				
Which routes/paths were gritted/cleared of snow?				
Any areas of plan unable to be cleared?				
Were warning ice/snow signs displayed at entrances to the gritted/snow cleared routes/paths?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No

Insert plan or draw the grounds of the premises and indicate the routes/paths gritted/snow cleared

Signed …….. Date…….

Appendix 3 – Warning Sign



WARNING ICE! This path has recently been gritted, but the path still may be slippy in some areas. Proceed with caution!