



WCESS POLICY	SNOW AND BAD WEATHER POLICY
Governor Sub Committee	Management
Date of Last Review	November 2018
Review Frequency	Every 2 years
Online	No

Following extreme weather conditions, the school can only be closed upon the instruction of the Headteacher using the method detailed within the Health & Safety Policy for enforced closure of school.

The re-opening of the school again can only be authorised by the Headteacher using the same method.

The aim of this policy is to reduce the risk of injury to all students, staff and visitors by using preventative measures where possible and practical and to ensure that again, as far as practical, first aid is available and a system exists to call the emergency services if necessary.

Conditions under which preventative measures must be taken prior to the school re-opening or whilst the school is operational:

- At any time when the ground temperature falls to a point where water will freeze to form black ice, ice or snow and ice, creating a non-adhesive surface.
- The Business Manager will appoint a responsible person to be totally responsible for the preventative measure to achieve the aim of this policy. This person will also be responsible for ensuring that all necessary supplies and equipment is available and operational to achieve this.
- Preventative measure to be used is generally the spreading of a salt grit to pre-arranged areas in priority of use. Additional measures may be required, subject to the severity of the weather conditions.
- The areas in order of priority are indicated on the enclosed drawing.

Practical application

The responsible person will take into account the local weather forecast and will arrange for the site team, to attend site with sufficient time to carry out the salting operation to priority 1 areas before the school is operational, followed by priority 2 areas. Should any part of the operation become unsuccessful or leave a non-adhesive surface, it must be notified immediately to the Headteacher or Business Manager. See Appendix 2 for priority areas map.

Note: It may be necessary to apply preventative measures even when the school is closed, when safe access to certain areas may be required, provided access to the school can be made subject to road condition.

Please refer to Worcestershire County Council guidance (Appendix 1) on dealing with ice, snow and autumn leaves.

Whilst every effort will be made to apply this policy, the Board of Governors, Worcester CC and any associated employees or site contractors do not accept any responsibility for injury or damage, however caused, by extreme weather conditions.

**Children's Services Directorate
Schools' Accommodation Services**

Grounds Maintenance Fact Sheet

Dealing with ice, snow and autumn leaves

You will need to have a standing procedure for clearing leaves, as well as ice and snow, from paths and playgrounds. If you have not already done so, it would be sensible to incorporate this into your School Safety Policy, with a clear order of priority for the areas to be cleared and a statement about who will do it and how.

Dealing with Autumn Leaves

On a day to day basis this is normally done by the caretaking staff. The first priority must always be to clear pedestrian entrances and paths, paying special attention to steps and slopes. The aim would be just to make these areas safe and the task could be achieved by either collecting of the leaves or simply sweeping / blowing them off the priority areas. Regular attention must also be given to drain covers to prevent these blocking and causing flooding.

If your site has a large amount of leaves then it may well be a good idea to invest in a leaf bin for storage and composting of the leaves on site. Leaf bins can just be an enclosure made from wire netting and wooden posts.

The removal of the bulk of the autumn leaves is normally part of the standard ground's maintenance contract. The terms and conditions in the Standard County Grounds Contract states: -

Collect and remove to Contractor's own tip all autumn leaf fall from all areas including grass, hard surfaces, hard porous surfaces (including safety surfaces) planted areas and hedge rows as follows: -

- *Large accumulations of leaves to be collected and removed before they cause a health and safety hazard or before significant damage is caused to underlying grass/planted areas. To achieve this the Contractor will need to schedule in a number of visits to the site during the autumn months.*
- *All significant leaves fall to be removed from all areas by the end of December each year. During a mild winter the Authorised Office may extend this deadline until the end of January.*

All arisings to be removed from site to the Contractor's own tip or with the agreement of the Authorised Officer the arisings to be left to compose on site for later use on site i.e. as a mulch on planted areas. The Contractor is encouraged to work with the schools towards a scheme of composting autumn leaf fall and recycling the composted material on site.

In reality this would mean two or three good sweeps of the site during the autumn by the ground's maintenance team. The cost of this operation is included in your standard monthly payment to the Grounds Contractor.

Dealing with ice, snow and prolonged winter weather

Outlined below is some information and advice schools may find useful with the onset of the winter weather.

Clearance of snow and ice – advice to site-based staff

Caretaking staff may need to be temporarily diverted from other duties, though it is appreciated that this is more difficult where only a Cleaner in Charge is employed for limited hours. It may be possible provide back via a casual handyperson or your grounds maintenance contractor. Even if back is provided the Caretaker or Cleaner in Charge would normally be responsible for clearing the main entrances around the site. (see "Backup in cases of heavy snowfall or prolonged winter weather" below).

The first priority must always be to clear pedestrian entrances and paths, paying special attention to steps and slopes. On playgrounds much will depend on how quickly the ice and snow is likely to melt. If it is warming up rapidly then it might be better to keep pupils indoors until the ice has gone, but if it stays cold it will need to be cleared from playgrounds as well. Regular pedestrian routes between buildings that cross playgrounds will need to be cleared in any case.

Vehicle-only entrances and roads should be the lowest priority for clearance unless they have steep slopes where cars could slide or get stuck. Again, in prolonged bad weather these may be areas you can engage your grounds maintenance contractor to help with.

You will need to decide in advance what products you intent to employ to melt snow and ice. These produces fall in to two basic types:

- Rock Salt based
- Alternative granular ice melt products

The pros and cons of these products are out lined below. On some larger sites you may find that you will need to stock both product types to achieve the best results.

Grit salt

Grit Salt is the traditional produce we have used to deal with ice and snow. As a product it is easy to use, good value for money and very good for clearing ice from vehicle access. It has a very long shelf life but only if it is kept dry. One of the minus points against its usage are that when used it does tend to carry on shoes and boots in to building leaving a residue on any carpeted areas. It is also very corrosive so any metal tools or spreaders used with this produce must be cleaned after usage to remove all traces of the salt. See "Alternatives to Grit Salt" below.

Points to remember if using Grit Salt: -

- Have you got enough salt in stock? Please remember that once we have a cold spell supplies soon dry up so order your extra bags now.
- Some of our ground's maintenance contractors supply grit salt to their schools, check if yours provides this service. A number of DIY stores now stock grit salt but in most cases, you will need to be able to collect it yourself. Alternatively, a list of grit salt suppliers is attached. Usually grit salt is supplied in 25 kg bags. Bags larger than this become very difficult to handle. If you are storing your grit in a "yellow" grit bin, then these bins usually hold between eight and twelve 25kg bags.

- Is the salt you have in stock still dry and loose? Salt that has got wet goes very hard and is difficult to handle. It can be broken up and used still but this can be quite a difficult job to do. If you need assistance with this problem, please contact your grounds maintenance contractor to see if they can help.
- How much area do you expect to spread salt over on a frosty morning and what equipment is available to achieve this task? A plastic bucket and a shovel may be fine to do the main path to the front entrance but it will hardly do if you intend to be able to clear the staff car park and the playground! There are various priced grit spreaders on the market, which would make a very useful investment for the schools who wish to be able to grit large areas quickly.
- Where salt is kept stacked in bags undercover, i.e. in the caretaker's store room, try and keep it stacked in such a way that the older bags are used first. Even when stored under cover the bags start to deteriorate after 12 months.
- Please refer to Health & Safety guidelines for manual handling of bags of grit salt.

Alternatives to Grit Salt

There are now on the market several alternative products to traditional rock salt such as "Ice Melt". These products are dearer than rock salt but they do spread much further and are a lot cleaner to use. These are also much less corrosive and because of this the spreader equipment suitable for these products are much cheaper to buy as they do not need to be so robust. These products do need to be kept dry and should therefore be stored indoors but will then keep for many years.

Points to remember if using one of these alternative products: -

- Have you got enough in stock? Please remember that once we have a cold spell supplies soon dry up so order your extra tubs / bags now.
- A number of DIY stores now stock one of these alternative products but in most cases, you will need to be able to collect it yourself. Alternatively, a list of suppliers is attached. Usually these products come supplied in 10 kg plastic tubs.
- Store in a dry place even in the tubs as once wet these products are difficult to spread.
- How much area do you expect to spread salt over on a frosty morning and what equipment is available to achieve this task? A plastic bucket and a shovel may be fine to do the main path to the front entrance. But it will hardly do if you intend to be able to clear the staff car park and the playground! There are various priced grit spreaders on the market, which would make a very useful investment for the schools who wish to be able to treat large areas quickly.

Grit storage bins (not to be used for any of the alternative products):

- If you are keeping your supply of rock salt in a grit storage bin then please check the bin is in good order. New or replacement bins can be ordered from a number of suppliers. Please refer to the attached list.
- Are your grit bins in an accessible place? One of the main attractions of using a grit bin is to have the salt close at hand to the areas that will need gritting.
- Grit bins are designed to hold loose salt. Bags of salt kept in the bins are often difficult to handle and lifting them out of the bin to use may well lead to injury to the individual involved. As most salt is delivered in bags then please empty the loose salt from the bags into your bins.
- If you are experiencing difficulties with litter being thrown in your grit bin, or with the bin being left open, then fitting a simple lock may be the solution to these problems. A basic hasp and staple can usually be easily fitted to the bins. Fit using nuts and bolts rather than screws. This is a simple task you may find your caretaker can do or alternatively see if your grounds maintenance contractor will do this job for you.

Backup in cases of heavy snowfall or prolonged winter weather:

- Backup staff for snow and ice clearance are usually available from the various ground's maintenance contractors. The funding of such work must be provided by the school. Typical day works rates would range from £30.00 to £40.00 per hour for a two-person team. Some of the contractors also have a range of equipment available for hire. If you feel your site is such that this back will be required, then you should talk to your grounds contractor to see what help they could provide and how you will contact them if they are required.
- In the case of very heavy snow fall where some schools find that they need digging out with heavy equipment then please call Rob Williams (Grounds Officer) 01905 766390 who will be co-ordinating a countywide approach to this work. Usually this would mean the hiring in of JCB's to carry out this work. If you hire in such plant yourself beware a JCB can move kerbstones and speed ramps as easily as it can remove compacted snow!
- If your stocks of salt become low during a prolonged cold period and your usual supplier is unable to help out then again please contact Rob Williams (Grounds Officer) for advice as to the supply of rock salt.

If you require further help, advice or information please do not hesitate to contact Rob Williams (Grounds Officer) on telephone 01905 766390 or mobile 07904 153585 or e-mail at rwilliams2@worcestershire.gov.uk

Rock Salt - Suppliers

R E Daniel & Co Ltd
Tel: 01905 333477
Web Site: www.redaniel.co.uk

Peacock Salt
Tel: 01292 292000
Web Site: www.peacocksalt.co.uk

NB this company is only cost effective if you need a minimum of 25 bags but then they can be very good value for money.

Notes

- Also contact your schools grounds maintenance contractor as they may well be able to arrange a supply of grit salt.
- Most DIY superstores now stock rock salt if you can arrange delivery or collection.

Alternative Snow / Ice Melting Produce - Suppliers

R E Daniel & Co Ltd
Tel: 01905 333477
Web Site: www.redaniel.co.uk

Peacock Salt
Tel: 01292 292000
Web Site: www.peacocksalt.co.uk
Products – Smelt (Granular) Non-Cor (Liquid)

Glasdon UK Ltd
Tel: 01253 600410
Web Site: www.glasdon.com
Products – Icemelt (Granular)

West Mercia Supplies
Tel: 0800 0 28 28 10
Web Site: <http://www.westmerciasupplies.co.uk>

Grit Bins & Grit Salt Spreaders - Suppliers

R E Daniel & Co Ltd
Tel: 01905 333477
Web Site: www.redaniel.co.uk

Peacock Salt
Tel: 01292 292000
Web Site: www.peacocksalt.co.uk

Glasdon UK Ltd
Tel: 01253 600410
Web Site: www.glasdon.com

West Mercia Supplies
Tel: 0800 0 28 28 10
Web Site: <http://www.westmerciasupplies.co.uk>

Note

There are a number of companies who sell salt and gritting equipment "on line" just search "Rock Salt Suppliers".

Risk Assessment for Snow & Ice

Hazards inc inadequate / lack of arrangements	Existing Control Measures	Tick if in place X if not	If 'x' state, the action to be taken with timescales or indicate any additional control measures or not applicable in this case	Residual risk rating High, Medium or Low
SLIPS, TRIPS, FALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a nominated member of staff to monitor weather conditions and anticipate when snow / ice clearance may be required? • Are those nominated aware that in order to implement procedures, they may be required to commence work at an earlier time? • Are staff aware of prioritised areas for clearing of snow and gritting of paths, steps and slopes (main access routes, paths from car parks to buildings etc. to be dealt with ASAP with other areas cleared as time permits? • Is nominated person aware that direct access to the main entrance from the site access point is to be created to a minimum width of 1m wide? • Are regular inspections made of all areas and identification of those such as steps and slopes which may not be safe even when cleared? • Are cleared paths treated with salt and grit throughout the day if freezing temperatures continue? • Are all staff aware of designated paths/access routes and take responsibility for using these? Are these reinforced with pupils/visitors? 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p>If slopes and steps remain in a dangerous condition it may be necessary to prevent access to affected area - cones / barrier / tape etc</p> <p>ADR/MWA INDICATE ON MAP & STAFF ENTRY</p>	Medium

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where playgrounds remain slippery due to compacted snow/ice are procedures in place to accommodate pupils indoors at break times? • If playground remains in use are supervision levels increased? • If designated person is absent is there another person available and aware that they must take the responsibility of clearing snow and ice? 	✓		
MANUAL HANDLING Physical exertion Back injuries, strains/sprain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do staff that are responsible for gritting / clearing paths have adequate equipment and clothing to carry out the work? • Are there procedures in place to ensure staff clearing snow are physically capable? • Are staff instructed to work at sensible pace and take frequent breaks? • Has training given in correct lifting techniques? • Is appropriate footwear worn? • Are there mechanical lifting aids available (trolleys, sack barrow etc.) if necessary? 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		Low
ACCESS AND EGRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are external pathways and circulation routes assessed with affected areas taken out of use as necessary and marked with sign/cone/tape so everyone is aware? • Are entrances and stairs within building kept clear of excess water and snow? 	✓ ✓		Low
HANDLING GRIT / SALT/ CHEMICALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce effects of salt on skin is adequate and appropriate PPE clothing, gloves, coats, aprons and shoes issued and worn? 	✓		Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •If using mechanical aids do staff adhere to restrictions on work-time to avoid injury to others? 	✓		
EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Are staff aware to avoid working in extreme weather? •Are staff aware of duties and responsibilities? •Have staff and students been instructed to wear appropriate clothing for all weathers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ 	BTH BULLETIN ENTRY / BRIEFING	Low
USE OF TOOLS AND POSSIBLY MACHINERY FOR LARGE SCALE CLEARANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to use is operatives aware to select and wear correct PPE (safety boots, ear/eye protection, gloves, high visibility clothing)? • Are pedestrians are kept at least 15 metres from work area? • Prior to use are safety checks carried out as per manufacturer's Instructions and check list? • Is operative aware to always drive according to the conditions and never at excessive speed and never attempt to use the machine on gradients over 10% or over speed bumps etc.? • Is operative aware of the restrictions to use machine for no more than 3 hours in any 8 hour period? • Is operative aware to remain alert and carry out ongoing visual checks of area? • If pedestrians enter work area will operative initiate 'safe stop' procedures (safe stop – bring machine to a halt, parking brake on, stop engine and remove key)? • Has operator read, understood and signed separate tractor risk assessment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 		Medium

