

The Coombes Church of England Primary School

Snow and Ice Policy

Aim of Policy: This Policy aims to clarify procedures in the event of inclement weather conditions and works in conjunction with the school Emergency Closure Policy

Description: This Policy details the actions to be taken in the event of severe weather conditions which may affect the ability of the school to open safely and/or the ability for children or staff to travel to school. This Policy works in conjunction with the School's Emergency Closure Policy.

The Coombes Author:	L Henderson	Lead Governor:	
Approval by:	Full Governing Body	Team Reviewing:	LGB Committee
Based on Model Policy?	Yes		

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Luke Henderson (Headteacher)

Louise Connelly (Chair of Governors)

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1.0 Snow and Ice Clearance

- 1.1 Each year, many staff and members of the public suffer personal injuries as a consequence of slipping and falling on ice and snow.
- 1.2 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers liability Act place a responsibility upon the employer, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the means of access and egress from its premises are maintained in a condition that is safe and without risk to either its employees or other persons.
- 1.3 The approved code of practice which supports the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations) states that "arrangements should be made to minimise risks from snow and ice. This may involve gritting, snow clearing and closure of some routes"
- 1.4 It is a popular misconception that an occupier cannot be held liable for failing to clear snow / ice but can be held liable once an attempt at clearance has been made and then someone is injured. The true position is that an occupier can be held liable for 'failing to act reasonably' in order to prevent accidents.
- 1.5 The Headteacher, in partnership with the site controller and operations manager, is responsible for ensuring that the means of access to the school is safe for both employees, children and visitors and that adequate arrangements are made to ensure that the risks from snow and ice are minimised. It is recognised that it is not possible or practical to remove every piece of snow or ice. The school will however, require those responsible for premises to exercise careful judgement and prioritise de-icing and salting of key access routes as required.
- 1.6 The school will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the establishment remains open as normal during inclement weather and will only close if no other options are reasonable.
- 1.7 Schools should follow Public Health guidance for severe weather events that require operational changes and/or culminate in school closure.
- 1.8 If the school is required to close, remote learning may be made available via MS Teams in order to minimise disruption to learning for the children. This will be subject to the operational capacity of the school.

2.0 Risk Assessment

- 2.1 Headteachers and Operation Managers will ensure that a risk assessment is in place, which covers the hazards associated with snow and ice on their premises. See Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The following information provides a summary of typical arrangements which will be put in place. The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing and revising the arrangements as determined by the school risk assessment.
 - Staff to be aware of their duties and responsibilities, it may be necessary for site staff to start work earlier on a particular day to commence a gritting plan.

- Adequate equipment available (including salt /grit, Rock salt for de-icing) on site
- Determine which access routes are the most used / important. Clear a path 1metre wide from the site entrance to the main building entrance and/or classroom entrances. Pathways leading from car parks to buildings, slopes and steps on route will be regarded as a priority.
- Paths will be cleared and treated with salt/grit to maintain a clear pathway, especially where temperatures remain below freezing. As time permits, other pathways to entrances and between buildings, including the path along School Road may need be cleared and gritted.
- Appropriate checks to be made to ensure continued safety throughout the day.
- The site controller/operations manager/Headteacher will identify any particularly dangerous areas which require extra care and should be checked / treated more frequently e.g. steps, slopes, gullies which may be hidden etc. This may result in section of the school site being 'closed'.
- The school will also make appropriate arrangements for any visitors with particular needs (elderly, disabled etc.)

- 2.3 Where the Headteacher has concerns over the safety of certain external pathways, circulation routes, playgrounds etc, it may be appropriate for affected areas to be taken out of use. If this is the case they will be marked clearly using signs/cones/tape to ensure everyone is made aware.
- 2.4 If playgrounds remain in use, supervision levels may need to be increased. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- 2.5 All staff will be made aware of the risk assessment in place for snow and ice and take responsibility for following the designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist.

3.0 Routes to School during severe Weather

- 3.1 The Headteacher will also consider how such weather may affect the operation of the school. This includes transport difficulties in getting to school and from school for staff pupils and other services.
- 3.2 Whilst many families walk to school, it is not practical to undertake salting on footways, or roads in the local area. Main routes will be advised, as they are likely to receive pre or post salting and/or gritting by the council.

4.0 Communication to Parents

- 4.1 In the event of school may not be opening, or opening late, the school will consult Trust colleagues and make a decision based on the information available. The final decision will be made by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
- 4.2 In the event that the decision is made to close the school or open late, a message will be put on the school website typically by 8.00am and an email / parentmail / text alert will be sent to all parents/carers as quickly as possible. Parents/carers will be

advised to check the website before leaving home. School staff, if possible, will be on site for parents/carers who may wish to call the school to confirm arrangements for the day.

- 4.3 The Local Radio Stations that may be notified:
- **Local Radio Stations: BBC Radio Berkshire Frequency 104.1, 104.4, 95.4, 94.6 FM & DAB**
 - **Heart Frequency: 97.0, 102.9, 103.4 FM**
 - **Reading 107 Frequency: 107.0 FM**

4.3 **In the event of school closing during school hours.**

If the decision is made to close the school during the day, we will text / parentmail / email parents' and carers' and place a message on the school website. If the school is to remain closed for the following day(s), the school will follow the procedures outlined above.

5.0 Learning Provision in the event of school closure

5.1 Remote learning in the event of school closure

In the event of the school being closed due to inclement weather, the school may provide (subject to staff availability, access to technology and operational capacity) remote learning materials for all children. Learning materials provided will be in line with the remote learning policy.

Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment- Snow and Ice

Step 1 Identify Hazards	Step 2 Who could be harmed and how?	Step 3 Current control measures	Adequate or to be actioned	Action by	Date to be actioned	Date actioned
Slips, Trips and Falls	<p>Employees, Pupils, Visitors</p> <p>Bumps, bruises, strains, sprains, fractures, broken bones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nominated member of staff to monitor weather conditions and anticipate when snow / ice clearance may be required. (may be necessary for them to start work earlier to implement procedures) - 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) - Other areas cleared as time permits. - Direct access to the main entrance from the site access point is created (1 M wide) - Regular inspection of all areas and identification of those such as steps, slopes etc which may not be safe even when cleared. - Treat cleared paths with salt and grit if freezing temperatures continue. - Ensure all employees are aware of designated paths / access routes and take responsibility for using these. Reinforce this with pupils / visitors. - If slopes and steps remain in a dangerous condition it may be necessary to prevent access to affected area – cones / barrier/ tape etc. Where playgrounds remain slippery due to compacted snow / ice it may be necessary to accommodate pupils indoors at break time. If 				

		playgrounds remain in use supervision levels may need to be increased.				
Manual Handling						
Physical exertion Back injuries, Strains/sprains	Site Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employees who are responsible for gritting / clearing paths have adequate equipment and clothing to carry out the work. - Ensure employees and volunteers clearing snow are physically capable, are fully briefed and have read the Risk Assessment. - Work at sensible pace and take frequent breaks - Training given in correct lifting techniques. - Appropriate footwear and clothing worn - Mechanical lifting aids available (trolleys, sack barrow etc.) 				
Third Party help using heavy equipment	Employees, volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only work within a designated coned area - Designated area should be marshalled at all times - Follow safety instructions provided by lead member of school staff 				
Large number of third party helpers – inadequately briefed on safety	Employees, volunteers	If a general request for help is issued with the expectation of a large number of volunteers, Safety Guidelines should be attached to the request via e:mail.				