



BEECHWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADVERSE WEATHER: SNOW AND ICE ON SCHOOL PREMISES AND RELATED EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

In the case of snow and ice on school premises, all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the school remains open as normal.

The following procedures are in place in the school to ensure that risks from snow and ice are minimised.

A risk assessment covering the hazards associated with snow and ice has been adopted by the governors and, together with this policy, identifies procedures to be followed, specifies school priority areas and outlines staff responsibilities in severe weather situations.

The Headteacher will monitor local weather forecasts in order to react to the situation as quickly as possible and implement any special measures e.g. to commence a gritting plan, including preparatory gritting of priority and other potentially hazardous areas.

The School Superintendent will be given instructions to ensure that snow clearing, gritting and, in extreme cases, closure of certain routes is arranged as necessary.

A plan has been agreed with governors and staff which identifies areas to be cleared in priority order (**BPS Adverse Weather Priority Plan**).

The availability of staff may act as a limiting factor in determining the extent of precautions we are able to take, but the following arrangements will be made as far as possible;

- x A path at least 1 metre wide will be cleared from the school entrance on Kentmere Avenue to the main building entrances and Nursery, with slopes and steps regarded as a priority (**Priority 1**);
- x The cleared area will be treated with salt/grit to maintain a clear pathway, especially where temperatures remain below freezing (**Priority 1**);



- x As time permits, other pathways to the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 building entrances will be cleared and gritted in accordance with the path priority plan **(Priority 2)**;
- x If there is not sufficient time to clear the pedestrian pathways from Brooklands Avenue, then these gates will remain closed, with pedestrians and vehicles directed to the Kentmere Avenue entrance;
- x As time permits Brooklands Avenue pedestrian pathways will be cleared and gritted **(Priority 3)**;
- x Where there are concerns over the safety of certain external pathways, circulation routes or playgrounds, it may be appropriate for affected areas to be taken out of use. If there is a requirement to prevent access to paths, slopes, steps or other areas then this will be marked clearly using cones/hazard tape to ensure everyone is made aware;
- x The car parks will not be treated as priority areas, but pathways leading from the car parks to the building will be dealt with as soon as possible;
- x Pupils will be admitted to the building as soon as possible after 8.40am, depending on available supervision levels. Staff will direct pupils to the appropriate supervision point (either classrooms or the school hall(s)).

Where playgrounds remain excessively slippery due to compacted snow and ice, it will be necessary for pupils to be accommodated indoors at break times. If playgrounds remain in use, supervision levels may need to be increased.

All staff should be aware of the risk assessment in place for snow and ice on school premises, take responsibility for following the designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist and report any hazards using the school hazard report form.

Allowance will be made for increased journey times to school in relation to pupils being given late marks.

School Closure

Beechwood follows recent DFE guidance on school closure due to severe weather which states;



'It is for individual schools to make any decision to close, but we expect headteachers to take a common sense approach based on the conditions at the school and also the safety of any pupils travelling. we would hope that headteachers can keep schools open while it is safe for them to do so, but decisions about closure have to be taken locally by those who know the local conditions.' (DFE January 2010)

The decision to close the school will only be taken by the Headteacher following a full risk assessment or if the number of staff unable to get to work is so great that the safety of pupils is compromised. Consideration will be given to the possibility of changing activities, carrying out group activities, partial closure or later opening times. All these mean that the school may be able to function and open, sometimes with fewer staff than usual.

If the Headteacher does take the decision to close due to bad weather, the following procedures will be followed to inform parents and LEA;

- x School closure will be reported to the local authority as soon as the decision is made;
- x A message will be posted on the school website, as soon as possible after the decision has been made;
- x Text messages will be sent to the mobile phones of all parents who have registered their numbers.

If there is significant bad weather, but the school remains open, a message will be posted on the website and text messages will be sent as soon as possible.