

Gosforth Park First School

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GPFS Snow Clearing and Gritting Policy

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RATIONALE

This policy for snow and ice clearance is based on the simple priority of ensuring the school site remains open yet safe at all times for staff, children, parents and visitors throughout periods of inclement weather.

The first priority is to ensure access and exit to and from the school site for all school users.

The policy is in place to allow a set procedure to be followed which is initially triggered by the Head Teacher making a decision on the safety of opening the school. Once triggered, the gritting procedure will be implemented.

In the event that the Head Teacher feels that it is not safe to open the school, everyone will be contacted by text and/or email advising them of the decision to close the school. The Head Teacher will strive to make the decision as early as possible, taking into consideration difficulties that staff may face in getting into school and the forecast for the whole day. This will ensure that staff and parents can be informed prior to making a journey in what is likely to be difficult traffic conditions. On occasions, the decision-making process may be delayed/changed due to severe snow occurring shortly after the decision to open the school has been relayed to staff/parents.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES

Head Teacher, Deputy Head and Office Staff

- Responsible for ensuring that school is fully equipped with appropriate snow clearing and protective equipment, and adequate stocks of rock salt and sand/grit etc.
- Responsible for arranging caretaker cover to ensure snow and ice clearance is undertaken at the earliest possible time in the event of his absence due to illness.
- Responsible for arranging caretaker duties to ensure snow and ice clearance is continued throughout the day if necessary.
- Responsible for outlining in this policy (school gritting plan), the prioritisation of routes to be gritted and appropriate access routes to use during bad weather.
- Responsible for ensuring that the gritting policy is made available to parents and carers.
- Responsible for drafting and reviewing the school's' gritting plan every three years or immediately in the event of any changes to the school grounds.

Facilities Supervisor

- Responsible for the immediate clearance of snow and ice in designated areas in line with the school gritting plan.
- Responsible for ensuring that equipment provided to clear snow and ice is adequate for the purpose and maintained in a satisfactory condition and supplies of rock salt and sand/grit mix are monitored throughout the winter period and replenished promptly.
- Responsible for temporary closing access areas around the school in line with the school gritting plan and displaying the appropriate signs and/or taping off these areas.

- Responsible for informing the Head Teacher at the earliest possible time of inability to journey to school due to weather conditions or illness.

Governing Body

- Responsible for agreeing the winter plan for the school including snow and ice clearing procedure.
- Responsible for providing sufficient resources to implement the plan.
- Responsible for monitoring that the snow and ice procedure is being carried out.

Staff

- Responsible for reporting to the caretaker/Head Teacher any situation where the recommended action contained within the gritting plan has not been carried out.
- Responsible for safeguarding own and colleagues' health and safety in bad weather.
- Staff should also wear footwear/clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Staff should report any health issues to senior management which could be exacerbated by severe snow or ice, or where they have any other concern/worry which may be linked to weather conditions such as pregnancy.

Parents

- Responsible for adhering to the designated, gritted pathways in school.
- Responsible for collecting their child during the day should conditions worsen.
- Responsible for ensuring that the school has their up to date telephone numbers in order for text messages/telephone calls to be received.
- Responsible for wearing suitable footwear for the conditions when bringing and collecting children from school.
- Responsible for ensuring that their child is wearing sensible footwear and warm coats according to the conditions.
- Responsible for supervising their child before and after school and ensuring that children do not play on any ungritted areas outside of the school day (before 8.55am and after 3.30pm).

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure their own safety. This is particularly important when there is a chance that an area may be slippery. It may be possible for paths to have become unsafe during the day when temperatures are low. It is therefore very important that extreme care is taken when coming on to the school premises later in the day. The paths along Granville Road and Broadway East are outside of the school's responsibility, as is the car park to the front of school.

Good communication is essential. Parents receive a copy of specific severe weather instructions as soon as possible through email which will alert parents of any school closure or specific safety advice. It is expected that parents adhere to these instructions and pass all relevant information to friends and relatives who may also come to school to bring and collect children.

GRITTING PLAN

Red Route (red dotted line on map) – this is the minimum which will be gritted in extreme weather (snow and ice) if school is open

- The pathway leading from the school gate down the main path into the main entrance (this will be used by all Key Stages)

If possible, weather and time permitting, an additional route will be gritted to the KS1, KS2 and Reception (Nursery to access via Reception door).

Staff will be on the yard to show children where to enter school when usual doors are not accessible.

Green Route (green dotted line on map) will be gritted in addition to the red route on typical icy days but not in exceptional circumstances and/or extreme weather.

This will cover

- The pathway leading from the school gate down the main path, through the gate onto the main playground (in approximately a 1m wide path) to the KS1, KS2, Reception and Nursery door.
- A pathway from the car park to nursery entrance
- The area in front of the double doors near the Headteacher's office

It is staff responsibility to exit their vehicle safely since every bay will not be gritted. If a member of staff feels they cannot do this they should telephone SLT or caretaker for assistance. Extreme caution should be exercised when moving from a vehicle to the pathway and when manoeuvring a vehicle around the car park. If time and weather conditions allow, these areas may be cleared during the day but the assumption should be made that grit has not been applied here.



All school users should be aware that:

- It is not practical to grit large areas of grounds, therefore if it is thought that playground areas are unsafe due to underfoot conditions they will not be used during the day. However, should the Headteacher decide that it is safe for the children, they will be permitted to play out during playtime and lunchtime.
- At the beginning/end of the day adults collecting children must use the clearly gritted pathways and should not allow children to play on the yards.
- It may be possible for paths to have become unsafe during the day. It is therefore very important that extreme care is taken when coming on to the school premises later in the day.

Message to be sent to parents via Parent Pay

Dear Parents

School will be open today, however, due to extreme weather, please make sure you follow the gritted pathways allowing children to enter school via the main office. Please do not arrive early and do not let your child play on ungritted/uncleared areas before or after school.

Please take extreme care on your way to school and let the school office know as soon as possible if your child is unable to attend today.

Many thanks

Dear Parents

Please make sure you follow the gritted pathways allowing children to enter school via their usual allocated doors this morning. Please do not arrive early and do not let your child play on ungritted/uncleared areas before or after school.

Please take extreme care on your way to and from school.

Many thanks