

All Hampstead Hill School Policies are always to be read and considered in conjunction with Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies. This Policy of Hampstead Hill School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Hampstead Hill School

Health and Safety Policy:

Snow and Ice Clearance



Snow and Ice Clearance

Each year, many staff and members of the public suffer personal injuries as a consequence of slipping and falling on ice and snow.

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.

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....."

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.

Heads of establishments are responsible for ensuring that the means of access to their establishment is safe for both employees 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 to remove immediately every piece of snow or ice. It does however, require those responsible for premises to exercise careful judgement and prioritise de-icing and salting of key access routes.

All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that the establishment remains open as normal.

Schools should follow the Snowline guidance for severe weather events that culminate in closure.

Risk Assessment

Principals and premises managers must ensure that a risk assessment is in place, which covers the hazards associated with snow and ice on their premises. A generic risk assessment covering snow and ice is available on the Grid.

The following recommendations are provided as a guide to typical arrangements which should be in place. The premise manager is responsible for reviewing and revising the arrangements as determined by their local risk assessment.

- Staff need 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 is available from Hertfordshire Supplies)
- Determine which access routes are the most used / important.
- Clear a path 1 metre wide from the site entrance to the main building entrance. Pathways leading from car parks to buildings, slopes and steps on route should be regarded as a priority.
- Treat cleared paths with salt/grit to maintain a clear pathway especially where temperatures remain below freezing.

As time permits, other pathways to entrances and between buildings should be cleared and gritted.

- Appropriate checks to be made to ensure continued safety.
- 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.
- Consider the needs of any visitors with particular needs (elderly , disabled etc.)

Where the Principal or premises manager 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 this must be marked clearly using signs/cones/tape to ensure everyone is made aware.

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 and take responsibility for following the designated paths and access routes when such conditions exist.

Routes to School During Severe Weather

The Principal will also consider how such weather may affect the operation of the school e.g. transport difficulties in getting to school and the availability of staff and other services.

Whilst walking routes to schools are increasing, it is not practical to undertake salting on footways, or roads, to all schools in the county. Those schools serving the highest numbers of pupils are those most likely to be serviced by scheduled bus services or high usage footways so are likely to receive pre or post salting.

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Signed:

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