



# Adverse Weather Procedure

Porchester Junior School

September 2025



## Overview

During severe weather conditions, you should keep your setting open and let as many children, pupils or students attend as possible, where safe to do so. Severe weather conditions include:

- extreme heat
- flooding
- storms
- snow

However, it might be necessary to close temporarily due to inaccessibility or risk of injury. You should do all you can to reopen as soon as possible. (**HSE Guidance - Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings** Updated 10 May 2023)

Use the [Met Office's severe weather warning system](#) to check for severe weather conditions in your area.

### Extreme Heat

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations require employers to provide a reasonable indoor temperature in the workplace.

This depends on the work activity and the environmental conditions. (HSE [Temperature: What the law says \(hse.gov.uk\)](#))

There is no maximum temperature for workplaces. The school has a duty of care to ensure that the environment for staff and pupil/students is as comfortable as reasonably practicable.

School should ensure that there is adequate ventilation in classrooms and other populated areas such as staffrooms, halls during assemblies/performances.

School should investigate ways to circulate the air: -

- Provide fans, such as desk, pedestal or ceiling-mounted ones
- Provide air-cooling or air-conditioning
- Ensure windows can be opened to keep air circulating
- Shade staff and pupils/students from direct sunlight with blinds or by using reflective film on windows

If equipment is used for ventilation, this should be risk assessed and equipment should be placed in the room safely, away from pupils/students, with all cables tidy and not in walkways/escape routes.

Staff and pupils/students should be encouraged to drink water regularly (water is better than caffeine or carbonated drinks).

Specific risk assessments should be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils/students with health conditions that may be exacerbated by hot weather conditions. For example, asthma and Thunderstorm Asthma, pregnancy/menopause and diabetes.

School should make an assessment in advance, using the Met Office weather reports, to determine whether specific activities/events should take place. This can include PE, Sports Days and local walks.

School should ensure that an assessment is made on a daily basis for break times and lunchtimes. If staff/pupils will be going outside during breaks, ensure that hats are available to provide protection, and that sunscreen is applied, according to the UV levels. Encourage pupils to play in shaded areas where possible and ensure that adequate supervision is in place at all times.

The school's high risk areas of heat are: the playground and classrooms

### **Flooding**

The school may be aware of areas on the site where flooding may occur. Precautions should be taken to limit the amount of damage that can occur. For example, positioning sand bags in areas where water will enter the building.

If flooding is a common occurrence, school should consider drainage upgrades in collaboration with their property maintenance contractor.

The school's high risk areas for flooding are:- the playground, reception area and boiler room.

Flooding can cause a range of health problems. There may be direct effects such as physical injury, or an increased risk of developing skin or gut infections through contact with contaminated food water. Longer-term effects can include chest problems due to exposure to mould and damp. (Guidance **Flooding and health: advice for the public** Updated 13 March 2024)

School should ensure that flooded areas are cordoned off immediately and take further advice from property contractors. An assessment will be made regarding structural safety of the area affected and remedial works needed.

It may be necessary to close affected areas of the school, or the whole school. The School should contact the Trust for guidance and ensure that the insurers are aware of the situation as soon as possible.

A cleaning programme will need to be established. Useful information can be found in the Government guidance [Flooding and health: advice for the public - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flooding-and-health-advice-for-the-public) ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

### **Strong Winds / Gales / Storms**

School should ensure that regular tree surveys are carried out, to assess the safety of trees/bushes around the school site. A programme for regular inspections should be implemented and documented.

School should regularly check wind speeds that are expected by using the Met Office website.

Where trees overhang property/equipment or areas of fields or playgrounds, school should ensure that these areas are not used during strong winds/gales/storms.

School will ensure that regular inspections of the building and grounds are carried out and any defects will be reported for remedial works. When strong winds/gales are expected, any known loose items such as tiles, roof coverings should be checked and action taken to prevent debris/loose items flying around the site.

The school's high risk areas for wind damage are: playground (tree damage/ fences), school roof tiles/ gutters.

### **Snow / Icy Conditions**

The school has a duty to ensure that all on site external areas where pedestrians walk are maintained in a safe condition at all times. These include footpaths/walkways, emergency doorways and routes, carparks and delivery & drop off points.

The school have completed a gritting risk assessment and the findings of this assessment are to be shared with those completing the task. Assessment controls to be implemented during completion of task.

Grit/salt is stored in outdoor storage shed.

### **When to Grit**

Salt can stop ice forming and cause existing ice or snow to melt. It is most effective when it is ground down, but this will take far longer on pedestrian routes than on roads.

Gritting should be carried out when frost, ice or snow is forecast or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the floor temperatures are at, or below freezing. The best times are early in evening before the frost settles and/or early in the morning before employees arrive. Salt doesn't work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the floor.

The weather will be monitored by Vicki Welsby and Shane Murphy. The weather will be observed visually through the day/night and monitored using local and UK based weather forecasts.

Gritting is to take place either:

- Early afternoon/evening before snow/frost settles
- Or early morning before employees arrive (salt will need time to dissolve). *This is guidance only and the daily weather reviews will identify best times for gritting.*

Due to the physical nature of the task, persons completing will be capable of lifting bags of salt/grit and using any relevant equipment. Staff are not to lift beyond their capabilities at any point and correct manual handling techniques will be adhered to at all times when handling bags of grit/salt or gritting equipment. Manual handling risk assessments are to be reviewed in lone with this procedure.

### **When gritting is not effective**

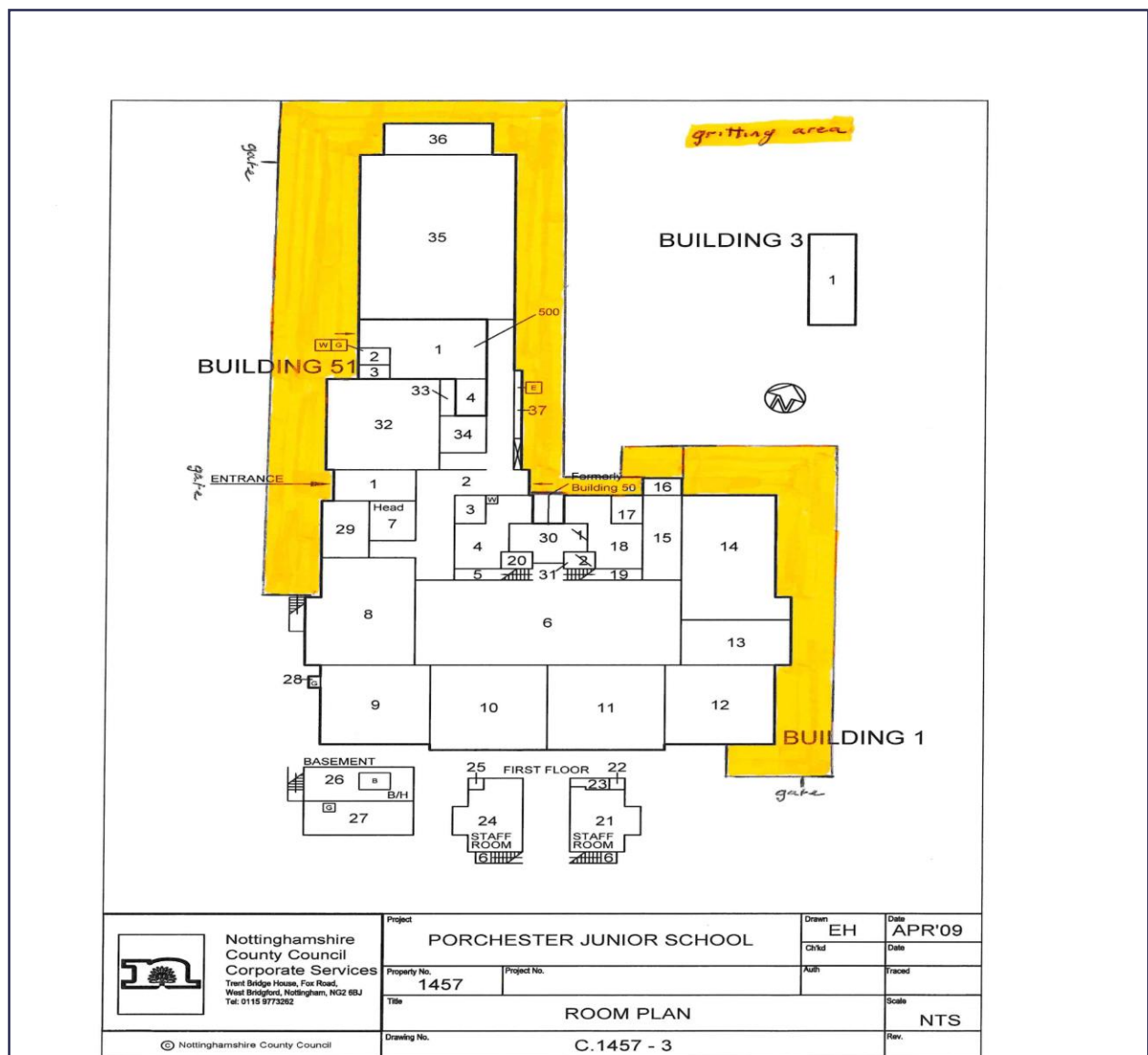
High traffic areas or routes that cannot be gritted effectively (e.g., due to compacted snow or ice) will be clearly marked off with warning cones/tape and when possible, made safe. (All warning cones and tape is to be removed as soon as the area is made safe to avoid confusion.)

On completion of the gritting procedure, any areas not gritted for this reason are to be communicated to the Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher/School Business Manager/Site Manager) and the reason why. This will then be further communicated to school staff and shared with persons such as parents and visitors to site to advise them of safe pedestrian routes to use, or to avoid the site until conditions improve.

If you grit when it is raining heavily, the salt will be washed away, causing a problem if the rain then turns to snow. Compacted snow, which turns to ice, is difficult to treat effectively with grit. Be aware that 'dawn frost' can occur on dry surfaces when early morning dews form and freezes on impact with the cold surface. It can be difficult to predict when or where this condition will occur.

## Areas to be gritted

The below map shows the expected areas of site that will be gritted.



## **Lighting levels of areas to be gritted**

During winter months the days are shorter and there is a lack of natural light. The lighting on communal areas both internally and externally should be of a sufficient level to allow safe access and egress from the building. As highlighted in the risk assessment, areas of concern are:

- The school playground

## **Pedestrian/Vehicle Contact**

Gritting is to take place in shared areas when there are low numbers of vehicle movements happening at approx. 6.00am and 5.00pm to limit pedestrian/vehicle contact. The person completing the gritting has been provided with a high visibility jacket and this is to be worn at all times when gritting areas where contact with vehicles is possible.

## **Controls required internally during inclement weather**

Inclement weather can create additional hazards including additional water being brought into the building on footwear. Entrances have matting in place for persons entering to remove additional water off their footwear. Additional matting for entrances/common areas is available and stored in the outdoor store if required.

## **Lone working**

Shane Murphy (Site Manager) would be alone on site when gritting. Lone working procedure/ risk assessment is in place for Shane Murphy. Key points from the lone working procedure are:

- Who: Shane Murphy
- Times alone on site: 5.30-6.00.
- Who do they contact: Vicki Welsby/ Bev Murphy

## **PPE provided**

As per risk assessment, PPE to be worn when gritting:

- Gloves
- High visibility, waterproof jacket
- Suitable footwear

## **Other controls identified in risk assessment to be in place before gritting is to commence**

As per risk assessment

See separate gritting risk assessment as required.

<b>Responsibilities Table</b>	
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>
Checking weather and deciding to grit	Vicki Welsby Shane Murphy
Gritting walkways & traffic routes	Shane Murphy
Monitoring grit levels and ordering more	Shane Murphy
Completing Winter gritting/snow clearing record	Shane Murphy
Communicating issues with gritting	Shane Murphy
Writing and review of risk assessment	Shane Murphy Vicki Welsby
Review of this document	Vicki Welsby Shane Murphy

### **School Closure procedures**

It is the policy of the school to make every effort to remain open whenever possible. The decision to close the school either before or during the school day will be made by the Head Teacher.

The school will only be closed if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Insufficient staff are able to come in to keep the school running safely.
- Conditions on site are dangerous.
- Conditions are considered to be or are anticipated to later become too hazardous for travel.

If the decision to close the school is made, the following procedure will be followed:

- The closure will be recorded on the school website.
- Parents/Carers who have provided up to date mobile phone numbers and/or email addresses will be alerted to the school closure using the Text message service activated by the Head Teacher once the closure has been decided.
- Capital FM, Hits Radio East Midlands and BBC Radio Nottingham will be informed and parents/carers can listen for up-to-date school closures.
- Updates and information will be provided to parents/carers through Parent Text Service and Class Dojo.
- The school will make all practical efforts to keep parents/carers informed as to the situation with the school during adverse weather conditions, as we appreciate that such conditions and uncertainty places very considerable difficulties upon parents/cares. However, it is advised that parents/carers regularly check the school website and Class Dojo when it is clear that a closure is a possibility.

- The school appreciates that during bad weather, children may arrive later than normal. Parents/carers should endeavour to contact the school as soon as possible to let them know that their child is on their way if they are likely to be delayed.

In the event of the school having to close during the day due to unforeseen worsening weather or similar circumstances:

- Parents/carers will be contacted by text, email or a telephone call to advise them of the early closure. Such an early release will only be contemplated in very extreme circumstances.
- Children are expected to continue their studies at home and advice will be provided on the school website.

#### **Site safety:**

- In the event of snow and ice, an emergency route will be in operation. **Access into school will be the main entrance as this will be cleared and salted. Parents/carers, children, visitors, and staff will be aware that pathways, even where cleared, do remain hazardous, Students will also be remained of this in assembly.**
- In icy conditions, the site team will make every effort to salt pathways from the main gates to the nearest entrance into the building.
- Where necessary, essential pathways will be maintained as clear as possible throughout the day.
- On school days where the school is closed to students, the site team and Senior Staff will monitor conditions in order to re-open the school as soon as it is safe to do so.
- During significant adverse weather conditions, the school dining room and certain corridors will be open from 8.40am for the children to wait inside.
- During adverse weather conditions, the playgrounds may be out of bounds at the beginning and end of the school day and, if necessary, also during break times.
- In the Head Teachers absence, the most Senior Leader on site will assume responsibility for making all decisions relating to the Severe Weather Procedures.

#### **Impact on staff:**

Our first priority is for the children of Porchester Junior School. However, it is understood that members of staff will also need to take responsibility for their own children as well as their own transport arrangements in adverse weather conditions.

- When the school is open, it is expected that all staff will do their best to get to work even if this means that they will be late. Keeping the school informed of any problems that staff encounter is a priority.
- If students are dismissed during the school day, we will need to ensure supervision for those who remain in school. Staff will be informed by Senior Staff that they can leave as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Priority will be given to those staff who have been advised by their child's school that their child must be collected due to their school's closure or those who live the furthest distance away from Porchester Junior school.

If the school is to close, the Head Teacher will contact staff. Staff will use any closure time spent at home providing remote learning for the children, preparation and planning time.

## **Appendix 1 – Toolbox Talk**

### **Winter slip & fall safety tips**

It's near that time of season where slips and falls occur at an increasing number. Facilities planning and Management's Grounds Services Departments need to do a very good job of keeping the sidewalks and steps clear of snow and ice. However, there may be icy patches they may not have had a chance to get to before you've walked to your office, lab, etc. The links below provide some good advice on being aware of your surroundings during the winter months and ways to prevent slips and falls.

How to prevent it:

- Wear the proper foot gear.
- Take small steps to keep your centre of balance under you.
- Walk slowly and never run-on icy ground.
- Keep both hands free for balance, rather than in your pockets.
- Use handrails from start to finish.
- Avoid carrying loads on stairways; or carry loads that you can see over.
- Keep your eyes on where you are going.
- Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them.
- Step - Don't jump from vehicles and equipment.
- Keep walkways clear of debris, water, ice, and slippery materials.

When these helpful hints don't work, and you know you are going to slip, try to reduce your potential injury when falling by:

- Roll with the fall. Try to twist and roll backwards, rather than falling forward.
- Relax as much as possible when you begin to fall.
- Toss the load you are carrying. Protect yourself instead of the objects being carried.

## Appendix 2 - Winter gritting/snow clearing record

### Porchester Junior School Winter gritting/snow clearing record

Date:	Person(s) undertaking the task:			
What time did gritting/snow clearing take place?				
Describe the weather conditions? What is the outside temperature (approx.) and time of measurement?				
Which routes/paths were gritted/cleared of snow?				
Any areas of plan unable to be cleared?				
Were warning ice/snow signs displayed at entrances to the gritted/snow cleared routes/paths?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No

Insert plan or draw the grounds of the premises and indicate the routes/paths gritted/snow cleared

Signed ..... Date.....

### Appendix 3 – Warning Sign



**WARNING ICE!** This path has recently been gritted, but the path still may be slippery in some areas. Proceed with caution!