



Icy Conditions and Winter
Weather Policy

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Appendix 1 - Notification of Academy Closure due to Adverse Weather

2. Version control

Date	Version	Revision	Owner
18/09/17	1.0	New Policy	Future Generation Trust Policy Team
23/09/19	2.0	Two yearly review of policy	Future Generation Trust Policy Team
26/11/21	3.0	Scheduled review of policy	Future Generation Trust Policy Team
19/09/2023	4.0	Scheduled review of policy	Future Generation Trust Policy Team

3. Introduction

The potential for slip, trip and fall accidents increases during the Autumn and Winter months for a number of reasons; there is less daylight, leaves fall onto paths and become wet and slippery and cold weather spells cause ice and snow to build up on paths and car parks.

4. Policy Aims

Future Generation Trust (FGT) aim to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe access and egress to and from academy sites for staff, pupils, members of the public and vehicles. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that each academy stays open as normal. Procedures may involve gritting, snow clearing and closure of some routes.

During the Autumn and Winter months the following procedures will apply to minimise the risks associated with adverse weather conditions. Timely and effective communication is key to keeping staff and parents updated on the systems and procedures in place at each academy and in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather.

5. Lighting

It is important to ensure that there is sufficient lighting around the site to enable staff, pupils and members of the public to see and avoid hazards that might be on the ground, both inside and outside of the academy.

The completion of regular building inspections will help identify any bulbs which need replacing around the site. External lights are on timers or sensors and these will be checked periodically to ensure that they are working effectively. Staff are also able to report any defects they notice which are recorded in a Defects Log.

6. Wet and Decaying Leaves

Fallen leaves that become wet or have started to decay can create slip risks in two ways; they hide any hazard that may be on the path or they themselves create a slip risk. Site Supervisors and/or Caretakers will regularly inspect paths and route ways and remove leaves as and when the need arises.

7. Rain Water

Many slip accidents happen at building entrances as people entering the facility walk in rain water or bring in rain water on umbrellas. To reduce the risk of slips during wet weather the entrances to our academies are fitted with anti-slip barrier matting.

During heavy rain our academy playing fields may become water logged and slippery. A decision will be made by the Headteacher and communicated to staff and pupils if it becomes necessary to close the playing field for PE or competitive matches.

8. Ice, Frost and Snow

To reduce the risk of slips on ice, frost and snow the following steps will be taken in the event of freezing temperatures being forecast.

The Headteacher will monitor the temperature, as prevention is key. They will also keep up to date by visiting weather service sites such as the Met Office www.metoffice.gov.uk or BBC Weather www.bbc.co.uk/weather and Highways England www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england.

Gritting will be carried out by the Site Supervisor and/or Caretaker (as described in the Gritting Plan below) when frost, ice or snow is forecast or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the ground temperatures are at, or below freezing. The best times are early in the evening before the frost settles and/or early in the morning before staff and pupils arrive. The decision to implement the Gritting Plan will be made by the Headteacher, or a Deputy Headteacher in their absence.

Where playgrounds and outside areas remain excessively slippery due to compacted snow and ice, it may be necessary for these areas to remain out of bounds. A decision will be made by the Headteacher, or a Deputy Headteacher in their absence and communicated to staff.

9. Gritting Plan

The following procedure will be followed to help prevent any icy surface forming and/or keep pedestrians off the slippery surface.

De-icing salt will be applied as soon as is reasonably practicable. Please note that de-icing salt does not always work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the floor so anyone arriving at an academy early, should take extra care. If a thaw is expected clearance work will only be done in key areas (e.g. steps and heavily used paths).

The first priority will always be to clear the main pedestrian entrances and pathways, paying special attention to steps and slopes. Pathways will be cleared to a width of 1 metre and de-icing salt applied. As time permits, other pathways will be cleared and salted. Slopes and steps will be regarded as a priority.

Academy car parks will not be cleared, however if time allows some areas may be cleared to aid staff parking. Pathways leading from car parks to building entrances will be cleared (if time allows) and treated with de-icing salt to maintain a clear pathway.

Vehicle-only entrances and roads will be the lowest priority for clearance and salting, unless they have steep slopes where cars could slide or get stuck.

Each academy will produce a drawing of the site identifying gritting priorities and communicate this to staff, pupils and parents.

In the event of prolonged periods of severe weather and stocks of de-icing salt diminishing the academy Gritting Plan will be reviewed in order to prioritise remaining stocks for high risk areas.

If deemed unsafe by the Headteacher, areas of the academy may be closed and/or the car park closed to all but staff.

10. Academy Closure due to Adverse Weather

All FGT Academies are committed to remaining open whenever possible to support pupils and their families. In extreme circumstances it may occasionally be necessary to close an academy, but leaders will explore all possibilities of measures including full or partial site clearing and staff deployment to avoid this eventuality.

The decision to close an academy will be made by the Headteacher, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team in their absence. The procedures relating to the closure of an academy due to adverse weather should be implemented in line with the academy's Business Continuity Plan.

Headteachers will inform both the CEO and the Head of Estates immediately via e-mail once the decision has been made to close an academy due to adverse weather using the form attached as Appendix 1.

Given the geographical spread of the academies within the trust and the differing challenges of individual sites a 'blanket' decision will not be made by the Central Team regarding closures.

11. Attendance Statistics

Where an academy is officially closed, all absence is registered as authorised.

When a pupil cannot attend school due to adverse weather conditions, the pupil will be marked in the register as having an authorised absence and will, therefore, not affect the academy's attendance statistics.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Future Generation Trust Board has overall responsibility for this policy and for reviewing its implementation and effectiveness. The Headteacher has day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy and must ensure that all staff are fully aware of its contents and trained accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle. However, it may be necessary to update the document earlier as a result of either an incident or a change in Health & Safety guidance.

Policy adopted on: 14 December 2023

Review Date: November 2025

Signed: Fliss Dale

Designation: Chair of Trust Board



Notification of Academy Closure
due to Adverse Weather

Academy	
Date of decision	
Time decision taken	
Actions that were taken in an effort to remain open	
Date(s) of closure	
Proposed re-opening date	