

Physis- a Greek word meaning the natural energy for growth, change and development.



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# Severe weather Plan 2017



**Physis Heathgates  
Academy**

*Physis Quantum is a specialist provider of exciting and innovative services to  
Children and Young People with special educational needs.*



## **Physis Heathgates Academy Severe Weather Plan**

Actions to be taken in the event of severe weather:

### **If the Academy Remains Open:**

At the time of writing the Academy educates children from two homes, one on-site and one approximately two miles away. It is therefore simple, apart from in the event of an extremely severe weather, for the children from the on-site home to attend school as long as the school is capable of operating so that the pupils and staff are comfortable and have the necessary facilities, e.g. toilet, heating and warm water.

The Academy consists of one Head Teacher, three full time teachers – all of whom live in excess of twenty miles from the Academy - and two sessional teachers. Due to its small number of children (four at the time of writing) the SLT has decided that the school will remain open if pupils from the on-site home and two teaching staff are able to attend, i.e. travel to and from school safely.

The Head Teacher will make the decision as to whether the school opens or is closed. This decision will be made at prior to 8am so that all teachers and homes can be informed.

If the Academy is open all children from Heathgates Farm (the on-site home) will be expected to attend and any children from Chapel House (two miles away) who can travel to school without unnecessary risk.

There is the possibility that the school may open in the morning but close before the normal finishing time of 3.30pm due to weather conditions or the local weather forecast.

### **If the Academy is Closed:**

If the Head Teacher decides that the Academy cannot open due to insufficient teachers/pupils being able to attend or problems with the facilities:

- A phone call will be made to all teachers and homes prior to 8am or instructions for the teachers and pupils to go home may be given at any point during the day
- An email will be sent to the local authorities of all children informing them of the decision
- Any other relevant people will be informed

## APPENDIX 1

### Snow Events: Advice for Head Teacher

It is difficult to manage major snow events, but planning ahead can help schools to minimise risks and stay open during adverse weather conditions.

#### Preparing for a Snow Event

- • Conduct a Risk Assessment

Conduct and review the risk assessment of your school premises to ensure it addresses the hazards associated with snow and ice including:

- ➤ checks to be made to ensure continued safety;
- ➤ identifying particularly dangerous areas that require extra care and need to be checked and

treated more frequently, eg. steps, slopes and gullies, which may be hidden, etc;

- ➤ consideration of the needs of visitors with particular mobility needs.

- • Create a Gritting Plan

Determine which access routes are the most used and important, with priority given to ensuring that fire exits are clear of snow and ice:

- ➤ Clear a path one metre wide from the site entrance to the main building entrance. Pathways leading from car parks to buildings, slopes and steps enroute 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.

- • Keep Staff Informed

Teaching and Care Staff may be asked to take responsibility for gritting and salting of designated paths and access routes, keep them informed of their duties and notified of impending weather warnings.

- • Maintain Adequate Equipment and Supplies Onsite

Schools are responsible for storing salt, grit and snow-clearing equipment on their premises.

- • Concerns Over Safety

If the Head Teacher 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 and tape to ensure everyone is aware.

- • During a Snow event

Clear the snow or ice in the day.

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. If possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

- • Use Salt or Sand - Not Water

If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery. You can prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared.

- • Be Careful not to Spread Salt on Plants or Grass as it may Cause them damage. If you don't have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as well as salt, but will provide good grip under foot.

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- • Take Care Where You Move the Snow

When you're shoveling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.

- • Prevent Slips

Pay extra attention to clear snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas. If you clear snow and ice yourself, be careful - don't make the pathways more dangerously causing them to refreeze.

**Staff should make reasonable efforts to get to work having regard to the travelling conditions:**

1. (a) employees who, having made reasonable efforts, arrive late will be paid normally;

2. (b) employees who do not arrive but who, in the view of the Head Teacher, have made a reasonable attempt to get to work will be paid normally. (Payment will only be refused if the Head Teacher/SLT has fully investigated the matter and is convinced that reasonable efforts were not made and informs Payroll accordingly.)
3. (c) staff should be expected to walk reasonable distances bearing in mind the weather conditions and their own health;