



# Health & Safety Policy

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## 1. Introduction and scope

Under the County Council's Health Safety and Welfare Policy, the Head of the Schools Service has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective management of health and safety in the Service Group. The Schools Service Health Safety and Welfare Policy was produced to ensure that this responsibility is effected within the Service Group. This document supplements the Schools Service policy by indicating the 'organisation' and 'arrangements' for meeting this responsibility in **community and voluntary controlled** schools (rather than other Schools Service establishments) and for ensuring that the County Council's Health Safety and Welfare Policy is effectively implemented.

## 2. Statement of intent

The County Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, which was agreed by the Central Safety Advisory Panel in November 2002 places the responsibility for implementing the policy in each service group of the County Council on the appropriate head of service. This document indicates the organisation for implementing that policy in schools.

This document has been produced on my behalf as Head of the Schools Service to explain in detail the organisation for managing health, safety and welfare in schools and to provide positive guidance for headteachers who have responsibilities for its implementation. Some arrangements for implementing the policy can be found in this document and others are set down in specific Schools Service codes of practice (see Appendix 2). The document will be reviewed annually.

I have nominated the **Education Business & Information Manager** to act as Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will establish appropriate links with the County Health and Safety Unit in order to ensure all managers have access to competent advice and assistance.

A dedicated Schools Health and Safety Team is in place to advise, support and enable headteachers and other school staff to undertake their legal responsibilities in schools.

Health and Safety is a management responsibility of equal importance to service delivery and is an integral part of the County Council's endeavours to provide high standards of service delivery. Managers at all levels in the Schools Service and in schools are expected to embrace this commitment. The County Council actively aims to raise standards above statutory minimums.

This document sets out the responsibilities of all managers for managing health and safety within their areas of control. Employees are reminded that they also have responsibilities under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and any breach of these could lead to prosecution of the County Council and/or individual employees. Failure to comply with safety requirements could result in disciplinary action.

Signed 

Date: **22 June 2004**

Head of the Schools Service

Policy review date: **June 2005**

### **3. Responsibilities of LEA and school staff**

#### **3.1 Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator**

The **Education Business & Information Manager** has been nominated as the Health and Safety Co-ordinator for the Schools Service. However, he is supported by the HR Schools Services Senior Consultant (who also attends senior management team meetings) and the HR Schools Service Health and Safety Services Manager.

The **Education Business & Information Manager** has overall responsibility for health and safety co-ordination throughout the Schools Service. Responsibilities include:

- ensuring that Schools Service policy documentation is prepared, reviewed and revised;
- establishing and maintaining an effective organisation for the control of health, safety and welfare matters, including the allocation of responsibilities;
- establishing means of communication on health, safety and welfare matters throughout the Service;
- ensuring effective monitoring systems are properly implemented, in accordance with Council policies;
- ensuring issues identified by the HR schools service health and safety manager or the HR schools service senior consultant are addressed at the senior management team this will include issues of policy with regard to health and safety management in schools;
- liaising with Human Resources on the overall identification of health and safety training needs of non-school staff.

#### **3.2 The HR Schools Service Senior Consultant is responsible for:**

- establishing, facilitating and chairing the service group safety committee;
- preparing an annual report for submission to the Central Safety Advisory Panel after ratification by the Safety Committee;

#### **3.3 The HR Schools Service Health and Safety Services Manager is responsible for:**

- delivering the Health and Safety Service to schools;
- attending the Schools Service Health and Safety Committee

### **3.4 Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that:**

- there is an appropriate organisation within the School for implementing the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. It is recommended that, in larger schools, a senior member of staff should be designated as Health and Safety Co-ordinator for the establishment (see 3.5 below);
- the County Council and Schools Health, Safety and Welfare policies are brought to the attention of all staff;
- a copy of each Code of Practice is kept in the administrative office/staff room of the school; that other copies are distributed to relevant members of staff and that a record of distribution is maintained;
- the provisions set out in the Codes of Practice are implemented;
- risk assessments are carried out, recorded and control measures implemented (see section 5.3) This will include risk assessments relating to hazards to which directly managed staff are exposed (this will include stress risk assessments);
- health and safety monitoring is undertaken in the school through:
  - an annual internal monitoring checklist;
  - termly inspections of the premises (headteacher must be involved in at least one of the inspections);
  - accident, near-miss and ill-health investigation;
  - performance management review

and to ensure that

- other health and safety information is communicated to relevant staff;
- relevant health and safety information is provided to visitors, temporary and agency staff, voluntary workers, contractors and those who may use the site.
- there is agreement and co-operation between other users/other employers of the school site to ensure hazard reporting and joint risk assessments are recorded.
- accidents are investigated and reported using the established procedures;
- trade union safety representatives can carry out their functions and that appropriate consultation takes place;
- opportunities are identified to improve health, safety and welfare within the school and that the health, safety and welfare responsibilities in relation to procurement and the management of contracts are carried out and recorded;
- health and safety are included on team/staff meeting agenda and governing body meeting agenda;
- there are arrangements for monitoring services such as gas and electrical systems and equipment;
- arrangements to enable staff to report hazards are in place;
- an Educational Visits Co-ordinator, who has attended a recognised training course, is appointed within the school;

- procedures for identifying and acting upon failures by any employee to achieve adequate health and safety performance are in place;
- health and safety training needs are identified and met;
- fire precautions procedures are implemented (including fire drills);
- appropriate arrangements are made with regard to any lettings;
- copies of the school local organisation and arrangements are completed, posted on staff noticeboards in a prominent position and updated as appropriate (see Appendix 1).

### **3.5 School Health & Safety Co-ordinator**

A Health and Safety Co-ordinator should be appointed in Secondary Schools and it is recommended that this should be the case for larger Primary Schools. It is a matter for the Headteacher to determine the precise duties and to put them in writing. It is suggested the following could be included:

- (a) establishing arrangements for dealing with health and safety matters such as:
  - dissemination of health and safety information to all staff;
  - first aid;
  - accident reporting;
  - emergency evacuation procedures;
  - ensuring accidents are investigated;
  - ensuring health and safety matters raised by staff are dealt with;
  - maintaining a central file of Codes of Practice;
  - maintaining a central file of other relevant information;
- (b) co-ordinating all aspects of health, safety and welfare policy and practice;
- (c) liaising with safety representatives or other means of consulting with employees;
- (d) ensuring the implementation of the safety policy is monitored;
- (e) ensuring 'reportable' accidents are reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

### **3.6 Line managers of teaching staff**

Line managers of teaching staff are responsible for implementing the Safety Policy within their area of responsibility, which will vary according to the phase and organisation of the school.

In particular, teaching line managers will need to ensure that:

- (a) codes of practice appropriate to their area of responsibility are brought to the attention of all staff within the area and complied with;

- (b) appropriate safety signs or notices are displayed;
- (c) relevant health and safety information is communicated to staff;
- (d) all accidents occurring in the area are reported; the causes are investigated; and an accident report form is completed;
- (e) reasonable arrangements for allowing safety representatives to carry out their functions are complied with;
- (f) health and safety training needs of staff within the area are identified and met, or reported to the Headteacher;
- (g) staff are aware of the fire procedures;
- (h) new employees receive appropriate health and safety information, instruction and training, including safety procedures within the area/school as appropriate;
- (i) assessments for all risks to health and safety are carried out and significant findings recorded, with appropriate preventative measures completed, in accordance with the codes of practice relevant to the area (including requirements of particular subject areas).
- (j) ensuring there are procedures for identifying and acting upon failures by any employee (including managers) to implement the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and procedures

### **3.7 Classroom teachers**

The health, safety and welfare of students in classroom, laboratories and workshops are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. These rules also apply to student teachers who must be made aware of their responsibilities by a professional tutor, and to support staff, such as teaching assistants.

A classroom teacher is expected to:

- (a) know the emergency procedures in respect of fire and first aid and the special health and safety measures to be adopted in his/her own teaching areas and to ensure that they are applied;
- (b) be aware of, and follow, health and safety codes of practice and guidance;
- (c) exercise effective supervision of students and ensure that they know of the general emergency procedures in respect of fire and first aid and the special safety measures of the teaching area;
- (d) give clear instructions and warnings as often as necessary (notices, posters and hand-outs are not enough);
- (e) ensure that students' items such as coats, bags, cases are safely stowed away;

- (f) integrate all relevant aspects of health, safety and welfare into the teaching process and if necessary give special lessons on health, safety and welfare;
- (g) follow safe working procedures personally;
- (h) ensure such precautions as protective clothing, guards and special safe working procedures are used when necessary;
- (i) make recommendations on health, safety and welfare matters to the line manager.

### **3.8 Other line managers (non-teaching staff)**

Other line managers in schools, such as site managers, or the office manager, are responsible for the implementation of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy for Schools in their area of control. This includes:

- ensuring, in their area of control, that risk assessments are carried out, recorded and the control measures implemented (see section 5.3)
- undertaking risk assessments relating to hazards to which directly managed staff are exposed (this will include stress risk assessments) (see section 5.3)
- ensuring that health and safety monitoring is undertaken in their area of control through:
  - annual internal monitoring;
  - inspections;
  - accident, near-miss and ill-health investigations;
  - performance management reviews;
- identifying the training needs of staff to enable them to meet required competencies;
- ensuring all new employees to the area receive a health and safety induction;
- ensuring all relevant health and safety information is communicated effectively to the correct staff;
- ensuring procedures for identifying and acting upon failures by any employee to implement the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and procedures.

### **3.9 All employees**

Although prime responsibility for health and safety in community and voluntary controlled schools rests with the County Council as the employer, the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy can only be implemented in schools with the full co-operation of all members of staff. All employees therefore have the following responsibilities:

- (a) to take reasonable care for their own health, safety and welfare and that of other persons affected by their acts or omissions;

- (b) to co-operate with the County Council, so far as is necessary, to enable it to meet its responsibilities for health, safety and welfare;
- (c) to be aware of, and follow, health and safety codes of practice and guidelines;
- (d) to use work equipment provided correctly, in accordance with instructions and training;
- (e) to report to their line manager any hazards or work situations they identify and any inadequacies in health and safety;
- (f) to report, using prescribed procedure, all accidents, reportable diseases, ill health, dangerous occurrences and near misses;
- (g) to take part in any health and safety training identified as necessary by the County Council or Headteacher.

Employees at all levels should note that if they fail to discharge the obligations placed on them by this Health, Safety and Welfare Policy or any relevant statutory provision, they may be liable to disciplinary action according to the County Council's disciplinary rules and procedures or prosecution by the Health & Safety Executive.

### **3.10 Governing bodies**

In addition to the County Council's overall responsibility as employer in respect of community and voluntary controlled schools, school governing bodies also have responsibilities in exercising control over premises.

In all areas and activities under their control, governing bodies have a duty to take steps to ensure that appropriate health and safety standards are complied with as far as is reasonably practicable. This duty will include ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made to comply with statutory requirements, the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy for schools and associated codes of practice; and that these are taken into account in determining the allocation of resources.

In particular they should ensure that annual internal monitoring is carried out in accordance with the Schools Services procedures. Where major building or maintenance/improvement works are being carried out, they must appoint a property consultant. Additionally, many minor building/maintenance projects will require the services of a property consultant if statutory approval is required, for example for electrical works, and where the school does not have access to internal specialists/competent persons. Funding for consultancy fees are included in schools' delegated budgets for such projects.

Governing bodies should ensure that any contractor appointed to undertake work on the school premises is competent to do so.

Governing bodies will also need to ensure that the Headteacher has an appropriate workload, in support of a reasonable work/life balance, having regard to his/her health and welfare.

Governing Bodies of Schools must ensure that the policies and procedures for recruitment, induction, staff development, performance management and capability used by their school addresses the areas covered by the Health and Safety Competence and Capability Code of Practice and, as a minimum, achieves the same standards as the Council HR Policies and Procedures. External advisers appointed by the Governing Body to assist in the performance management of head teachers should also be made aware of the Council's standards relating to performance management.

## **4. Safety representatives, Safety Committee and consultation with staff**

### **4.1 Safety representatives**

The Schools Service encourages effective joint consultation on health and safety matters with safety representatives, both through the Safety Committee and through local managers. A safety representatives agreement has been negotiated with the recognised trade unions.

### **4.2 Safety Committee**

The Schools Service has a Safety Committee which was established by the Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator. The purpose of the Safety Committee is to facilitate consultation on Schools Service health and safety issues and to enable employees to raise and discuss any matters concerning health and safety within the Service's work areas and in schools.

The Safety Committee will be made up of employee representatives and management representatives as described in the constitution. The Committee will meet three times a year and will ratify an annual report to the Central Safety Advisory Panel.

### **4.3 Local consultation**

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place for consultation with workplace safety representatives and to address issues raised by safety representatives on behalf of the staff they represent.

In any situations where the trade unions have not appointed local safety representatives, Headteachers are responsible for arrangements to consult directly with employees in the establishment, or with their elected representatives. The recognised trade unions have agreed that safety representatives may represent staff who are not members of the trade union for the purposes of consultation on health, safety and welfare matters.

Headteachers must ensure that all relevant staff are consulted with regard to risk assessments which cover their work activities.

## **5. General arrangements for health and safety**

### **5.1 Local organisation and arrangements**

Headteachers are responsible for completing Appendix 1 indicating the local organisation and arrangements for implementing the Policy.

## **5.2. Codes of practice**

The detailed arrangements for implementing the Policy are contained in codes of practice which are listed in Appendix 2

## **5.3. Risk assessments**

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations there is a requirement for all risks to health and safety to be assessed and for significant findings to be recorded. The codes of practice were prepared following an assessment of the risks and in general form the basis of most routine risk assessments. However, as generic assessments they have limitations and it is the responsibility of managers to ensure assessments are modified and extended to take account of local circumstances. Headteachers are responsible for ensuring specific risk assessments are undertaken (such as VDU and Manual Handling) and for undertaking risk assessments relating to hazards to which directly managed staff are exposed (this will include stress risk assessments).

# **6. Health and Safety monitoring and auditing**

## **6.1 Health and Safety Monitoring**

The Schools Service has established the following systems for health and safety monitoring:

- An annual internal monitoring checklist system which will be distributed annually to community and voluntary controlled schools by the Schools Health and Safety Team. It must be completed by all headteachers and, in secondary schools, by heads of department or their equivalent.
- Inspections of establishments, sites and contractor operations by headteachers as identified in codes of practice or specific risk assessments.
- Routine checks on equipment and electrical, gas, mechanical and other services.
- Investigation of incidents, accidents and causes of ill-health by local managers in the first instance.
- Hazard reporting as described in codes of practice.

## **6.2 Health and Safety auditing**

The County Health and Safety Unit is responsible for an auditing programme which will include community and voluntary controlled schools. On receipt of an audit report, headteachers will prepare an action plan, which will be forwarded to the Schools Health and Safety Team.

### **6.3 Health and Safety review**

Headteachers and governing bodies will review health and safety performance in the following ways:

- Using the Performance Management system to ensure health and safety is an integral element of target setting, monitoring performance and related processes.
- Establishing systems for ensuring that issues identified by monitoring and auditing are addressed.
- Establishing procedures when issues are not addressed.

The procedure must address the following issues:

- How the matter will be dealt with within the line management structure when it is referred upwards, with responsibilities established for each stage.
- The point at which the matter must be referred to the Governing Body if it is a general issue rather than one individual's failing.
- The procedure must include a response to remedy failures, whether observed in routine activities, active or reactive monitoring, or auditing.

The procedure must be well documented to emphasise that, for example, deviation from the established codes of practice is unacceptable. It is important that there is a way of holding failing managers to account.

## **7. Consequences of non-compliance**

It is a requirement for all staff to fulfil their responsibilities as outlined in this policy. Where there is a failure to comply with the Policy (including the codes of practice), whether observed in routine activities, active or reactive monitoring or auditing, an appropriate response is required to hold managers and staff to account and remedy the failure within the establishment. The system in place for schools is as follows:

- Where reasonable efforts have been made by the Schools Service Health and Safety Team to secure information, compliance or co-operation to comply with legislation and prevent enforcement action against ECC, the issue will be passed in writing to the Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator. All documents, including details of telephone or verbal conversations with the Headteacher will be provided as evidence that 'reasonable steps have been taken to secure compliance.
- The Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator will then directly intervene either verbally or in writing to establish a timescale in which the establishment manager or member of staff will comply with the County Council's request.
- Where a Headteacher fails to co-operate with the Local Authority, thereby placing the County Council at risk of legal action, the Schools Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator will raise the issue with the Chair of Governors. The Governing Body will be expected to direct the Headteacher to take

appropriate action and, if non-compliance continues, disciplinary procedures will ensue.

- In the event of further non-compliance, the Health and Safety Co-ordinator will refer the matter to the Schools Service Management Team for consideration of further action.
- In the event of further non-compliance, the matter may be referred to the Chief Executive. The 'employer' (ECC) under the *Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998* has the authority to recoup costs from school budgets where it is forced to undertake additional work in schools in order to meet legal requirements. This will be done only when the Schools Service has made all reasonable efforts to achieve compliance.
- For serious breaches of health and safety legislation or the ECC Health, Safety and Welfare Policy resulting in an employee putting either him- or herself, or others at risk, disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure will follow.
- Where the breach is considered to be sufficiently serious it may be regarded as gross misconduct, possibly resulting in dismissal from the Council's service.
- Ultimately, compliance would be enforceable through the courts. Substantial or persistent non-compliance with the Schools Policy requirements is a ground for suspending delegation, subject to the governing body's right of appeal.
- It is necessary to have relevant procedures in place, as stated in this document, to ensure that all employees and managers in the Schools Service and in schools fulfil their legal responsibilities so that the County Council is able to meet its legal obligations as 'the employer'. A failure to manage health and safety could lead to enforcement action by the Health and Safety Executive.

## **8. Performance Management Reviews for Headteachers and Teachers.**

Schools follow a nationally set performance management system that is focused on improving teacher practice and pupil achievement. It would not be appropriate to include explicit references to health and safety in every PMR. However health and safety should be considered as part of the PMR process and it would be appropriate to include a health and safety objective where there are specific areas that need development.

Whilst there are few specific links to health and safety in the ten elements that make up the National Standards for Teaching, those carrying out the PMR of teaching staff will need to link health and safety to where it applies within the ten elements, for example, pupil behaviour and management, leadership etc.

For the Headteacher, account should be taken of the results of annual internal monitoring, health and safety audit reports, Ofsted reports and S4 forms. Where these show areas that need development, health and safety should be included as a specific objective under Leadership. It would therefore be necessary for the Performance Management Governor to draw the attention of the external adviser

appointed to carry out the headteacher's PMR to any health and safety matters that need to be considered.

References should be made to teaching staff responsibilities in this document. Information in the appendices to this document can also be used to assist in determining appropriate health and safety related objectives.

## Local organisation and arrangements Notice

<b>Name of establishment</b>	<b>Alec Hunter Humanities College</b>
<b>Manager responsible for establishment:</b> e.g. Headteacher	<b>Andrew Hutchinson</b>
<b>School's Health and Safety Co-ordinator</b> (if applicable)	<b>Pat Shelock</b>
<b>Location of Health and Safety codes of practice/documentation/risk assessments</b>	<b>Personnel Office</b>
<b>Location of Fire Register</b>	<b>Bursars Office</b>
<b>Procedure for accident reporting</b> (name of employee to report to and if appropriate, who reports to the HSE)	<b>Pat Shelock</b>
<b>First Aider/Appointed Person(s)</b>	<b>Donna Bootle Nicola Mc Givern</b>
<b>Procedure for reporting hazards</b> (name, tel.no. or other contact arrangements such as a Hazard Book)	<b>Bursars Office Internal 215</b>
<b>Name(s) of establishment's Trade Union safety representatives</b>	<b>NUT &amp; NASUWT</b>
<b>Fire assembly point</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>
<b>Fire Marshal/Evacuation Officer</b> (if applicable)	
<b>Day and time of weekly fire alarm tests</b>	<b>Friday 4pm</b>
<b>Name, address and telephone number of nearest hospital</b>	<b>Broomfield Hospital 01245 514390</b>
<b>Location of First Aid boxes</b>	<b>Main Reception</b>

## Health & Safety codes of practice

No.	Title	Publication date
1	Managing Health and Safety in Secondary Schools	July 1999
2	Managing Asbestos in County Council Buildings	January 2000
3	D&T Food Technology and Textiles	July 1996
6	Art, Craft and Design	August 1988
7	Management of Contracts	September 2003
9	Science Education	January 1998
10	Rural Studies	January 1991
11	Physical Education	October 2002
12	Grounds Maintenance	April 1990
13.1	D&T Automobile Practice	September 1982
13.2	D&T Wood	March 2003
13.3	D&T Metal	February 2003
13.4	D&T Heat Processes	April 2003
13.5	D&T Annual Safe Conditions Survey	September 2001
13.6	D&T Plastics	April 1996
13.7	D&T Control Systems	April 1996
14	Swimming Pools and Associated Equipment	September 1997
16	Drama	September 1999
21.1	Building Contracts undertaken on County Council Premises Centrally Financed Projects	August 1996
21.2	Building Contracts undertaken on County Council Premises Locally Financed Projects	August 1996
23	Outdoor Play and Environmental Activities	February 1993
24	Operation of Small Buses (Minibuses)	May 1999
25	Primary School Code of Practice	September 2000
26	Manual Handling Operations – Inanimate Objects	September 1995
27	Manual Handling Operations – Manual Handling of People	September 1995
28	Safe Practice on Educational, Adventurous and Recreational Visits	April 2003
29	The Administration of Medicines to Pupils and Procedures for Dealing with Certain Medical Conditions	May 2002
32	Managing Violence in Schools	October 1997
33	Health and Safety in Special Schools	November 2001
34	Managing Occupational Stress	April 1998