

# 2017

## Health and Safety Policy



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and Nursery School, Burnham Market  
Primary School

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017

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## **Introduction**

Norfolk County Council's (NCC) commitment to the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others affected by its activities is outlined in the document 'Health and Safety Our Commitments'. The overall health and safety management approach adopted by NCC is in line with the health and safety management model described in the Health and Safety Executive's microsite Managing for Health and Safety.

NCC expects employees to adhere to this policy in line with its obligations under equality legislation. Managers must ensure that all reasonable adjustments or supportive measures are considered to allow equality of access and opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith or religion, gender identity, pregnancy or marital status.

This document sets out a short step by step guide to assist Headteachers/managers to understand the NCC health and safety management system and their role in managing health and safety in schools.

## **The NCC Health and Safety Management System**

The purpose of a health and safety management system is to enable an organisation to understand and control its health and safety risks in a proportionate way and to improve its performance. It aims to eliminate or minimise risk to employees and others who may be exposed to risks associated with its activities. It enables the organisation to assure itself of its conformance with its stated policy and to demonstrate such conformance to others. The system will also assist the organisation in meeting applicable legal obligations.

NCC's Health and Safety Policy Statement 'Our Commitments' establishes the overall commitment and principles relating to health and safety management; it demonstrates a formal and public commitment to good health and safety management.

The Policy statement is reviewed every two years by the Health, Safety and Well-being Manager. Any revisions are agreed with Unions before being authorised by Chief Officers and signed by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

Information and guidance to support the model are published on Schools' PeopleNet, the NCC HR Internet site. The site contains documents that set out NCC's expectations and levels of mandatory compliance through policies, as well as other documents which have a guidance status to help schools comply with their policy duties. All published documents provide advice and guidance on how to achieve safe systems of work taking into account legislation, enforcement agencies/industry best practice, case law and incidents.

By following these policies and procedures schools can develop local procedures and work instructions. These describe the local arrangements for that school for managing particular tasks or activities.

## **Organisational Responsibilities**

NCC recognises that overall responsibility for health and safety lies with all levels of management having direct responsibility for activities, employees and commissioned and contracted services under their control. However, all employees have a legal and moral

responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for those other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

NCC, through the designated cabinet member for Finance, Corporate and Personnel, has overall responsibility for NCC's Health and Safety Policy 'Our Commitments'.

## **Management Responsibilities**

### **Chief Executive**

As the Head of paid staff the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health and safety at NCC. They are responsible for ensuring:

- The Health and Safety Policy 'Our Commitments', and the health and safety management system, is properly implemented and adhered to across the organisation.
- The effectiveness of the health and safety organisation and arrangements.
- The provision of appropriate resources to enable persons with specific responsibilities to perform their duties effectively.

### **The Director of Children's Services**

Has responsibility for ensuring that suitable and adequate organisation and arrangements are in place for the management and control of health and safety within NCC schools. In particular, they must ensure that:

- The Council's health and safety policy and procedures are implemented in schools;
- Effective Directorate/Department policies and procedures are developed and implemented for specific service related areas of risk, along with detailed work instructions where necessary;
- A positive health and safety culture is actively demonstrated and promoted through good leadership, including a commitment to continuous improvement.
- They and their Management Team understand and are competent to carry out their duties for health, safety and welfare;
- Adequate budgetary provision is made to meet the cost of fulfilling the Directorate's responsibilities in relation to health, safety and welfare.
- Adequate time and resources are given to Headteachers, managers and employees to fulfil their roles as defined by the policy.
- There are adequate and effective arrangements in place for consulting all employees and their representative trade unions on matters that affect their health and safety;
- Ensure that the management of health and safety in schools considers the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act

## **Headteachers, line managers, supervisors and team leaders**

Although the overall legal responsibility lies with NCC, and therefore the Chief Executive and the Director for Children's Services, schools where NCC is the employer operate under a devolved management system, including budgets. Therefore Headteachers are responsible for the operational health and safety management system within their school. They must ensure that the requirements of relevant safety policies and procedures are complied with. The Model School Health and Safety Policy on School's PeopleNet provides detailed information about the requirements that Headteachers and others with management roles within a school setting need to meet. NCC expects schools to adopt and customise this model policy. All staff must understand the relevant parts of this document as it applies to their role. Headteachers/managers must ensure that these responsibilities are understood and can be practically applied by their teams.

## **School Governors (where Norfolk County Council is the employer)**

The Governing Body is required to monitor (rather than actively manage) that their school is meeting its obligations by checking that policies and procedures are implemented in accordance with requirements. There are many ways that a Governing Body can contribute towards good health and safety performance, for example:

- Ensure that the school has an up to date health and safety policy which clearly states responsibilities and arrangements for health and safety within the school
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed and updated as required (e.g. annually, or prior to this if there are reasons to implement a review, such as after an incident)
- Ensure effective communication with Headteachers, safety representatives, parents and pupils.
- Ensure that sufficient resources, including time and finance, are provided to manage health and safety.
- Receiving an annual health and safety report from the headteacher and ensuring that this is discussed with the full governing body

## **Health and safety – management model**

The management of health and safety is no different to any other management activity and is a core part of business. The line management role is key to assisting the organisation to deliver effective, proactive health and safety management. The means of achieving this are part of a standard management model (Plan-Do-Check-Act) as follows:

### **Plan-Do-Check-Act for safety**

1. Establish standards based on risk assessment (Plan)
2. Implement plans to achieve objectives (Do)
3. Measure progress with plans and standards required (Check)
4. Review and take action where needed (Act)

Headteachers/managers must set a personal example by including health and safety management in daily management practice and demonstrating safe personal working practices.

## **Managing activities (staff, pupils and visitors) and sensible risk management**

Risk assessment is the cornerstone of good health and safety. It is a way of identifying significant risks that have the likelihood to cause harm and then developing control measures and safe systems of work. Headteachers/managers are responsible for ensuring that the activities under their control are assessed and that relevant measures are put in place to control the risks.

NCC has signed up to the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) pledge to take a sensible approach to managing health and safety risk. This means that time and effort is focused on risks which are most significant and arise most often. Full details of Sensible Risk Management are available on School's PeopleNet.

Undertaking a risk assessment of the working environment, activities and job design will help to identify the information, instruction and training needs of your team. The following list of core subjects should be referred to on School's PeopleNet as they relate to your areas of management control:

### General risk assessment

- Curriculum Codes of Practice. Certain school curriculum subjects such as science, Design and Technology, PE and swimming expose pupils and staff to a number of potentially significant hazards. Model risk assessments and safe working practices necessary to manage these risks are detailed in each code of practice. Records of Procedural Arrangements are available for each code must be completed on an annual basis as part of subject heads' monitoring of their area of responsibility to ensure they are confident that suitable controls are in place and staff are familiar with the requirements.
- Primary Curriculum Code of Practice. The risk involved is relatively low, however to keep children aged 5 - 11 safe, suitable working practices in Primary, PE, art, science and technology must be followed. Again, a record of procedural arrangements must be completed.
- Pupil Health. Guidance is available on general infection control and specific topics such as managing medicines and intimate care (toileting of disabled pupils).
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for Pupils. Where pupils require assistance in the event of a fire or emergency a PEEP must be developed. Guidance and templates are provided in the section on Fire Safety.

Please note - NCC has adopted national guidance for Educational Visits management and this information is used by both schools as required.

Other specific policies, guidance and templates for risk assessing activities and hazards are provided on School's Peoplenet as follows and are used and reviewed annually by the Headteacher and relevant staff.

- Driving for Business
- Manual handling
- First aid
- Incident reporting
- Violence at Work
- Lone Working
- Work equipment

You may also need to look at other policies and assessments that relate to equipment such as hazardous substances (e.g. if the equipment creates dust), noise, hand arm vibration, D and T Code of Practice etc. Assessments must be reviewed annually, and equipment must be maintained and checked in line with required or recommended inspection frequencies

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- New and expectant mothers
- Young people at work (work experience placements and employment of people under 18)
- Occupational health - referrals
- Well Being at Work
- Use of Hazardous Substances

Please note, where the use of hazardous substances relates to the the curriculum, then specific information for the use of hazardous substances is provided - see CLEAPSS and the relevant Code of Practice.

- Management of Contracts and Contractors
- Asbestos

All Headteachers/managers have responsibilities under this policy in relation to asbestos in the buildings they control.

- Fire

All Headteachers/managers have responsibilities under this policy, for example, in relation to evacuation arrangements.

Specialised guidance referred to in Codes of Practice, e.g. CLEAPSS, Association for Physical Education etc

- E- safety



## Competency

### Information, instruction and training

Headteachers/managers must ensure that staff under their control are provided with adequate information, instruction and training to carry out their role safely; paying particular attention to new/inexperienced staff, trainees and role changes with new health and safety implications.

All staff require an awareness of health and safety and some degree of formal training is usually required. The training requirements depend on a number of factors including organisational and legal requirements.

Information, instruction and training does not always require attendance on formal training courses. In many instances verbal or written instruction may be sufficient, for example:

Providing a briefing about the safe working methods that have been identified through risk assessment.

Job shadowing/observing an experienced member of staff as part of job induction.

Providing step by step instructions on how to perform a particular task

Informing staff of the location of asbestos containing material and what to do if it becomes damaged.

Using INSET days or team meetings to include health and safety and first aid training.

To define what is a suitable and sufficient means of providing information, instruction and training will depend upon a number of factors such as: complexity, the significance of the risk posed and the need to adequately prepare the staff taking into account individual existing knowledge, experience and training.

### School's PeopleNet (health and safety management system)

School's PeopleNet is the main source of health and safety policy and guidance for Headteachers/managers in NCC schools. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team develops policy, guidance and information on all key areas of health and safety management using information from a range of sources which include: regulations; approved codes of practice; industry standards and best practice guidance.

School's PeopleNet consists of a number of sections for health and safety management which follow the plan-do-check-act management cycle. Health, Safety and WellBeing on School's PeopleNet is structured as follows:

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#### Health and Safety

##### Responsibilities and Organisation

##### Health and Safety Policy

A model health and safety policy template is provided on School's PeopleNet for completion by the Headteacher/Governing Body

## Roles and Responsibilities Section

Guidance and information on curriculum and general risk assessment and specific work activities for pupils, staff and visitors. Links to other sources of information such as CLEAPSS are also provided

## Occupational Health and Norfolk Support Line

Guidance and information on specific health related management issues including pre-employment health assessment, management referrals and health surveillance.

Please note: these services are provided within the HR services package.

Staff health and safety information is also provided on School's PeopleNet and is a resource for Headteachers/managers to incorporate into the provision of staff information, instruction and training where it is relevant to the work.

## Induction

All new staff must have a general induction as well as information, instruction and training in specific areas of work. The general induction must include the following as a minimum:

- Fire arrangements for the workplace, including assembly point, exit routes, fire alarm sounder and specific details as they relate to the premises.
- First aid arrangements - first aid contacts and location of first aid equipment.
- Details of asbestos containing materials which are relevant to the place(s) of work
- Welfare facilities - toilets, kitchen, rest areas.
- Incident reporting requirements.
- Staff responsibilities (general, specific arrangements such as checking portable electrical equipment using the checklist, responsibility for pupil safety in lesson planning and delivery).
- Relevant risk assessments which apply to the work and safe working practice
- Arrangements for competency development such as mentoring, job shadowing, training courses and what work tasks cannot be carried out until the required competency level is achieved.
- Means to report building defects and Premises Headteacher/line manager information.
- Premises security and any lone working requirements.
- Pupil safety and safeguarding

## Training

Norfolk County Council provides a range of in-house health and safety training courses designed to provide attendees with the means to practically apply safe methods of work,

combined with the appropriate level of subject knowledge and the use of relevant NCC guidance and information.

All Headteachers/managers must be able to discharge their health and safety responsibilities on behalf of the organisation. The starting point is to attend the NCC one day Health and Safety Training Course for Headteachers and Line Managers. Attendance on this course sets the direction for effective health and safety management.

There may also be circumstances where job specific training is not provided in-house and will need to be organised by the Headteacher/manager (see details in the Health and Safety Training Directory for Schools on Schools' PeopleNet).

### **e-learning modules**

Short health and safety modules are provided which cover core subjects including manual handling, display screen equipment and fire. Use of these courses may not necessarily replace the need for staff to attend a formal training course or receive further instruction and information, for example, lifting techniques for manual handling.

## **Health, safety and wellbeing support**

### **Health and safety team**

Health and Safety Advisers assist Headteachers/managers in their role by providing: advice and training; producing safety guidance; information and procedures; assistance with incident investigations (depending upon severity) and supporting Headteachers/managers in the risk assessment process.

### **Occupational health and wellbeing team – for all schools purchasing the HR service**

This team is responsible for managing and promoting the Occupational Health Service, Musculoskeletal Injury Rehabilitation Service (MIRS) and Norfolk Support Line (NSL) services. These are contracted in services which provide treatment for staff and/or advice to Headteachers/managers in relation to a staff members' health and work.

## **Team engagement, consultation and communication**

### **Team engagement**

Team engagement is about the participation in decisions that are made relating to health and safety, for example by:

- Involving some of the team for the work area as part of the risk assessment process in order to make the assessment more meaningful and reflect real work practices.
- Consulting with the team as part of the change process.

### **Communication**

Health and safety information should be given at the right time, in the right way to the right people.

Headteachers/managers should identify the most appropriate two-way communication routes with their staff. Written organisational information for health and safety is provided on Management Information (MI) Sheets, School's PeopleNet and Message of the Month. Headteachers should also consider how health and safety information is conveyed to parents, e.g. sharing information on serious injuries sustained at school.

## **Behaviour**

Headteachers/managers can communicate powerful signals about the importance and significance of health and safety when they lead by example. Equally, the development of a positive health and safety culture can be undermined by negative behaviour.

## **Team meetings**

Health and safety should always be an agenda item at team meetings. This will enable staff to make a more personal contribution and to raise issues. Headteachers/managers use meetings to discuss key risks, relevant precautions, review risk assessments and as a means of supplementing training by giving further instruction and information.

Relevant health and safety arrangements, information and individual targets can be discussed at 1-2-1s as a means of communication, changing behaviour and information sharing.

It is important that all members of staff, teaching and non teaching, get the opportunity to discuss health and safety issues. It can be difficult in a school setting to ensure this is the case, particularly if there are a high number of part time staff, but every effort must be made to ensure all staff can take part.

## **Health and safety monitoring**

### **Proactive**

Premises and activity monitoring must be carried out to ensure that workplace precautions are in place. The range of monitoring activity includes:

- Inspections by line and premises Headteachers/managers within their area of responsibility (including grounds, activities, work of peripatetic staff).
- Headteachers/managers monitoring staff awareness and understanding at team meetings and through work observation.
- Use of the appraisal process and supervision meetings to monitor staff compliance with health and safety responsibilities individually.
- Planned inspection and monitoring visits carried out by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team (including contractors)
- Health surveillance (please note, there are specific requirements for Health Surveillance in relation to Design and Technology contained in the D&T Code of Practice)

## Reactive

### Incident investigation

Staff incidents which must be reported on an online NCC Incident Report Form are: work related ill health; injury; violence at work; near misses; property damage and dangerous occurrences. Pupil incidents that must be reported are injuries that result in the pupil being taken to hospital as a result of their injuries.

Incident reporting is the responsibility of all staff and as a result we learn from what's happened and work towards preventing it from happening again. Headteachers/managers must ensure that all work related incidents are reported, processed, investigated and the findings acted on without delay. An important part of the investigation process is to involve the injured person (or others relating to the incident) as appropriate, for example, making contact with the injured person without delay and advising of action that may have been taken as a result of an incident.

The purpose of investigations is to identify the underlying cause of incidents and not just the direct and more obvious cause. Headteachers must ensure that investigations are sufficiently thorough to enable them to deal with these underlying causes.

## Contractors and partnerships

### Contractor approval, selection and monitoring

If you directly engage contractors (and they are not approved by NPS) you must ensure that the health and safety Contractor Code of Practice is implemented as part of the approval process.

A member of the Health, Safety and Well-Being team should be involved in this process where higher risk activities are involved, for example, work at height, electrical and gas safety related services, other construction related works.

Where services and goods are contracted, Headteachers must ensure that the relevant health and safety responsibilities are clear between both parties and that health and safety monitoring arrangements are put in place. This must be proportionate to the risk involved.

### Partnerships (including seconded Council Staff)

Where the School is working in partnership with other organisations and/or there are Council seconded staff working for that organisation, arrangements for monitoring health and safety must be included as part of the original partnership plan. The frequency of monitoring will depend upon the level of risk involved in the partnership activity. The partnership arrangements must include identification of the health and safety arrangements which will be implemented and/or shared by all parties involved in the partnership.

## **Health and safety planning and change management**

### **Annual planning**

At a service level, Headteachers/line managers must consider the actions and resources they need to assist with health and safety management for the following year. Examples of identification of actions can arise from a range of areas such as risk assessments, monitoring, planned refurbishment and governance arrangements.

### **Change management**

Health and safety considerations relating to changes in activities, organisational structure, premises, specific projects and equipment must be integral at the planning phase. If it is overlooked, additional costs can arise which can lead to lost time, sickness absence, reduced staff morale, increased injury and disruption. Headteachers/managers must ensure that health and safety requirements are assessed as part of the change process using the risk assessment process.

### **Construction, refurbishment, acquisitions and disposals work – key information if you are involved in a project**

As a Headteacher/manager you may become involved in changes to premises which include construction, relocation and refurbishment.

Where construction related work is undertaken on school premises both the school and the contractor have health and safety responsibilities. Specific health and safety training is provided for construction related work. It is recommended that Headteachers (and Premises Managers) attend this training which is detailed in the Health and Safety Training Directory on Schools' PeopleNet.

Further guidance is provided on Schools' PeopleNet under the Premises and Construction Sections.

## **Occupational health and well being**

### **Well being**

Please note: Headteacher and staff Well-being support and information is available through the Head Teacher Support Adviser who can be contacted on 01603 303358.

### **Health**

The risk assessment process requires Headteachers/managers to consider individuals who may potentially be at greater risk due to an individual health or condition, for example, diabetes, depression, asthma, pregnancy, limited mobility, or a learning difficulty. The risk assessment process also considers the general health risks to all staff.

### **Occupational health (as part of HR package)**

Occupational health is a branch of health care concerned specifically where health affects work or work can affect health. The Headteacher/manager may want to refer a member of staff to occupational health if they have:

- Been absent from work, either short-term or long-term, and the attendance management policy states they should be referred.

- Advised they have been diagnosed with a health condition that has an effect, or will have an effect, on their ability to perform their job.
- Reported health problems that they or their manager believe may be related to the job they perform.

HR Direct (01603 222212), NCC's Occupational Health Adviser (01603 223338) , and Atos Healthcare's helpline (0845 371 3302) are available to support and advise managers at all stages of a referral, from considering whether it is appropriate, to acting on the advice given by Occupational Health.

### **Health surveillance (as part of HR package)**

Work processes and risk assessment may identify hazards that require health surveillance in relation to noise, vibration, working with substances that can affect the lungs and substances that can affect the skin.

### **Musculoskeletal injury rehabilitation service (purchased separately)**

MIRS provides fast-track treatment for staff who have a musculoskeletal injury that;

- Prevents them coming to work
- Prevents them undertaking their normal duties
- Is made worse (exacerbated) by their work.

Referral is through a person who has completed a short training session (referral manager) - see details in the Health and Safety Training Directory on Schools' PeopleNet. Once referred, staff are contacted within 24 hours and treatment commences (where appropriate) within 3 working days. The referral manager receives reports at the beginning and end of treatment in order to help them manage the staff member.

### **Norfolk support line (provided as part of the HR package or purchased separately)**

NSL provides counselling, information, signposting and support for staff with issues affecting their psychological well-being. Staff can have telephone or face-to-face counselling (where appropriate). As well as emotional support, NSL can also provide legal, financial or health advice when it is part of the issue affecting the staff member's well-being.

As a Headteacher/manager, NSL can also provide you with: -

- Guidance when assisting staff with their problems
- Support in tackling difficult management issues
- Help with responding to the early warning signs of stress
- Support in developing skills

Norfolk Support Line can be contacted 24 hours/day on 0800 169 7676. Further information about the service can be found on School's PeopleNet.

## Premises management and Caretaking

Headteachers/premises managers and Caretakers have a responsibility for ensuring the safety, security and maintenance of school premises. Headteachers/premises managers must ensure that they are familiar with any shared responsibilities for their particular areas of work, for example, who carries out general housekeeping inspections, who develops the fire escape plan and communication routes for premises related issues etc.

Detailed guidance on premises managers' responsibilities and guidance relating to that are available on Schools' PeopleNet. NCC provides health and safety training for Premises Managers and their supervisors. See the Health and Safety Training Directory for details.

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**Ratification Date**

**Review Date**

**Signed Chair of Governors**

**Date**

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