

# Health and Safety Policy

**Revised:** July 2020

**1 Introduction**

1.1 Chance 2 Change recognises and accepts that every one of its employees, students and visitors to the Unit is entitled to a safe and healthy environment.

1.2 It is the intention of the SLT of the Unit that all appropriate steps will be taken to meet statutory requirements, recognised codes of practice and guidance notes in establishing a safe and healthy environment. The “References” section at the end of this policy sets out these sources.

1.3 The overall high quality of the environment will be evidence of a strong ethos of housekeeping, which will permeate the Unit community and an awareness of the fabric and appearance of the building will be demonstrated by students and employees on a daily basis.

1.4 All employees have both a duty and a responsibility to take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves and others and to co-operate to ensure statutory duties and obligations are fulfilled.

The Unit’s Health and Safety Policy can only be successfully implemented with the full co-operation of everyone concerned. This will be achieved so far as is reasonably practicable by adoption of arrangements and procedures developed out of risk assessment for control of risk.

These can be summarised as:

• Providing and maintaining safe equipment and safe systems of work

• Making arrangements to ensure the safe use, handling, storage and transport of materials, drugs, substances and other articles

• Providing the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure all personnel are aware of their responsibilities for safety

• Providing safe places of work with safe access to and exit from them

• Providing a safe and healthy working environment

• Providing a system for rapidly identifying and remedying hazards

• Where hazardous conditions cannot be eliminated, providing suitable protective clothing and equipment

**2 Responsibilities**

2.1 The Department for Education guidance notes on the statutory responsibilities of schools sets out key responsibilities. Responsibilities of the Governing Body The ultimate responsibility for all aspects of Health and Safety at work within the Unit rests with the leadership team through the safety organisation.

2.2 In discharging its responsibilities, SLT will:

1. make itself familiar with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice;
2. monitor the management structure for Health and Safety;
3. ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety throughout the Unit, and, that it is implemented;
4. periodically assess the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made; and
5. identify and evaluate risks relating to possible accidents and incidents connected with Unit-sponsored activities, including work experience.

2.3 In particular, SLT undertakes to provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

1. a safe place for all users of the site to work, including safe means of entry and exit;
2. plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
3. safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances;
4. safe and healthy working conditions that take account of appropriate statutory requirements, code of practice and guidance;
5. supervision, training and instruction so that all staff and students can perform their school-related activities in a healthy and safe manner; and
6. provide safety and protective equipment and clothing, with associated guidance, instruction and supervision.

**Responsibilities of the Executive Principal**

2.4 The Executive Principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day development and the effective implementation of safe working practices and conditions for all staff, students and visitors. The Executive Principal will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that the Health and Safety policy is implemented.

**Responsibilities of the Health & Safety Manager**

2.5 The Executive Principal will designate the Business Manager to be the Unit’s Health and Safety (H&S) Manager. The H&S Manager will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and will be the designated contact with the Health & Safety Executive. They are also responsible for advising all personnel in meeting their individual responsibilities with regard to Health and Safety at work.

**Responsibilities of Supervisory Staff**

2.6 All supervisory staff will make themselves familiar with the requirements of health and safety legislation and codes of practice that are relevant to the work of their area of responsibility.

2.7 In addition to the general duties that all members of staff have, they will be directly responsible to the H&S Manager for the implementation and operation of the Unit’s Health and Safety Policy within their relevant departments and areas of responsibility.

2.8 Responsibility for specific aspects of Health and Safety are delegated to some staff via their job descriptions.

2.9 Supervisory staff will take a direct responsibility in the Unit’s Health and Safety Policy and in ensuring that staff, students and others comply with its requirements. Where any new process or operation or substance is introduced into the area of their responsibility, they are to liaise with the H&S Manager so that the associated risks are assessed, and any precautions deemed necessary are implemented.

**Responsibilities of all members of staff**

2.10 All staff must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety aspects of their work and avoid conduct which would put themselves or anyone else at risk.

2.11 In particular, members of staff will:

1. be familiar with the Health and Safety Policy and all safety requirements laid down by the SLT;
2. ensure that staff, students, visitors and contractors are applying Health and Safety regulations, rules, routines and procedures effectively;
3. see that all plant, machinery and equipment are in good and safe working order and adequately guarded, and not make or allow improper use of such plant, machinery and equipment;
4. use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective equipment or safety devices that is supplied;
5. ensure that toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
6. report any defects in the premises, plant, equipment and facilities that they observe to the H&S Manager; and
7. take an active interest in promoting Health and Safety and suggest ways of reducing risks.

**Students**

2.12 Students have a responsibility to ensure that they act with all reasonable care with regard to Health and Safety of themselves and others.

**Health and Safety Monitoring**

2.13 The Unit’s SLT is responsible for monitoring Health and Safety performance and recommending any action necessary should this performance appear or prove to be unsatisfactory.

2.14 Terms of reference of the SLT: Under section 2 (7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Safety Committee has the function, in consultation with the staff and students it represents of keeping under review the measures taken to ensure the Health and Safety at Work of the employees and students.

Specific functions will include:

• The study of accident and notifiable disease statistics and trends so that reports can be made to the SLT on unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action

• Examination of safety audit reports on a similar basis

• Consideration of reports and factual information provided by inspectors of the enforcing authority

• Consideration of reports that safety representatives may submit

• Assistance in risk assessment and the development of Chance 2 Change safety procedures and safe systems of work

• Monitoring the effectiveness of safety procedures and safe systems of work

• Monitoring the effectiveness of the safety content of employee training

• Monitoring the adequacy of safety and health communications and publicity at the Unit

**3 Risk Assessments**

Responsibility for assessing and controlling risks rests with all personnel within the Unit. However, risk assessments and training shall be performed in consultation with the H&S Manager.

**4 Safety Education**

4.1 The DFE1 has published guidance for schools on Safety Education.

This guidance shows how the curriculum for Personal, Social Health and Education (PSHE) and Citizenship can address the issue of accidental injury and death in children and young people.

4.2 One of the aims of PSHE is to enable children to apply personal and social skills to a range of contexts in their lives. Skills in risk assessment learned in relation to preventing accidents are transferable to other issues.

4.3 This DfE guidance also sets out the general teaching requirement for health and safety in relation to science, design and technology, information and communication technology, art and design, and physical education.

**5 Specific Arrangements for Health and Safety Fire Safety**

5.1 Appropriate procedures for ensuring that safety precautions are properly managed will be formulated and disseminated to all staff. These procedures will include Fire Drills and the use of Fire Extinguishers and Fire Blankets.

5.2 Chance 2 Change evacuation procedure will be prominently displayed in all teaching rooms, offices and curriculum areas. All staff and students must be fully conversant with the procedures for evacuation of the premises in case of a fire/bomb threat. Evacuation procedures will be tested each term. The evacuation and safety of visitors and contractors will be the responsibility of the person who they are visiting or working for. They will be accounted for by a designated member of staff during the numbers check.

5.3 All firefighting equipment will be checked annually by an approved contractor and records maintained. The fire alarms for all Chance 2 Change buildings will be tested weekly from different points when the site is not in use and records maintained by the Site Manager. All emergency lighting will be tested six-monthly and records maintained by the appointed contractor.

5.4 All emergency exits must be kept clear of obstructions. Staff who see an obstructed exit must clear the obstruction if it is safe to do so or report it immediately to the Health & Safety Manager.

5.5 The most important part of fire control is prevention. It is with this is mind that all personnel are conversant with the fire potential of materials and substances that they use, and should exercise maximum care in their use, especially those marked ‘flammable’. All staff must take the recommended online fire safety training.

**Reporting Accidents**

5.6 Any accident or injury to staff, students and visitors must be reported, in writing, using the Unit’s report procedures. All student and staff accidents or injuries will be recorded on the systems in place. Visitor injuries will be recorded on an accident form. The H&S Manager should be made aware of any accident or injury. Certain accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). The H&S Manager will ensure that the Health and Safety Executive is informed of reportable incidents. The H&S Manager will also ensure that the Governors are informed of all accidents of a serious nature and any dangerous occurrences, and where applicable follow the requirements of current legislation.

5.7 An analysis of any accidents will be presented to SLT annually. Accident Investigation 5.8 All significant accidents or incidents that are considered to be dangerous and near-miss situations are to be reported.

5.9 The H&S Manager is to carry out an immediate investigation into the incident in order to identify the cause of the accident and measures taken to prevent a reoccurrence

5.10 Investigations such as these are essential in order that accidents, damage to equipment and property, and losses are kept to a minimum.

5.11 The Director is responsible for the coordination of such investigations.

5.12 All contractors must ensure that accidents involving their personnel are reported to the H&S Manager of the Unit as well as their own reporting chain. Coping with the sudden death of a student

5.12 A copy of the DfE guidance notes on coping with the sudden death of a student is given in Annex 2 to this policy.

**First Aid**

5.13 First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones. Under health and safety legislation, employers have to ensure that there are adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities for providing first aid in the workplace.

5.14 A DfE good practice guide, Guidance on First Aid for Schools has been written to provide advice for schools on drawing up first aid policies and ensuring that they are meeting their statutory duties. In particular it includes a checklist of issues which schools may find helpful when undertaking a risk assessment. The SLT seeks to adopt this guidance on good practice.

5.15 The H&S Manager should ensure that the number of certified first-aiders will not, at any time, be less than the number required by law. In addition, supplies of first aid material should be held at various locations throughout the Unit. These supplies should be checked on a regular basis by a qualified first aider.

**Equipment**

5.16 Protective clothing and equipment must be provided and used by staff and site managers when required. Staff and students must be provided with and use protective glasses/eye shields in all workshops and laboratories. Visitors must be provided with protective clothing as appropriate.

5.17 The following equipment must be checked annually by approved inspectors or an appropriately trained member of staff:

• fume cupboards

• all electrical appliances

• workshop equipment, e.g. lathes, kilns

• fixed gymnasium equipment

5.18 When new equipment is purchased, it is the responsibility of the H&S Manager supported by appropriate professional, to ensure that it meets appropriate educational standards and that its installation and use conforms to Health and Safety requirements.

5.19 Equipment, materials and chemicals must be stored in the appropriate storage containers and areas. All containers must be labelled with the correct hazard sign and contents label. Managers should consider storage life when ordering new supplies. Reference must be made to COSHH.

5.20 Defective tools and equipment:

• All defects found in hand tools, power tools or any other equipment must be reported immediately • The equipment concerned is to be withdrawn from service, clearly marked and isolated in an area where it cannot be reissued for further use until repair has been effectively completed.

5.21 Means of access:

• When using access equipment, such as ladders, crawling boards etc, the correct equipment is to be used for the job to be undertaken. Stepladders should always be supported by an assistant

• Always use correct routes of access. Do not use short cuts; they can result in serious accidents

**Machinery**

5.22 Legislation lays down requirements for employers regarding the safety and safe use of all work equipment including machinery. Work equipment should not give rise to risks to Health and Safety irrespective of is age or place of origin. The following safety checklist should be adhered to:

• Only trained and authorised users must be allowed to operate machines

• Training checklists should be used to ensure all the relevant points are covered

• Machines must never be used without all proper guards in place and working correctly. Posters and signs should be used to remind workers of the need to use guards

• Operators should check that all necessary guards are in place before starting any machine

• Areas around machines should be clean, tidy and free of obstructions

• Sufficient clear space should be provided to allow easy movement and reduce the risk of accidental interference from other works

• Appropriate safety clothing should be worn when operating machines

• A sufficient standard of lighting must be provided around machines. In particular, ‘flicker’ must be prevented as this can cause problems when working with moving parts

• A clear system of signing must be implemented for defective machines in order to prevent unauthorised use

• Defects must be remedied promptly

**6 Housekeeping**

6.1 Tidiness, cleanliness and efficiency are essential factors in the promotion of Health and Safety. Accidents can be prevented by following the guidelines listed below:

• Keep corridors and passageways unobstructed

• Ensure shelves in storerooms are stacked neatly and not overloaded

• Keep floors clean

• Do not obstruct emergency exits

6.2 The H&S Manager will monitor the efficiency of the waste collection service. Separate provision must be made for the collection and disposal of laboratory materials (chemicals, broken glass etc.), clinical waste and normal refuse when necessary.

**7 Electrical Equipment**

7.1 Only authorised and fully qualified personnel are to install, repair or attempt to repair electrical equipment.

7.2 Where 13-amp sockets are in use, only one plug per socket is permitted.

7.3 The protective outer sleeve of electrical cables is to be firmly secured within the electric plugs. Where the outer sleeve is not secured within the plug and the connecting live wires are visible, a qualified person is to be tasked to rewire the plug correctly.

7.4 Electrical equipment that is known to be or suspected of being faulty must not be used. If electrical equipment becomes faulty whilst in use, it is to be isolated from the source of supply and secured so that it cannot be used until repair has been affected.

**8 Use of Harmful Substances**

8.1 When using harmful substances, whether they are material or chemical substances, all personnel must ensure that adequate precautions are taken to prevent injury to health.

8.2 No new materials or chemical substances are to be brought into use unless an assessment using the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 has been carried out and clearance given for use by the safety adviser. The user department is to be in possession of a safety data sheet. See also the CLEAPSS guidance at <http://openlibrary.org/books/OL17230488M/CLEAPSS_laboratory_handbook>

8.3 Work involving lead or asbestos is not to be carried out under any circumstances without reference in the first instance to the safety adviser.

**9 Skin Infections and Hand Care**

9.1 To reduce the risk of dermatitis, oil acne or skin cancer, always avoid unnecessary skin contact with oils and chemicals. Always wear gloves and protective clothing where necessary.

9.2 Use barrier creams before commencing work. These provide a barrier between the skin and harmful chemicals, oils and dirt.

9.3 Do not put oily or chemically soiled rags in pockets.

9.4 Always change clothing if it has become contaminated with chemicals, flammable liquids or oils.

**10 Visits**

10.1 Educational trips and visits must be organised in accordance with the Unit’s “Off Site/School Visits Procedures”.

**11 Site Working Procedures**

11.1 Staff must ensure that site working procedures are developed through:

• Assessing the tasks

• Identifying the hazards

• Defining a safe method

• Implementing the system

• Monitoring the system

**12 Minibuses**

12.1 Users of school vehicles must be aware of and observe the following requirements:

1. the driver must have a current licence and is under obligation to notify the Unit if they have been involved in any accident within the past five years. Permission will be granted to drive based on this information. A driver must be aged between 22 years and 67 years of age and have been driving on a regular basis for a minimum of 2 years. Anyone who does not satisfy these criteria may only drive a school vehicle with the **WRITTEN** permission of the Executive Principal. The driver must hold a full current driving licence with the relevant category entitlement to drive the vehicle;
2. drivers of school vehicles are required to complete a record form and supply their original driving licence for photocopying;
3. the driver is responsible for reporting any vehicle defects to the H&S Manager. If a defect makes the vehicle un-roadworthy, it should not be driven under any circumstances (even within the school perimeter);
4. only one person per seat is to be carried;
5. seat belts are to be worn by all passengers and the driver at all times;
6. the driver at the time when an offence was committed is responsible for the payment of fines incurred; and.
7. movement of vehicles within the Units perimeter, during daily breaks and class changeover periods must be kept to a minimum and should only take place if absolutely necessary. Due care and attention must be taken. Vehicles should not be driven above 5 miles per hour whilst on site and hazard lights must be used at all times.

**13 Visitors to the Site**

13.1 All visitors to the Unit will sign in at the reception and be issued with a visitor’s badge. Visitors will be collected from reception by the member of staff concerned or escorted to the appropriate area of the Unit.

13.2 No contractor may undertake work on site without permission from the H&S Manager, other than in an emergency, e.g. fire, flooding or to make safe following theft/vandalism.

13.3 Contractors are responsible for the Health and Safety of their employees and for their safe working practices, which must not constitute a hazard to staff, students and visitors to the Unit.

13.4 Hirers of the Unit premises must use plant, equipment and substances correctly and use the appropriate safety equipment. They will be made aware of their obligations in relation to Health and Safety when making the booking.

13.5 Whilst on site, all visitors and contractors must wear a Chance 2 Change visitor’s badge. Temporary teaching staff on cover duties will be required to indicate their presence in the Unit by reporting to reception.

13.6 If a member of staff meets someone on site who they do not recognise and is not wearing a visitors badge, they should, if they do not feel threatened, enquire if the person needs assistance and direct them either to the reception or off the site, as appropriate.

13.7 If an intruder is uncooperative in going to the reception or leaving the site, or a member of staff feels threatened, or is threatened with violence or a violent attack takes place, immediate help from the Police should be sought by telephone. The radio should be used to notify the reception to call ‘999’ for assistance. Whenever possible, ask Reception to call ‘999’ but when reporting to Reception first may cause a significant risk to persons on site, dial ‘999’ immediately then report your actions to Reception immediately afterwards.

**14 Security**

14.1 All staff should be conscious of all aspects of the security of people and property. In particular, the emergency exit doors on the outer perimeter of the buildings should only be used in the event of emergencies and kept secure at all other times. All emergency exits must be kept clear of obstructions.

14.2 Maintaining security is aimed at reducing the opportunity for unauthorised persons to enter the buildings through non-designated access points. It is also necessary to be alert to the possible presence of unauthorised persons on site who may constitute a threat to staff, students and bona-fide visitors and contractors.

**15 Critical Incidents**

15.1 As part of its commitment for the well-being of staff, students and visitors, the Unit has set out a procedure which is to be adopted in the event of a critical incident occurring either on the Unit premises or on an activity away from the sites.

15.2 A lockdown procedure is in place as a response to any external or external incidents which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of staff, students and visitors of Chance 2 Change. See Annex 3 for full guidance.

**16 Smoking**

16.1 Smoking is not permitted in the Units or grounds.

**17 Healthy Eating**

17.1 It is the policy of Chance 2 Change to encourage students to adopt eating habits that are conducive to a healthy lifestyle. To this end the Unit works with the catering company in providing menu options that support these aims.

17.2 Food is only to be consumed in recognised rest rooms and dining areas.

**18 Contractors**

Contractors working within the Unit are required to comply with the working rules as issued by Chance 2 Change. Any breach of these rules is to be reported to the H&S Manager.

**19 Legionellosis**

19.1 The primary aim is to prevent the build-up of the Legionella pneumophilla organisms in water systems and to prevent inhalation of infected water droplets. Control measures are as follows:

• All showers are to be turned on and left running for five minutes weekly

• All showers are to be cleaned monthly, or after more than one week’s non-use, to prevent slime, corrosion and scale build-up. This will involve dismantling the showerheads to clean and disinfect inside the spray nozzle

• The water temperature is to be below 20 degrees C or above 55 degrees C and this is to be checked monthly

• Records are to be maintained of all cleaning and temperature checks carried out • Water storage tanks are to be covered

• Records are to be maintained of any maintenance, water treatments or disinfection

**20 Manual Handling of Loads**

20.1 Personnel are not to lift, drag, push or carry heavy loads unless training has been undertaken and risk assessments carried out.

20.2 Health and Safety information and advice are available on all aspects of health, safety and welfare from the safety adviser.

**21 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

21.1 The SLT will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

**References**

HSE Website www.hse.gov.uk

HSE Five Steps to Risk Assessment - http://www.hse.gov.uk/

HSE A Guide to Risk Assessment Requirements - http://www.hse.gov.uk

HSE Reporting school accidents http://www.hse.gov.uk

Health and Safety Commission (HSC) Managing health and safety in schools £5.95

HSC Health and safety guidance for school governors and members of school boards £5.95

DfE School Security website [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

DfE Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide <http://www.education.gov.uk>

DfE/DH Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide -http://www.education.gov.uk

DfE Guidance on First Aid for Schools <http://www.education.gov.uk>

DfE Safety Education: Guidance for Schools, December 2001

(Ref: DfE/0161/20002)

DfE Code of Practice on LA-School Relations - <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

Guidance on Standards for School Premises (ref DfEE 0029/2000).

DfE/CEDC Safe Keeping: A good practice guide for health and safety in study support (Ref DfEE 0197/2000)

HSE publications (priced and non-priced) are available from HSE Books Tel: 01787 881165

DfE guides are free from DfE publications Tel 0845 6022260

HSE's infoline is 08701 545500

Health and Safety legislation:

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

Education legislation:

Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No.2)

School Standards and Framework Act 1998

School Inspections Act 1996.

Education Act 1996

**Annex 1**

**DfE Guidance**

**Responsibility for Health and Safety in Schools**

Health and Safety at Work Law Health and safety responsibilities derive from the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations. Health and safety legislation is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

**Employer**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety with the employer. Who this is varies with the type of school:

• For community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units the employer is the Local Authority (LA).

• For foundation schools, foundation special schools and voluntary-aided schools, the employer is usually the governing body.

• For independent schools, the employer is usually the governing body or proprietor.

The Local Authority/LA is the employer for statutory youth groups.

Education employers have duties to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

• the health, safety and welfare of teachers and other education staff

• the health and safety of students in-school and on off-site visits

• the health and safety of visitors to schools, and volunteers involved in any school activity.

**Employees**

Employees have responsibilities too. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply to them as well.

Employees must:

• take reasonable care of their own and others health and safety.

• co-operate with their employers.

• carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions.

• inform the employer of any serious risks.

**Enforcement**

The HSE enforces health and safety law relating to the activities of LAs and schools. Because the employer is responsible for health and safety in the workplace and on work activities the HSE will normally take action against the employer. However, in some circumstances, for example where an employee failed to take notice of the employer’s policy or directions in respect of health and safety, the HSE may take action against the employee as well or instead.

**Responsibility of All Schools**

The employer must have a health and safety policy and arrangements to implement it. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 applies. Key elements of a health and safety policy are listed below; this is not a comprehensive list.

Employers must assess the risks of all activities, introduce measures to manage those risks, and tell their employees about the measures. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply.

In practice, employers may delegate specific health and safety tasks to individuals. But the employer retains the ultimate responsibility no matter who carries out the tasks. The employer should therefore maintain an audit track, making clear who is responsible for what and confirming that these tasks are being carried out.

**Key Elements of a Health and Safety Policy**

• A general statement of policy

• Delegation of duties as allocated tasks

• Arrangements made to put in place, monitor and review measures necessary to reach satisfactory health and safety standards

• Training of staff in health and safety including competence in risk assessment

• Off-site visits including school-led adventure activities

• Selecting and controlling contractors

• First-Aid and supporting students' medical needs

• School Security

• Occupational health services and work-related stress

• Consultation arrangements with employees

• Workplace safety for teachers, students and visitors

• Violence to staff

• Manual handling

• Slips and trips

• On site vehicle movements

• Management of asbestos

• Control of hazardous substances

• Maintenance and when necessary examination and test of plant and equipment such as electrical equipment, local exhaust ventilation, pressure systems, gas appliances, lifting equipment and glazing safety.

• Recording and reporting accidents to staff, students and visitors - including those reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

• Fire safety, including testing of alarms and evacuation procedures

• Dealing with health and safety emergencies - procedures and contacts

**Annex 2**

**DfE Guidance**

Coping with the sudden death of a student Unfortunately, some head teachers will be faced, in the course of their professional lives, with a set of circumstances arising from the death of a student at school or elsewhere.

In such circumstances, head teachers may feel on their own and may need advice at that moment.

Accordingly, the Department has been asked to make advice available to help head teachers cope with the immediacy of a student’s sudden death at school.

The text below is based on work prepared by Chris Bridge, Head Teacher of Huntington School. We are very grateful to Mr Bridge for this.

**Working with the Police**

Very soon after the death is announced the Police should visit as they have to carry out an investigation into the circumstances.

You will need to clear rooms or spaces for them to work in.

They may want to collect evidence.

The Police will normally tell the child’s next of kin and will want to speak at once to the usually very upset teacher who will need someone with them and will probably need to stay at school.

The Police will almost certainly tell you that you must not speculate on the cause of death. But remember that the media are under no such restriction.

**Telling Students**

Where a student collapses during the school day when other students are present, is rushed to hospital and subsequently dies, those students will need to know what has happened before they leave at the end of the school day.

It is important to agree with the police the timing and content of the information that you give to students so as to meet the needs of the students whilst not impeding any police investigation. Are there any siblings, close relatives, or boy/girl friend who needs to know first? Advise them first, but only when parents are ready to collect them.

Gather the whole year group together with 20 minutes to go before the final bell. Timing is everything. The students will listen intently until you tell them that the student has died. Then they stop hearing. If the student has died as the result of an accident you may want to ask them not to speculate about the causes of the accident and not to spread rumours. Getting them to hear this is very difficult. Allow them ten minutes to just be together as a year group. They will need to cry. Expect that some students will contact the local press.

If you want teachers to tell other students, you should have a statement ready for them to read out before you advise them.

**Telling Teachers**

This may have to be after you have told the key students. You will need to tell the teachers who were nearest to what happened first. Depending on who that teacher is, they will probably need someone with them. If you want teachers to tell other students for you, have a statement ready for them to read out before you advise them.

**Telling Parents**

The police will tell the parents of the child.

Getting a letter to other parents, which expresses sympathy and gives factual information about the death, is very important. It saves the rumours, which can be intensely hurtful to other students, parents and teachers.

**Dealing with the Media**

Head teachers at community and voluntary controlled schools should contact their LA as soon as possible, especially if at all unclear about procedures for dealing with the media. It is recommended that the school should have an Emergency (or Critical Incident Recovery) Plan, which sets out procedures. Note: the LA may advise the school not to speak to the media and direct all enquiries to an appointed LA officer.

If your school does not already have a member of staff nominated as press officer, you may need to assign a colleague as press officer at once, even for fielding enquiries. You may well need intense help. A press officer may be required for the whole day.

The press and local TV channels may contact the parents and they together with the press may speculate about the cause of death. This is a very hard thing to deal with, especially if a TV crew has filmed this speculation by distraught parents.

You may find you have no time to prepare interviews and certainly no time to filter statements through the Director of Education even if the LA wants you to do this.

Keep expressing your sympathy for the parents so that editors will find it hard to cut this part of your statement.

If there is a post mortem, this may happen very quickly, possibly within 24 hours of the death.

Ensure you are advised of the results of any post mortem as soon as possible.

Your LA may want to hold onto this information, but you will need it. The best way to stop media speculation is to give them facts.

**Helping the School Recover**

This is a long-term issue. You can help a school recover through a memorial service or assembly and through the use of counsellors.

Recognise that those who go to counsellors may well not be those whose need is greatest.

A brother or sister may well have intense needs that appear later. It is very difficult for the school to know when to stop making allowances.