



<b>Education Health and Safety Policy (EDU-POL-02)</b>			
<b>Issue Date</b>	November 2022	<b>Review Schedule</b>	3 yearly (or sooner if there has been a significant change)
<b>Approvers</b>	Schools H&S Advisory Group	<b>Cross Reference Applicable Documentation</b>	<a href="#">Council H&amp;S Policy</a> <a href="#">Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning</a>
<b>Group</b>	Corporate Services & Governance	<b>Service</b>	Human Resources / Workforce Development / Health and Safety
<b>Target Audience</b>	All staff employed by Gateshead Council	<b>Compliance</b>	Health and Safety at Work Act, etc., 1974

*This document forms part of the Corporate Health and Safety procedural arrangements*

<b>Change Record</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Controller</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Changes</b>
November 2022	Lorraine Dixon	Issue 7	Change of director for Education, Schools and Inclusion and a review of the policy

### **Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Guidance in Gateshead Council**

Gateshead Council's Occupational Health and Safety policies/procedures consider current legislation, rules, regulations and best practice guidance from a range of professional and public bodies.



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# 1. Introduction

**1.1** The Health and Safety at Work Act, etc., 1974 and associated regulations place overall responsibility for health and safety with the employer. The type of school will determine who the employer is, i.e.: -

- in community and voluntary controlled schools the statutory responsibility for health and safety remains with the Local Authority
- in “academy” schools the employer is the governing body, therefore they must have their own written health and safety policy. This should refer to Gateshead Council’s policy and procedures where appropriate.

The employer has duties to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:

- the health, safety and welfare of all employees
- the health and safety of pupils both in school and on off-site activities
- the health and safety of visitors, volunteers and other non-employees involved with the school

**1.2** Overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of all health and safety in schools rest with the head teacher. They are responsible for implementing the Council’s Corporate policies, procedures, the [Children’s Social Care and Lifelong Learning H&S Policy](#) and Education H&S Policy and procedures. A system must be in place in every school to ensure that the policies and procedures are implemented and monitored.

**1.3** It is the duty of the governing body (if they are the employer) or head teacher to ensure that their school has their own current health and safety policy, *(a model policy for schools is available [EDU-MOD-01](#))*. This model should be customised to reflect the individual circumstances of the school. However, it is important that any policy prepared by the school is consistent with the [Corporate H&S Policy](#) and the [Children’s Social Care and Lifelong Learning H&S Policy](#) and arrangements to ensure no ambiguity occurs with regard to responsibilities. Within the school policy there should be reference made to these policies.

**1.4** The head teacher may choose to delegate certain tasks to other members of staff, such as a School Business Manager. However, the **delegation of certain duties will not relieve the head teacher from overall responsibilities for health and safety within the school.**



## 2. Related Information

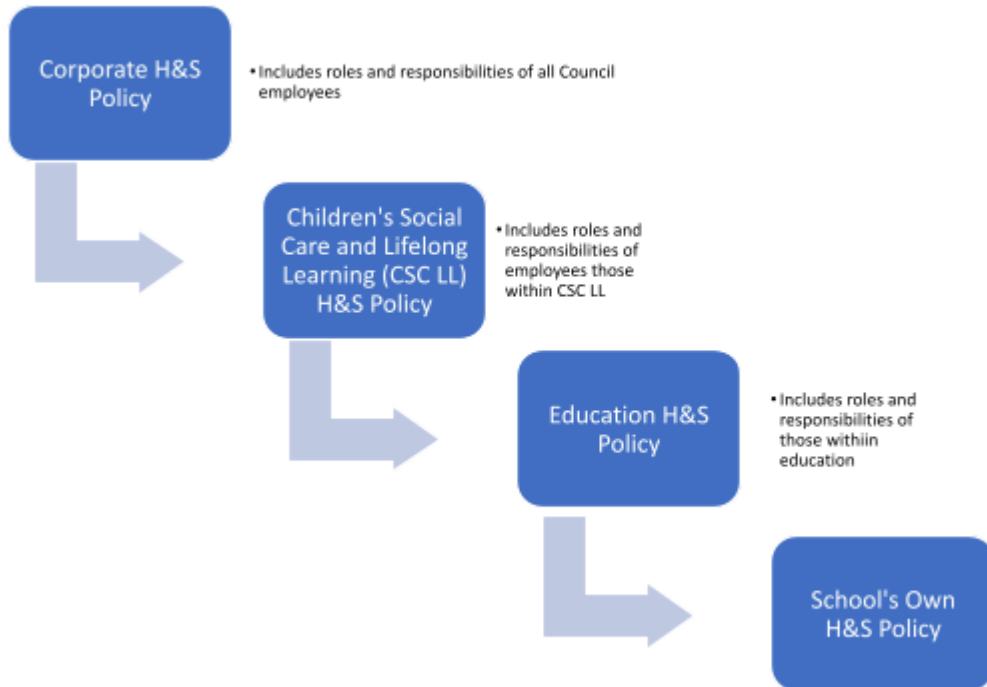
### 2 Corporate Health and Safety Policy

- 2.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act, etc.,1974, requires the employer to prepare and keep an up-to-date written health and safety policy, supported by information on the organisation and arrangements for carrying out the policy. The safety policy must be brought to the notice of all employees. The Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy highlights the health and safety responsibilities of **all employees** and outlines the Council's intention to fulfil its legal obligations. Additional procedural guidance and a copy of the [Corporate Health and Safety Policy](#) and general safety arrangements can be found on the [Council Intranet](#) or in the Health and Safety Section of the [Services for Schools North East](#) webpage.
- 2.2 The [Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning H&S Policy](#) helps to demonstrate to employees where their role within their group lies.
- 2.2 Head teachers/governors must manage health and safety in the same way that they manage other issues by implementing the policies, procedures and arrangements agreed and monitored by the council. Staff at all levels in the school must understand their health and safety role. **The head teacher is required to take all necessary and appropriate action to ensure that the requirements of the councils [Corporate H&S Policy](#); the [Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning H&S Policy](#) and the school's own health and safety policies are met in full at all times. [EDU-MOD-01 Model H&S Policy](#).**
- 2.3 The Council cannot fulfil its statutory duty unless it monitors how schools are complying with Corporate and Education Policies. The Council's Health and Safety Officers will monitor this to ensure required standards are reached and take action where they are not.

### 3. Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

- 3.1 The HSE will enforce health and safety law in all council premises and for Council controlled activities. Their aims are to protect the health, safety and

welfare of people at work and to safeguard others who may be exposed to risks from the way work is carried out.



## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Principle Duties of the Governing Body

- 4.1 Be familiar with the basic requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety Regulations, 1999 and any other relevant legislation.
- 4.2 Comply with the Education Health and Safety Policy, including the monitoring and review of procedures within their school.
- 4.3 Recognise and demonstrate that they, together with the head teacher, have responsibility for the day-to-day management within the school.
- 4.3 Ensure that there is an effective and enforceable school policy detailing responsibilities for the provision of health and safety throughout the school.
- 4.4 Review health and safety arrangements at least annually and periodically assess the effectiveness of the school policy ensuring that any necessary changes are made.
- 4.5 Identify and evaluate risk control measures in order to select the most appropriate means of minimising risk to employees, pupils and others.
- 4.6 In conjunction with the Head Teacher, provide an active and reactive monitoring role for the school on health and safety performance. Any inspection reports should contain the following:
  - Actions allocated to individuals who are responsible for the function
  - Time limits set for action
  - Remedial action to deal with the problems identified
  - Identification of any long-term actions required in order to address underlying causes of problems
- 4.7 Include health and safety issues at governor meetings either through a special meeting or as a standard agenda item. This should include discussion of any safety reports or information issued.
- 4.8 Receive from the head teacher or nominated member of staff, reports on health and safety matters.

- 4.9 Promote a **positive H&S culture** and high standards of health and safety within the school.
- 4.10 Provide information, instruction and training to all relevant employees enabling them to carry out their duties in a safe manner without placing themselves and others at risk.
- 4.11 Ensure that adequate resources and allocation of funds that may directly influence health and safety are available to fulfil the aims and objectives of the policy.
- 4.12 Prepare an annual report on health and safety matters including arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of employees and pupils. The report should include any changes to those arrangements since the previous governor's report.
- 4.13 Facilitate the work of any accredited trade union health and safety representatives.
- 4.14 Ensure that school H&S working arrangements are developed and implemented.
- 4.15 Support the head teacher in implementing infection control measures.

## 5. Principal Duties of the Head Teacher

- 5.1 Be familiar with the basic requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act, etc., 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) Order, 2005 and any other relevant H&S legislation.
- 5.2 Produce a written whole school health and safety policy, (*a model health and safety policy for schools is available via intranet [EDU-MOD-01](#)*). The model policy should be customised to reflect each individual school's circumstances. The policy should be reviewed annually and signed and dated by the head teacher and chair of governors. The policy should also take account of and be consistent with the Council's policies and arrangements.
- 5.3 The school H&S policy should take into account particular circumstances for ensuring the health and safety of pupils whilst in school; e.g. COVID 19,

laboratories, D&T workshops, physical education or educational visits. It should not only focus on safety arrangements, but also those for managing health, such as stress and mental health and wellbeing.

- 5.4 The school's own H&S policy should demonstrate that the head teacher with support from the governing body is committed to health and safety management within the school.
- 5.5 Ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed at least annually or if circumstances change e.g. following an incident /accident.
- 5.6 Ensure all incidents/ accidents (including near misses) are investigated and recorded appropriately (using the Corporate online incident reporting procedures) and the necessary remedial action taken to prevent a recurrence.
- 5.7 Assign responsibilities for planning, measuring, reviewing and auditing health and safety policies and procedures. Ensure that adequate resources, financial and otherwise, are made available for the provision and maintenance of health, safety and welfare.
- 5.8 Ensure there is circulation of information on health and safety matters and where appropriate consult with safety representatives, members of staff and others for specific aspects of health and safety.
- 5.9 Identify and make arrangements for training all staff, including induction of new employees, and where necessary, re-training of existing staff with respect to health and safety as and when required.
- 5.10 Permit safety representatives to take such time off with pay during working hours as shall be necessary for the purposes of performing their functions (*as detailed under Section 9 – 'Trade Union Appointed Safety Representatives'*).
- 5.11 Ensure that site health and safety inspections are carried out at least once per term and details recorded.
- 5.12 Carry out appropriate/periodic safety checks.
- 5.13 Encourage employee suggestions on ways and means of eliminating hazards.
- 5.14 Communicate the policy to all relevant parties.



Corporate Health & Safety Team

Health and safety information must be **shared with all employees**, both non-teaching, as part of their role. Issue No.7 EDU-POL-02

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- 5.15** Ensure there are adequate systems in place for undertaking risk assessments.
- 5.16** Implement and monitor the school's health and safety arrangements, which form part of the policy.
- 5.17** Ensure that the school has emergency procedures in place.
- 5.18** Ensure that the premises, plant and equipment are fully maintained and statutory checks carried out as required.
- 5.19** Provide appropriate health and safety information to governors including reporting any problems in implementing the H&S policy.
- 5.20** Ensure consultation arrangements are in place for staff and their trade union representatives (where appointed).
- 5.21** Adhere to Council policies, procedures and arrangements to reduce and prevent accidents, incidents and illness.
- 5.22** Encourage the co-operation of all users of the school, to promote and develop measures which ensure health and safety of all employees, pupils, volunteers and other visitors to the premises.
- 5.23** Co-operate with the Council in any auditing or monitoring they may carry out on health and safety performance.
- 5.24** Ensure health and safety is included as an agenda item for all staff meetings.
- 5.25** Liaise with the Council's Health & Safety Team as appropriate.

## **6. Duties of teaching or non-teaching staff holding posts of special responsibility, for example, Deputy or Assistant Heads, Heads of Department, Site Managers and School Business Managers.**

### **Employees holding posts of special responsibility must:**

- 6.1** Be familiar with the basic requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and any other relevant legislation.
- 6.2** Support the head teacher in the day-to-day management of health and safety in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and will have delegated responsibility for health and safety in the absence of the head teacher.
- 6.3** Apply the school's health and safety policy to their own department or area of work and be directly responsible to the head teacher for the application of the health and safety procedures and arrangements.
- 6.4** Ensure the circulation of information on health and safety and take responsibility for health and safety in specific areas or activities which may have been delegated to them. Draw up and review departmental arrangements.
- 6.5** Report to the head teacher any problems in the implementation of arrangements.
- 6.6** Identify staff training needs and report to head teacher.
- 6.7** Ensure that actions are taken on health and safety matters and that safe working practices are observed.
- 6.8** Ensure that any defects in premises, plant and equipment are brought to the attention of appropriate personnel without delay.

- 6.9** Maintain or have access to an up-to-date library of relevant published health and safety guidance from sources including the Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services (CLEAPSS) and the Association for Physical Education (AfPE). Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of and make use of such guidance.
- 6.10** Ensure regular health and safety risk assessments are undertaken for the activities for which they are responsible and that control measures are implemented.
- 6.11** Ensure that appropriate safe working procedures are brought to the attention of all staff under their control.
- 6.12** Carry out regular inspections of their areas of responsibility ensuring that equipment, furniture and activities are safe and record these inspections as required.
- 6.13** Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable other employees and pupils to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety.
- 6.14** Ensure that all accidents (including near misses) occurring within their department are promptly reported and investigated using the appropriate forms.
- 6.15** Arrange for the repair, replacement or removal of any item of furniture or equipment which has been identified as unsafe.
- 6.16** Ensure that all members of staff under their control adhere to all relevant aspects of the Health and Safety Policy.
- 6.17** Ensure that competent members of staff carry out risk assessments for all activities within their control. The assessments should cover general risks as well as the specific risks involved with the teaching and supervision of children.

## **7. Duties of All Employees**

- 7.1** Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, etc.,1974, all employees have general health and safety responsibilities. All employees must be aware that

they are obliged to take care of their own health and safety whilst at work and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

**All employees must:**

- 7.2 Co-operate with their employer in health and safety matters.
- 7.3 Use any machinery, equipment, substance, transport equipment and safety devices in accordance with the risk assessment and training and instruction given.
- 7.4 Comply with the school's health and safety policy and procedures at all times.
- 7.5 Report **all incidents** in line with the Council's online reporting procedure.



Employees must report **all work-related incidents** to the head teacher or a member of the senior leadership team as soon as possible after the incident and no later than the end of the working day on which it occurred.

- 7.6 Co-operate with school management on all matters relating to health and safety.
- 7.7 Not to intentionally interfere with or misuse any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health safety and welfare.
- 7.8 Report all defects in condition of premises or equipment and any health and safety concerns immediately to their line manager.
- 7.9 Report immediately to their line manager any shortcomings in the arrangements for health and safety.
- 7.10 Ensure that they only use equipment or machinery that they are competent to use or have been trained to use.
- 7.11 Work in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and be familiar with departmental arrangements.
- 7.12 Check visually that classroom/work areas and any equipment used are safe and in good condition before being used.

- 7.13** Ensure that safety procedures are followed and any necessary protective equipment is used. (This includes procedures for managing COVID 19).
- 7.14** Report any problems/accidents to the appropriate person and suggest any improvement in safe practices/eliminating hazards.
- 7.15** Use the correct equipment and tools for the job.
- 7.16** Be aware of any action to be taken in an emergency situation.
- 7.17** Seek appropriate advice as and when required.
- 7.18** Report any health conditions that might affect their work or others in the workplace.

## **8. Role of the Health and Safety Officers**

- 8.1** Stop any activity of Council employees or contractors that they deem to be a danger to either those involved, those working or studying in the school or members of the public.
- 8.2** Carry out audits on the effectiveness of the health and safety management system. These can be site or subject specific. Following an audit, we will provide a report showing strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement.
- 8.3** Advise on the development and provision of health and safety training and carry out safety training when appropriate.
- 8.4** Assist in the development and implementation of safe systems of work to ensure the safety elements are adequately covered.
- 8.5** Assist in the development of safety policies that are Council and Group / Service specific.
- 8.6** Carry out incident investigations. Where appropriate, a report will be produced and sent to the head teacher and/or Service Director depending on the circumstances. The report would include details of the findings and make recommendations for the appropriate course of remedial action to be taken to reduce the risk of recurrence.

- 8.7** Attend the Schools' Health and Safety Advisory Group Meeting (safety committee for schools) in the role of technical adviser, together with professional association and development meetings.
- 8.8** Co-operate with other competent persons both internal (e.g. advisers on fire safety, health and safety, occupational health, water hygiene, asbestos, etc...) and external (e.g. HSE Inspectors, fire safety officers, radiation protection adviser).
- 8.9** Liaise and consult with the Trade Union Safety Representatives on health and safety matters as required under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations, 1977.

## **9. Trade Union Appointed Health and Safety Representatives**

### **9.1 A Safety Representative has the right to:**

- Investigate accidents and potential hazards within the workplace
- Investigate complaints made by an employee they represent relating to health, safety and welfare at work
- Make representation to management on matters arising from the above
- Monitor the implementation of risk control measures as identified by risk assessments
- Carry-out inspections of the workplace. The safety representative must give reasonable notice in writing of their intention to do so and have not inspected that area within the previous three months
- Attend meetings of safety committees in their capacity as a safety representative
- Inspect documents relating to health and safety
- Request information and advice on the legislation and its interpretation from the Council's Health and Safety Officers

**9.2** The safety representative is entitled to such time as is necessary to carry out the above functions and to attend training courses. This time is subject to the requirements of the service, though such requests must not normally be refused.

**9.3** If two or more safety representatives request the employer to set up a safety committee, the employer must do so within three months of the request.

**9.4**As soon as possible after their appointment, safety representatives should be permitted time to attend a trade union approved training course. This training will cover the role of safety representatives, the legal requirements relating to health and safety at work, the nature and extent of workplace hazards, and the employer's health and safety policies, organisation and arrangements. This training will also help develop new skills in order to carry out their functions.

## **10. Role of the Schools Health and Safety Advisory Group**

- 10.1** The Schools Health and Safety Advisory Group play an **important role in improving the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing** of all those that work or study in maintained Gateshead schools or those that have a service level agreement with the H&S Team.
- 10.2** The group is made of representation from schools, trade union appointed H&S representatives and the H&S Team.
- 10.3** The group meets termly to discuss school related matters of health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.
- 10.4** [Schools H&S Advisory Group Constitution.](#)

## 11. Support

Please contact the following if additional information or support is required:

**Email:** [CSGhealthandsafety@Gateshead.Gov.UK](mailto:CSGhealthandsafety@Gateshead.Gov.UK)

**Telephone:** 0191 433 (ext)

**Extensions:** 2272 / 2237 / 2270 / 2236