

Statement of intent

The board of directors is committed to ensuring that high standards of health, safety and welfare are provided and maintained to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for all pupils, staff, students and visitors.

The board of directors recognizes that health, safety and welfare is a management responsibility of equal importance to service delivery and needs to be considered an integral part of the school provision. This commitment also embraces all aspects of occupational health and safety, including physical and mental well being of all employees.

Managers at all levels are expected to embrace this commitment by ensuring a high standard of health, safety and welfare in their area of responsibility as defined in the policy and arrangements, by supporting their staff and pupils to maintain this commitment and leading by example.

The head teacher, as appointed health and safety co-coordinator, will ensure that the board's commitment to health, safety and welfare detailed in this policy is actioned and communicated to all employees.

All employees are reminded of their responsibilities as outlined in the policy and the requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Act. This means any breach of health, safety and welfare could lead to the prosecution of board of directors and/or individual employees. Failure to comply with safety requirements could also result in disciplinary action.

This statement, policy and arrangements was approved by the board of directors on 01.10.17.

Organisation and responsibilities

The board of directors takes overall responsibility for health and safety at the school. The board delegates specific health and safety tasks to others as set out in this policy and the associated Essex County Council Guidance Standards (Guidance). The Guidance is published in the Health and Safety pages of the Essex Schools InfoLink website.

The role of the board of directors

The board of directors, as employer, has a duty (as required by The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) to:

- institute a *Health and safety policy* and advise employees of it;
- ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all staff and pupils in school and during off-site visits, and of visitors to the school, and volunteers involved in any school activity;
- assess the risks of all activities, both in school and off-site, introduce measures to manage those risks, and tell employees about the measures;
- ensure that staff are trained annually in their health and safety responsibilities; and,
- take reasonable steps to make sure that the buildings, equipment and materials are safe and do not put the health of users and visitors at risk.

Head teacher

The head teacher is accountable to the board of directors for the implementation of the *Health and safety policy* and will also discharge the board of director's overall duty as employer. This will be achieved through the following systems.

Establishing and maintaining control by:

- ensuring the *Health and safety policy* is brought to the attention of all staff;
- allocating and defining the health and safety responsibilities of all managers and all employees;
- ensuring managers have access to competent advice and assistance.

Securing co-operation between individuals, safety representatives and groups to encourage ownership of the *Health and safety policy* by:

- establishing a health and safety committee to facilitate consultation (the committee meets on a termly basis);
- facilitating and encouraging local consultation between managers and employees or their representatives;
- ensuring arrangements are in place for appropriate co-operation and co-ordination where services are delivered in partnership with other organizations, including the self employed;
- supervising all office staff and ensuring the *Health and safety policy* is implemented in all school offices.

Establishing effective communication with regard to health and safety including:

- ensuring relevant health and safety information is appropriately disseminated to managers and staff at least annually;
- facilitating access of all managers to competent health and safety advice;
- ensuring managers lead by example;
- ensuring health and safety is included in team meetings;
- ensuring health and safety is addressed during appraisals / performance reviews;
- ensuring there are facilities for enabling employees to raise health and safety issues, concerns and suggestions;
- ensuring where persons are not employees, such as employees of a contractor, self-employed persons or voluntary workers, that arrangements are made for the provision of information with regard to relevant risk assessments and the associated preventive / protective measures;
- ensuring relevant health and safety information is provided to visitors, temporary and agency staff and voluntary workers.

Establishing arrangements to ensure staff are competent. These arrangements should include:

- recruitment procedures;
- the provision of information, instruction and training to meet these needs.

Establishing a planned and systematic approach to implementing the *Health and safety policy* which includes:

- ensuring there is guidance in place to indicate the work place precautions and arrangements for implementing the policy;
- ensuring an annual health and safety action plan is prepared and agreed by the management team for prioritising different health and safety objectives;
- maintaining the fire register.

Establishing arrangements for monitoring health and safety performance including:

- arrangements for inspections of areas of work, including allocation of responsibilities for undertaking them and specified frequencies;
- arrangements for monitoring services (e.g. gas and electrical systems) and equipment;
- complying with the school's procedures for monitoring the implementation of health and safety systems;
- appropriate investigation of accidents, injuries and incidents;
- the collation and analysis of accidents, injuries and incidents records;
- the investigation and monitoring of sickness absence arising from work related ill health or injury;
- arrangements to enable staff to report hazards.

Establishing arrangements for reviewing health and safety performance including:

- establishing appraisal protocols which ensure issues identified by monitoring and auditing are addressed;

- an annual report is produced for the board of directors summarizing health and safety performance according to the criteria and in the format agreed by the board of directors;
- ensuring health and safety performance is included in performance management reviews;
- procedures for identifying and acting upon failures by any employee (including managers) to achieve adequate health and safety performance.

A copy of *Woodcroft health and safety arrangements* is completed, posted on notice boards in a prominent position and updated at regular intervals.

Health and safety co-ordinator

The head teacher is the nominated health and safety co-ordinator and has responsibility for the overall co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of this policy.

Responsibilities include:

- ensuring that the school's *Health and safety policy* reflects current priorities and is monitored, reviewed and revised as necessary;
- establishing means of communication on health, safety and welfare matters throughout the school;
- ensuring the effective co-ordination of health and safety throughout the school;
- ensuring effective monitoring systems in accordance with the school's policies are in place;
- ensuring all appropriate health and safety issues are addressed at management team level;
- ensuring all managers have access to competent advice and assistance on health, safety and welfare matters;
- preparing an action plan for health and safety (annually or longer term as appropriate).

Head teacher's nominated deputy

The head teacher's nominated deputy is responsible for carrying out the head teacher's duties in their absence.

Managers (Including senior teachers, head therapist, finance manager and care manager)

Managers are responsible for implementing the *Health and safety policy* in their area of control. This will include ensuring that:

- health and safety information and guidance appropriate to their areas of responsibility are brought to the attention of and communicated effectively to all staff within their management and are complied with;
- assessments for all risks to health and safety are carried out and significant findings recorded, with appropriate preventative measures completed, in accordance with the guidance relevant to the subject area;
- all incidents occurring in the area of responsibility are reported; the causes are investigated and an incident report form is completed;
- reasonable arrangements for allowing safety representatives to carry out their functions are complied with;
- staff are aware of safety procedures (including fire procedures, first aid, accident, injury and incident reporting, etc.);
- new employees receive appropriate health and safety information, instruction and training, including the area of responsibility safety procedures;
- both active and re-active health and safety monitoring is undertaken in their area of control (inspections, accident/near miss investigations, appraisals, monitoring checklists, etc.);
- staff have the necessary competence to fulfil their duties (provision of information, instruction, training, etc.);
- health and safety issues are raised with the head teacher which cannot be addressed within the area of responsibility;
- health and safety is included as an agenda item at meetings;

- procedures for identifying and acting upon failures by any employees to adhere to the *Health and safety policy*.

Class teachers

The safety of pupils in the classroom, around the school and during off-site activities is the responsibility of the pupil's class teacher. This section also applies to agency teachers.

A class teacher is expected to:

- know the emergency procedures in respect of fire and first aid and the special safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching areas and to ensure that they are applied;
- exercise effective supervision of pupils 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;
- give clear instructions and warnings as often as necessary (notices, posters and hand-outs, etc., are not enough);
- ensure that pupils' coats, bags, cases, etc., are safely stowed away;
- integrate all relevant aspects of safety into the teaching process and if necessary give special lessons on safety;
- follow safe working procedures personally;
- call for protective clothing, guards, special safe working procedures, etc., when necessary;
- make recommendations on safety matters to the head teacher.

Duty caretakers

The duty caretakers are responsible for the premises and vehicles, ensuring appropriate standards of health and safety are maintained for the areas and duties set out in their job descriptions. Specific responsibilities include:

- ensuring health and safety arrangements are in place with regard to cleaning staff, and monitoring health and safety standards in their area of activity; ensuring such work is carried out safely and without risks to health, ensuring they are provided with relevant health and safety information including the *Health and safety policy* and Guidance;
- ensuring health and safety arrangements are in place with regard to fire precautions;
- liaising with contractors to ensure appropriate co-operation and co-ordination between the school, the duty caretaker and the contractor, as required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations; to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to inform the contractor of the risks to their or their employees' health and safety arising out of or in connection with the operation of the school; and to ensure contractors are aware of any special risks to children which might arise out of their work;
- daily checking of the online maintenance tasks, prioritising health and safety items;
- carrying out and recording inspections as set out in the *Inspections folder*; and
- ensuring that premises and vehicle defects which affect health and safety are dealt with or, if this is not possible, for ensuring they are raised with the head teacher, finance manager or the board of directors.

Line managers

All managers, including therapists and senior teachers' assistants, are responsible for ensuring the *Health and safety policy* and arrangements that have been made are implemented in their areas of activity. As a general rule managers' direct responsibility for health and safety is determined by the extent to which they have authority to take executive action. In other words, if they have the responsibility to make the general decision about some aspect of their work, they are responsible for the health and safety implications of that decision.

In addition to ensuring work activities under their control are carried out, so far as is reasonably practicable, safely and without risk to health, managers' responsibilities include:

- monitoring the implementation of the *Health and safety policy* in their area of responsibility, carrying out inspections of workplaces and equipment; and ensuring accidents are investigated;

- ensuring individual employees are aware of their responsibilities for health and safety;
- ensuring employees under their control are adequately trained, informed, instructed and supervised.

Therapists have additional responsibilities. In particular, they will need to ensure that:

- guidance appropriate to their area are brought to the attention of all relevant staff;
- guidance is complied with and appropriate safety signs or notices are displayed;
- relevant health and safety information is communicated to staff;
- first aid procedures are complied with;
- all accidents occurring in their area are reported and an accident, injury or incident form is completed;
- reasonable arrangements for allowing safety representatives to carry out their functions are complied with;
- training needs of staff within the area are identified;
- staff are aware of the fire procedures;
- new employees receive appropriate health and safety information including specific safety procedures.

All employees

Health and safety responsibilities for all employees include:

- taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of all persons affected by their acts or omissions;
- co-operating with the board of directors so far as is necessary to enable it to meet its responsibilities for health and safety;
- using work equipment provided correctly in accordance with instructions and training;
- to inform the board of directors, through line managers, of any work situations which represent a serious and immediate danger to health and safety;
- following the school's safeguarding and behaviour management policies and guidance.

All employees are reminded of the need to report any accidents which occur at work.

Failure to do so may lead to difficulties when claiming industrial injury benefit.

Any employee having a problem concerned with health and safety or identifying any hazardous situation should raise the matter with their line manager or the head teacher.

Pupils

Pupils have no particular responsibility in the implementation of the school's *Health and safety policy*, but are nevertheless expected to:

- exercise personal responsibility for safety of themselves and others;
- observe the safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of staff given in an emergency;
- use and not willfully misuse, neglect or interfere with any item provided for safety.

General arrangements

Health and safety advice

Essex County Council's Health and Safety Advisory Service has been appointed to assist in undertaking protective and preventive measures.

Guidance

Information on Essex County Council's Guidance Standards can be downloaded from the schools Infolink and should be made available to the relevant departments.

Accident reporting

Details of who to contact in the event of an accident are in *Woodcroft health and safety arrangements*, copies of which are displayed on the school notice boards. Please also see the school's *Accident, injury and incident policy*.

Woodcroft health and safety arrangements

The document *Woodcroft health and safety arrangements* should be completed and displayed on school notice boards, where all staff have access. This information informs employees where they would find the general arrangements for implementing this policy.

Risk assessment (See also *Appendix A*)

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 school has adopted the Essex County Council form to record significant findings. For most activities Essex County Council Guidance Standards indicate the preventive and protective measures and the assessment form will refer to the particular Guidance.

Health and safety monitoring, auditing and reviewing

- The Essex Internal Monitoring Form will be completed annually by the head teacher and managing director and a copy sent to other board members.
- An inspection of the school will be carried out termly by the finance manager and head teacher.
- All accidents will be investigated, as appropriate, to identify any failures in the management of health and safety. Where necessary, reports will be submitted to the board of directors.
- Accident, injury and incident records will be examined at least annually to identify any causes that might be remedied. (Recurring events might highlight a problem not highlighted by a single event.)
- In addition to the above, annual inspections will be carried out of the following equipment; P.E. equipment, climbing frames, fire extinguishers, portable electrical appliances, fire alarms, emergency lighting, lightning conductors, heating appliances and hot and cold water systems. Other routine inspections are detailed in specific Guidance.

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 Guidance), 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.

For serious breaches of health and safety legislation or the *Health and safety policy* resulting in an employee putting either themselves or others at risk, disciplinary action in accordance with the school'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.

Ultimately, compliance would be enforceable through the courts. Substantial or persistent non-compliance with the school's *Health and safety policy* requirements is a ground for suspending delegation, subject to the 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 school fulfil their legal responsibilities so that the board of directors 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.

Access to the *Health and safety policy* and *Woodcroft health and safety arrangements*

Copies of these documents are available to all employees on the school notice boards.

Appendix A – risk assessment policy

We have a number of specific procedures that address the different areas that require risk assessment. Our risk assessment format is based on that of the Essex Health and Safety Service.

Fire risk assessment

A fire risk assessment has been undertaken by an independent fire risk assessment specialist. The risk assessment is reviewed annually by the head teacher in consultation with the caretaker and managing director, or sooner if major structural changes have taken place. Records are held in the fire risk assessment folder in the head teacher's office.

Miscellaneous

Woodcroft subscribes to the Essex Health and Safety Service. A range of miscellaneous risk assessments have been adapted for our use from the Essex Infolink website. The full list is contained in the risk assessment folder in the school office.

Off-site risk assessments

All locations visited by groups on a regular basis e.g. sports/PE activities are updated annually or more frequently if the need arises (for example in the event of building work). One-off or less frequently visited sites are risk assessed prior to the visit taking place, using the previous risk assessment as a starting point. These are initiated by the secretary and signed off by the head teacher. They are filed in the risk assessments folder in the school office. (See also *Off-site policy*)

Premises risk assessments

The classrooms, safe spaces, communal areas, therapy rooms, garden and terrace are risk assessed annually. The review is initiated by the secretary and signed off by the head teacher. They are filed in the risk assessments folder in the school office. A termly *Health and safety timetable and checklist* containing record keeping for all aspects of premises safety is kept by the school caretakers. These are signed off termly by the head teacher during term time and the finance manager during holiday time.

Pupil behaviour profile and risk assessment

These are initiated on admission to Woodcroft and updated as we gain more insight in to the needs of the pupil. They contain a detailed pupil and sensory profile with individualised risks likely to be encountered in school and off-site and the control thereof. They are reviewed each term (or more regularly if deemed appropriate by the head teacher) and updated as necessary. Input is sought from teachers and parents. A parent signature is sought at least annually, usually at annual review (or more frequently in the event of a major revision). Copies are held in the pupil's class and office file. (See also *Behaviour management policy*)

Staff risk assessments

Staff with formally identified risks may have specific risk assessments, copies of which will be held in the school office. These may include maternity, lone working or occupational health risks. The latter will be assessed by our occupational health service provider, either on appointment, or following an issue identified during the course of employment.

Vehicle risk assessments

Woodcroft inspects its vehicles according to an inspection schedule required by the terms of our vehicle operators licence. These include ten-weekly, weekly and daily checks, as well as driver walkround checks. Records of these checks are held by the finance manager.

Appendix B – first aid policy

This appendix draws on information in the First Aid section of the Essex Schools Infolink Health and Safety A–Z of Managing Risk pages, and should be read in conjunction with other related policies including: *Accident, injury and incident policy*, *Emergency procedures* and *Medical administration and treatment policy*.

Appointed persons for first aid

The head teacher (or nominated deputy), care manager and duty caretaker are the persons appointed to take charge of the situation in an emergency. They are also the persons appointed to authorise the calling of an ambulance. An appointed person must be on the premises at all times the school is open.

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that all appointed persons refer to the online First Aid guidance and to ensure that they have been made aware of their duty to follow the guidance therein.

Please note that the policy on appointed persons is different for an off-site activity. The *Off-site policy* must be followed in these circumstances.

First aiders

At Woodcroft only the care manager and currently certified first aiders are qualified and authorised to administer first aid. There is a list of first aiders displayed in each class and in the school office. It is the responsibility of the care manager to ensure that first aid training is updated every three years and that the lists are kept up to date.

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that all first aiders refer to the online First Aid guidance and to ensure that they have been made aware of their duty to follow the guidance therein.

First aid boxes

There are first aid boxes in each classroom, in the school office, in the kitchen area of the house and in each school vehicle. It is the responsibility of the care manager to check these boxes at least termly and to ensure the contents are kept up to date. First aid boxes are marked with a white cross on a green background.

General guidance for staff

- If a serious accident or asthma attack occurs, the person should not be moved until the care manager, head teacher (or nominated deputy) or duty caretaker arrives. In the case of a seizure, appropriate action should be taken according to staff first aid training while an appointed person is called. All major decisions concerning pupils and staff will be made by the head teacher (or nominated deputy), care manager or duty caretaker.
- Plastic gloves must be worn (available from the first aid boxes and every bathroom) when handling a pupil who is bleeding or attending to any personal hygiene matter. These gloves should be changed between each use with an individual and each activity. They should be disposed of after use. Hands should be washed thoroughly between procedures whether gloves are worn or not.
- Emergency medical information is kept in the school office and must accompany a pupil if sent to hospital. The care manager is responsible for updating this information.
- Plasters should only be used when permission has been obtained from a pupil's parents. This information is obtained during the school admission process.
- Every accident to any person on Woodcroft property or during an off-site activity must be recorded as soon as possible in the *Accident and injury books* which are kept in all classrooms.
- If a member of staff or pupil incurs an accident that results in a deep cut or wound the individual's GP should be consulted regarding the need for a Tetanus injection.