

Ashgrove Primary School

Health & Safety Policy

7 October 2008

Version 1-2

Health & Safety Policy

Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure, so far as is “reasonably practicable” (NEELB), that no person is placed in a situation where injury or ill health may be caused as a result of the school and that all such risks are assessed and appropriately controlled.

Rationale

The health and safety of all pupils, staff and visitors to the premises and grounds of Ashgrove Primary School remains our top priority. This policy has been developed and adopted by the governors with reference to the advice and procedures contained in the Health and Safety Policy of the North-Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB, August 2004).

Ashgrove recognises and accepts its responsibility for health and safety as an employer, and in particular the duties laid down in:

- Article 4 (Employers Duties) of the Health & Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978;
- Articles 5 and 6 of that Order in respect to persons other than its employees; and
- Article 88 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

The school will maintain maximum possible provision in relation to:

- a safe place of work, safe access to it and safe egress from it;
- plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid risk and contribute positively to health and safety at work;
- a healthy working environment; and
- adequate welfare facilities.

So far as is reasonably practicable, we will provide and maintain up-to-date information for all staff on the hazards and risks of substances, equipment and systems used at work including the recommendations of relevant risk assessments. The school will rely on NEELB to provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters and, where necessary, to assist in effecting improvements.

The school will co-operate fully with queries from staff representatives and recognised trade unions. Opinions and suggestions in relation to health and safety are welcomed from members of staff.

Members of staff are reminded of their duties under Article 8 of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order, 1978: to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others.

The school will establish procedures to monitor and increase the effectiveness of its Health and Safety Policy.

The Board of Governors

Governors have a statutory responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 for ensuring that the Health and Safety Policy is understood and implemented and that assessments are carried out to address significant risks.

The Schedule to the Scheme for the Membership, Procedure and Functions of the Board of Governors and the Scheme for Local Management of Schools assign to boards of governors a number of functions, duties and responsibilities in respect of health and safety, including the preparation of a policy on fire safety. In the discharge of their statutory responsibilities governors must ensure:

- that all teaching staff recommended for appointment by them hold appropriate qualifications, both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;
- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of both teaching and non-teaching staff under their control;
- the maintenance of procedures for the safety of all persons using the premises under their control;
- that an inspection of the school premises and equipment is carried out by them at least once per year and that a report is submitted to the chief executive of NEELB;
- the prompt and efficient maintenance of all equipment and all non-structural repairs as defined in the relevant Annex to the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- that contractors who are carrying out work on behalf of the board of governors carry out their undertakings in a safe manner so as to ensure the health and safety of all personnel on the premises;
- that all equipment and materials either purchased or acquired by them are suitable and safe for their intended use; and
- that teaching and non-teaching staff are issued with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy.

The Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all children and staff and for ensuring that members of the general public who may be affected by any activity undertaken by or on behalf of the school are not exposed to reasonably foreseeable risks to their health or safety.

The principal is responsible for the day-to-day application of the Health and Safety Policy. In discharging this responsibility the principal will:

- ensure that all teaching staff hold appropriate qualifications both to teach the subjects required of them and to use the necessary equipment and machinery;
- that both teaching and non-teaching staff are kept up-to-date with whatever training is required for their safe working;
- ensure the provision and maintenance of procedures for the safety of all teaching and non-teaching staff;
- ensure that all staff are aware of any instructions or safety advice pertaining to their particular discipline issued by NEELB or DENI;
- ensure that all safety reports pertaining to the school are understood and that the detailed work has been completed;
- ensure that adequate arrangements exist for carrying out regular emergency evacuation (fire) drills and that all staff are aware of, and participate in, such arrangements;
- report to the Board of Governors all defects and hazards that are its responsibility;
- ensure that safe systems of working are used by contractors or persons carrying out inspections or non-structural repairs that are the governors' responsibility as set out in the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- report to NEELB all defects and hazards which cannot be dealt with under the Scheme for the Local Management of Schools;
- ensure that all accidents to children, teaching staff and non-teaching staff are reported promptly to the NEELB; and
- ensure that all staff operate safe working practices in the execution of their duties.

In the absence of the principal the vice-principal, acting principal or nominated senior teacher will assume the role.

Teaching Staff

Each member of the teaching staff has a responsibility to exercise care and attention regarding the safety of themselves and pupils under their control. In the discharge of this responsibility all teachers shall:

- ensure that they take reasonable care during work activities to avoid accident or injury to themselves, other members of staff and pupils;
- observe all safety instructions and advice issued by NEELB or DENI and all safety rules relating to specific machinery or processes;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment is both available and used by themselves and pupils;
- report all potential hazards affecting health and safety to the principal and make recommendations on the provision of safety equipment and on improvements to plant, tools or equipment which are dangerous, or potentially so;
- report all accidents to the principal and ensure that accident or incident report forms are fully completed;
- co-operate fully with the principal on all matters pertaining to health and safety;
- exercise effective supervision of pupils and know emergency procedures in respect of fire, first aid etc;
- know any special safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching area and ensure they are applied; and

- give clear instruction and warnings to children as often as is necessary and follow safe working procedures personally.

All Employees

All employees have a responsibility to exercise personal care and attention for the safety of themselves and others and to co-operate with their employer in the execution of this policy. In the discharge of this responsibility all employees shall:

- ensure that their workplace is free from hazards before commencing work;
- report all potential hazards and defects in equipment and protective clothing to the principal;
- ensure that any equipment or machinery known to need repair is not used until the necessary work has been carried out;
- use only those electrical appliances owned by the school or NEELB;
- co-operate with any health and safety training considered necessary and reasonably practicable;
- perform their duties in a safe and tidy manner;
- ensure that all toxic and flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
- ensure that they are aware of any safety precautions to be taken when undertaking potentially hazardous procedures;
- ensure that all necessary protective clothing and equipment are available;
- include safe working methods in instruction to pupils;
- report all accidents and injuries to the principal as soon as possible;
- obtain adequate treatment as soon as practicable if injured;
- assist in the investigation of injuries and accidents as necessary; and
- observe the safety rules of the NEELB and school.

Health and Safety in Relation to the Use of the Kiln

The kiln will only be operated in accordance with the following procedures.

- The kiln will be installed in a room dedicated to its sole use in a locked area separate from the main body of the school.
- The kiln shall only be operated by the principal or by another member of staff operating under the instructions of the principal.
- Any loading or unloading by children will be conducted before or after the firing and cooling programme, ie when the kiln is inactive. (Such situations will also be subject to the school's child protection policy.)
- Firings will generally take place at weekends. In exceptional circumstances an overnight firing may be done mid-week so long as the kiln is at a safe temperature (ie almost finished cooling) between the hours of 8:45am and 4:00pm;
- The kiln shall not be opened at any stage during the firing process.

Dogs

For health and safety reasons dogs are not permitted into any part of the school grounds or building.

Review

A copy of this policy will be issued to all employees. It will be reviewed annually, added to or modified as necessary and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of particular groups of children, staff, or visitors.