

# **COOKSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL**

## **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Board of Governors recognise their statutory duty to ensure health and safety on premises under their control. They also acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that the Education Authority's (EA) health and safety policy is both understood and implemented in the school, that risk assessments are carried out to address significant risks and that they operate within the procedures and guidelines set out in the employing authority's scheme of management.
- 1.2 This policy statement is the first step in developing and implementing a revised health and safety management system within the school and demonstrates the commitment of both the Principal and Board of Governors to implementing EA policy relating to health, safety and welfare.
- 1.3 A partnership approach involving the EA, Governors, Principal and staff will facilitate the embedding of a health and safety culture within the school and will contribute to an effective health and safety management system. All stakeholders are encouraged to support this approach given their legal duties relating to health and safety.

### **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 This policy will provide a mechanism to ensure that the Principal and senior leadership team implement a safety management system throughout the school to provide a safe and healthy environment for

school staff, pupils, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by work activities, services or while on school premises.

- 2.2 The policy will also provide a mechanism for ensuring compliance with statutory responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 and other relevant legislation by ensuring that school management are doing all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of employees and those who may be affected by the facilities and activities of the school.
- 2.3 The policy will facilitate a risk-based approach to planning resources, prioritising finance and reducing costs associated with accidents.
- 2.4 The policy will contribute to effective health and safety management through the application of monitoring and audit procedures which will focus on continuous improvement. This reflects the school's commitment to organisational learning and will also enable staff to carry out their responsibilities with confidence.

### **3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The main duties are with the employer, and in the case of Cookstown High School, the employer is the Education Authority. Employers are responsible for safeguarding, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees and those who their activities might affect.
- 3.2 The Department of Education publication 'The School Governors' Handbook' also confirms that "*The Scheme of Management for the school sets out the duties of the Board of Governors in relation to school premises.*" The Board of Governors acknowledge that, in accordance with EA policy, the Principal has responsibility for the day-

to-day application of EA Health and Safety Policy. Therefore, the Board of Governors responsibilities will focus on ensuring the development, implementation and monitoring of suitable and sufficient arrangements for the management of health and safety systems for the school. The Board of Governors will ensure they discharge their duties by the application of a governance and accountability framework.

- 3.3 The **Board of Governors** are responsible for ensuring that the Principal and senior leadership team develop a safety management system throughout the school.
- 3.4 The Board of Governors are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's health and safety arrangements.
- 3.5 The Board of Governors are responsible for developing and implementing arrangements to ensure that;
- All school risk assessments are completed and implemented
  - Equipment and materials purchased by the school are safe and suitable for their intended use.
  - Contractors carry out their work in a safe manner
  - Prompt and efficient maintenance is requested and carried out where non-structural repairs are identified
  - Prompt and efficient maintenance is requested and carried out on school equipment.
- 3.6 The Board of Governors are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are developed for the annual inspection of the school premises and the preparation of a report for the EA Chief Executive.
- 3.7 The Board of Governors are responsible for ensuring that both teaching and non-teaching staff are issued with a copy of the health and safety policy statement.

- 3.8 The Department of Education publication 'The School Governors' Handbook' (Chapter 21) deals with responsibility for school premises and facilities and confirms that *"The Principal should ensure that the physical condition of the school is satisfactory and inform the Governors of the state of the buildings and grounds and enlist their support in requesting maintenance and improvements."*
- 3.9 **The Principal** is responsible for developing and implementing an effective safety management system for the school.
- 3.10 The Principal is responsible for ensuring that health and safety forms an integral part of subject planning within the school.
- 3.11 The Principal is responsible for ensuring the availability of resources to maintain and improve the safety management arrangements.
- 3.12 The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all employees have appropriate qualifications, experience and training to safely undertake their work and to continually develop and improve their competencies in order to carry out their work activity in a safe and efficient manner.
- 3.13 The Principal is responsible for monitoring safety performance throughout the school.
- 3.14 The Principal is responsible for developing arrangements for ensuring effective maintenance of a safe working environment.
- 3.15 The Principal is responsible for initiating a risk assessment process where there is a significant risk to health and safety and communicating the results of those assessments to employees and other persons likely to be affected by the activity or process and for ensuring implementation of the findings of any risk assessment.



3.16 In the absence of the Principal, a Vice Principal or a nominated senior teacher will assume the role.

3.17 Managers and employees also have duties, as do people who have control of premises. The EA Manual for Principals and Governors - Managing Health and Safety in Schools document has confirmed that *“ensuring health and safety in schools is an essential part of any school manager’s responsibility and to do this successfully an effective health and safety management system needs to be in place.”*

3.18 **Vice Principals/Heads of Department/Subject Co-ordinators** are responsible for;

- Developing and implementing safe working procedures for all activities and practices within their subject area;
- Implementing a risk assessment process where there is a significant risk to health and safety and communicating the results of those assessments to employees and ensuring implementation of the findings of any risk assessment;
- Ensuring the availability of resources to maintain and improve the safety management arrangements;
- Ensuring that all employees have access to regular training within their discipline to undertake their work safely and to continually develop and improve their competencies in order to carry out their work or activity in a safe and efficient manner;
- Ensuring that the health and safety procedures are an integral part of subject planning and teaching of all subjects and activities, and;
- Ensuring that regular inspections of the workplace and procedures are undertaken to identify hazards and that steps are taken to eliminate or minimise associated risks.

3.19 **Teaching Staff** have a responsibility to exercise care and attention regarding the safety of themselves and pupils under their control and they have specific responsibility for;

- Carrying out risk assessments where there is a significant risk to health and safety and integrating the results into teaching practice;
- Ensuring that health and safety forms an integral part of subject planning within their teaching practice;
- Practicing and teaching safe working during class lessons;
- Ensuring that all protective clothing and equipment as required is both available and used by themselves and pupils;
- Reporting all accidents to the Head of Department and ensuring that Accident Forms are fully completed, and;
- Co-operating fully with the Head of Department and the Principal on all matters pertaining to health and safety.

3.20 **Employees** are responsible for;

- Taking reasonable care not to endanger their own health and safety and that of other persons likely to be affected by their acts and omissions;
- Undertaking their tasks as instructed and in line with training received;
- Reporting to their manager any health and safety concerns;
- Not interfering with or misusing any equipment provided to ensure safe working practice in the workplace;
- Reporting any accident involving injury, damage to plant and equipment, or potential injury, damage or loss.
- Co-operating with and assisting other management colleagues in implementing the health and safety policy, and;
- Adhering to all appropriate risk assessments and method statements.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 In fulfilling their duties and responsibilities the Principal and Board of Governors will adopt the EA Manual for Principals and Governors – Managing Health and Safety in Schools document.
- 4.2 This manual is available at (<http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/health-and-safety/manual-for-principals-and-governors>)
- 4.3 This manual provides clear information on the issues which need to be considered by senior management when developing a health and safety management system tailored to the school and includes guidance on;
- Accident prevention
  - Accident reporting
  - Administering medication
  - Asbestos
  - COSHH
  - COSHH risk assessment
  - Display screen equipment
  - Educational visits
  - Emergency planning
  - Fire safety
  - Fire safety logbooks
  - Fire safety – PEEP
  - Fire safety – PEEP questionnaire
  - First aid
  - Glazing in schools
  - Health and safety monitoring
  - Health and safety policy
  - Management of contractors
  - Portable electrical appliances

- Prevention and management of needle stick injuries
- Risk assessment
- Security
- Violence in schools

- 4.4 The list of issues at 4.3 above does not represent an exhaustive list of the hazards and risks which may be encountered and therefore effective environmental scanning and risk assessment will be necessary features of the methodology for identifying and managing risk within the school environment.
- 4.5 While the EA manual provides guidance on generic risks, the school will, where necessary, develop and implement its own policies and procedures to address specific risks identified following risk assessment.
- 4.6 The methodology will reflect the HSG65 approach of 'Plan, Do, Check and Act.
- 4.7 The school plan will involve an initial review of the health and safety arrangements within the school and an action plan to address any emergent issues. The plan will include what needs to be done and who will be responsible along with agreed aims and objectives.
- 4.8 School management will use the EA Manual to assess risk and identify what needs to be done to manage risk and then 'do' it by implementing any recommended action. This will involve consultation and the provision of appropriate training and supervision.
- 4.9 School management will use the monitoring checklists contained within the EA Manual and information obtained from inspections to check how well risks are being controlled.



- 4.10 School management will act to address issues or deficiencies identified from monitoring and/or inspections and will plan for this – thus completing the 'Plan, Do, Check and Act' cycle.
- 4.11 The Board of Governors will ensure that proactive monitoring takes place as a result of inspections to ensure that;
- High quality reports can be produced
  - Problems or weaknesses can be identified
  - Training needs are identified and addressed
  - Deficiencies identified at inspection are remedied or form part of an action plan.
  - Resource implications have been recognised and programmed.
  - Risk assessments remain valid.
- 4.12 The Board of Governors will apply the 'appointed person' principle to ensure that a nominated member of staff has been given line management responsibility for key safety issues. An appointed person will be nominated for the following key areas;
- Fire Safety
  - Health and Safety
  - First Aid arrangements
- 4.13 The Board of Governors will apply a 'strategic risk management framework' to provide a mechanism to safeguard, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of people who work in the school or who may be affected by work activities.
- 4.14 The 'strategic risk management framework' involves;
- Providing risk information as a result of risk assessment
  - Providing policies and procedures to address risk

- Providing instruction in those policies and procedures
- Providing specialist training (e.g. First Aid, Fire Warden)
- Detailing roles and responsibilities for effective supervision
- Ensuring appropriate equipment is provided and tested
- Monitoring the application of policy by audits and testing
- Reviewing policy and procedures in light of accidents or audits.

4.15 A model of this framework for staff is attached at Appendix 1.

## **5. THE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

- 5.1 The school will comply with the Management of Health and Safety Regulations (NI) 2000 by ensuring arrangements are in place for the suitable and sufficient assessment of risk.
- 5.2 The school will co-operate with the EA to ensure compliance with the Fire and Rescue Services (NI) Order 2006 and the Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010 and will develop and implement procedures for fire safety and emergency evacuation, including maintaining a fire logbook on the premises. This will be supported by the school's own Fire Safety Policy.
- 5.3 The school will comply with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (NI) 1982 by ensuring that adequate provisions are made to administer first aid for any injuries sustained within school. This will be supported by the application of the school's own First Aid Policy.
- 5.4 A key feature of the safety management system will be the monitoring of the working environment and general housekeeping by the application of the school's Health and Safety Monitoring Checklist Policy.

- 5.5 The school will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2003 (and 2005 amendment) and this will be achieved by the application of the school's COSHH Policy.
- 5.6 The school will comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (NI) 1992.
- 5.7 The school will comply with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (NI) 1999.
- 5.8 The school will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (NI) 1993.
- 5.9 The school will comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (NI) 1992.
- 5.10 The school will comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations (NI) 1996.
- 5.11 The school will comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations (NI) 1991 in the context of Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) in co-operation with the EA appointed contractor.
- 5.12 The school will ensure that suitable and sufficient arrangements are made for the control of contractors, service engineers and other visitors by the application of the school's Contractor Checklist Policy.
- 5.13 The school will ensure that staff are aware of how to avail of occupational health and wellbeing advice.
- 5.14 The school will work with the EA to address security issues on site.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 This policy statement shall be reviewed every three years or in light of any emergent issue emanating from health and safety monitoring or reports or any relevant change in legislation.

**This policy statement was agreed on 25 June 2019.**

Signed:  (Principal)

Signed:  (Chair – Board of Governors)



## APPENDIX 1

### CHS - STRATEGIC HEALTH & SAFETY FRAMEWORK

