

PART – D APPENDIX a

SITE TEAM, HANDYPERSON(S) & CLEANER(S) HEALTH & SAFETY OPERATING POLICY

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This section has been written as a Safety Policy Statement for the Site Team, Handyman(s) and Cleaner(s).

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SAFETY POLICY FOR SITE TEAM/HANDYPERSON(S)/CLEANER(S)

Part 1 – GENERAL STATEMENT

- 1.1 The following statement is issued in pursuance of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. It is complementary to the Act and both the Council and Service Safety Policies and does not supersede any part thereof.
- 1.2 The Policy regards the health and safety of all employees, pupils and other visitors using any Education premise as of paramount importance.
- 1.3 In this instance, the Policy is the direct concern of Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaners
- 1.4 All employees working in Education premises have a duty under the Act to:
 - (a) work safely and efficiently
 - (b) not to misuse any machine or substance
 - (c) to use the approved protective clothing and/or equipment.
 - (d) to report any defect in any machine, accessory or electric cabling.
 - (e) to comply with all instructions issued for their safety and to adhere to correct procedures.
 - (f) to take reasonable care for the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - (g) to promote sound safety, health and welfare practices at their place of work.
- 1.5 This policy is supplementary to the establishment's safety policy.

Part 2 – GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) is/are reminded that although the Director of Education bears the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the safety and health of everyone in Education Establishments, each employee or anyone on the premises controlled by the Education Service bear some measure of responsibility for the operation of safety rules and procedures, and also have a responsibility for their own health and safety.

The following are therefore aimed at ensuring each Site Team Member/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) is/are aware of the areas of responsibility delegated to her/him/them, the potential hazards associated with her/his/their work and the measures to be followed in order to ensure risks are addressed.

Part 3 – ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments of work activities are to be carried out in order to identify hazards associated with work activities, the likelihood of the hazard being realised and the control measures required to minimise these risks.

Within this policy statement are the arrangements or procedures to be followed/complied with, which have been identified by risk assessment, in order to minimise the risks to Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s), and others who might be affected, by the activities they undertake. (For more information on risk assessments please see The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 in Part 1 of the H&S Manual).

3.2 MANUAL HANDLING

The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) will, before attempting any manual handling task, assess the risks associated with the task.

To achieve this the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must, when requested to undertake a manual handling operation, first identify the following:

- a) The type of load to be moved paying particular attention to the weight and shape of object(s) to be moved.
- b) Where the load has to be moved to and any likely problems with the route, ie is the route up/down steps.

Once this information is known, they must decide whether they are capable of moving the load safely by himself/herself, with or without the aid of equipment, or whether assistance is required.

If the Site Team member/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) do not feel able to undertake the task without assistance then assistance must be obtained. Assistance can take the form of equipment, sack trucks, or asking a second person to help.

Providing that the assessment can be undertaken in less time than it would to write it up then the assessment will not need to be in writing. We advise that written manual Handling Assessments are to be completed for all Regular operations, ie delivery of computer equipment/stationery, and

for all infrequent operations involving awkward or heavy items, especially if needing to be moved some distance, ie setting up exam tables, moving classroom furniture or setting out stage blocks.

For all such operations the manual handling assessment form attached as an appendix 1 to the Health and Safety (Manual Handling Operations) regulations 1992 (see S1 Page 1.130) must be completed.

3.3 EQUIPMENT

Any equipment which the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) is/are expected to use will be:

- a) provided by the School (either purchased or hired);
- b) suitable for the task to be performed;
- c) in good condition and,
- d) where appropriate, be subject to a system of maintenance.

NB If any of these conditions are not met the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) is/are not to use the equipment. The reason must then be reported to the appropriate person.

3.3.1 FLOOR MACHINES

Floor machines are mainly used for cleaning purposes and such machines will include Scrubber/Polishers, Wet Vacuum Machines and Dry Vacuum Cleaners.

The following precautions are to be followed at all times:

- i) The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must not use, or allow any other person to use, any floor machine unless they have been properly instructed in its use.
- ii) The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must be aware of the limitations of the machines in use, ie Dry Vacuum Machines must not be used for wet suction; Wet Suction Machines must not be used for wet suction with dry conversion kit installed etc.
- iii) The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure that each machine is clean and in a serviceable condition before use.
- iv) Power cables must be checked regularly for any sign of fraying or breakage in the insulated covering.
- v) Plug tops should be inspected for chips or cracks. (It is advisable to use shatterproof plug tops on all machines). Plug tops must be fused with the correct value fuse.

NB All persons are reminded that any machine which is defective, especially with an electrical fault, must not be used. Any defective machines are to be marked as unserviceable and withdrawn from service and, if possible, locked away to prevent anyone, not aware, from using the machine. Defective machines should be repaired as soon as possible.

The following precautions must be followed when the equipment is in use.

- i) Power cables should not be pulled to their limits so that the plug tops are pulled from power sockets.
- ii) Care must be taken that trailing power cables do not become jammed beneath doors and/or do not obstruct doors or become a trip hazard. All operators are reminded that trailing power cables are a potential hazard to the operator and that cables on Scrubber/Polisher machines especially should be kept well clear of the rotating brush or drive plate.

NB Machines can be a fire hazard – keep them clean. Vacuum cleaners must be emptied regularly. A dirty machine with air vents blocked can cause overheating. If the filters in vacuum cleaners are not kept clean, the efficiency of the machine is impaired.

3.3.2 ACCESS EQUIPMENT – LADDERS AND STEPLADDERS

Steps or ladders are regularly used for cleaning and for access. Where steps or ladders are required the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure that:

- a) the steps or ladders have been, or are, brought from reputable suppliers and that they comply with the relevant standard.
- b) the steps or ladders have been given identifying symbols and the date of purchase recorded in a register.
- c) the steps or ladders are stored correctly, i.e. wooden equipment should not be stored in boiler houses.
- d) the steps and ladders are inspected before and after use and any defects remedied immediately. Defective equipment beyond repair should be destroyed as soon as possible.
- e) folding stepladders are not used as straight ladders.
- f) folding stepladders rest evenly on their legs and are extended to the full width of the tie-cord.
- g) wherever possible, and always when working on the 10th tread or above, a second person must steady steps.
- h) metal ladders or steps have rubber safety feet fitted to them.
- i) the feet of ladders or steps are never placed on mats, other moveable objects, or highly polished surfaces.
- j) when a ladder is used it is made safe by either:
 - i) securely lashing it at or near its top;
 - ii) securely lashing it at its base; or
 - iii) by a second person footing the ladder.
- k) ladders are set at the most stable angle. (A slope of 4 units to 1 unit out at the base).

- l) ladders always extend at least 1m above the landing place or the highest rung in use unless there is a suitable handhold to provide equivalent support.

3.3.3 ACCESS EQUIPMENT – TOWER SCAFFOLDS

Where tower scaffolds are used or erected by the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) it is essential that the manufacturers instructions are followed. Generally however Site Team members/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure they comply with the following safety precautions.

- a) The maximum height of all towers is not to exceed 3½ times the shortest base dimensions, for internal use, or 3 times, for external use, unless manufacturers information specifies otherwise. The ratio for external use will only apply where the tower is exposed to, at most, light winds and for extra stability it is advised the tower either be tied to a building or anchored at the bottom corners.

NB In the event manufacturers information is not available the maximum height to least base ratio must not exceed 2:1.

- b) The tower must rest on a firm foundation, which is capable of resting the total load, and must not rest on recently made up ground. If using a mobile scaffold ensure the castors are locked.
- c) The tower must be vertical.
- d) Tower scaffold units are to be completely boarded out at the top and toe boards, a minimum height of 150 mm, must be provided. Only purpose provided scaffold boards in good condition are to be used.
- e) Guard rails must be in position around the platform when the platform is occupied. The guard rail must be at a height of at least 910 mm above the edge of the platform and there must be an intermediate guard rail provided so that there is no gap which exceeds 470 mm between any toe board and guard rail.
- f) Access to a platform must be by a ladder secured to the narrowest side of the tower at the top and bottom, unless a built-in internal ladder is provided or manufacturers instructions specify otherwise. The ladder provided should have rungs which are no more than 300 mm apart and stiles not more than 480 mm apart.

NB You must never climb up the outside of the scaffold.

- g) If any of the components or any joints of the tower unit are missing or damaged the unit must be taken out of use and labelled “Warning – this scaffold unit is unsafe and must not be used”.
- h) If mobile scaffolding is in use it must never be moved with a person on it, nor should any equipment be left on the platform whilst it is in motion.
- i) Static towers must be dismantled before being moved.
- j) Whenever tower scaffolds are in use provision must be made to prevent unauthorised access, by providing barriers or tapes around the base.

3.3.4 ACCESS EQUIPMENT – SCAFFOLDING OTHER THAN TOWERS

The erection of tubular scaffolding, or other non proprietary makes used in the construction industry, requires specialist expertise and knowledge and the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) are **not** to erect such scaffolding.

3.3.5 HAND TOOLS

These will include hammers, screwdrivers, drills etc.

- a) Only tools provided by the school are to be used.
- b) The tools must be inspected prior to use to ensure there are no defects, ie split handles etc.
- c) The tools are only to be used for what they are intended.

3.3.6 HAND HELD PORTABLE POWER TOOLS

These include mains or battery powered screwdrivers, drills, sanders etc.

- a) This equipment must be visually inspected prior to use. The cable, plug and casing should all be in good condition or the equipment put out of use until it has been checked/repaired.
- b) An annual test of the equipment, to check on earth leakage and insulation, must be carried out.
- c) This equipment should be used from a socket with a Residual Current Device (RCD) in the circuit or with a plug-in RCD.

NB This is essential where the caretaker etc. is working outside or alone.

- d) Care should be taken to ensure there are no trailing leads creating trip hazards for other users of the premise.

3.4 SLIP HAZARDS

These arise either through inappropriate treatment of floors, cross contamination of the same or a failure to address spillages. Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure that:

- a) only the correct floor treatments are used on floors throughout the establishment for which they are responsible. Account will need to be taken of the uses to which a particular area is subjected and the floors treated accordingly. Slip retardant polishes should be used where practicable.
- b) if wax polishes are used extra care is taken as some can become slippery, difficult to maintain and cause problems when stripping becomes necessary. Where it is used Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must be aware of the possibility of its being "trafficked" into other areas and causing "skating rink" conditions.
- c) they are aware, and make other Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) aware, of the treatment the floors are receiving.
- d) measures are taken to ensure that water or other spillages are mopped up as soon as possible and not allowed to become a slip hazard.

- e) when floors are wet, signs are to be erected giving warning of the danger.
- f) when floors are being polished the affected areas are to be cordoned off.

NB Signs and cordoning off should be undertaken both inside and outside normal school hours in case members of staff, pupils or other members of the public are on the premises.

3.5 TRIP HAZARDS

The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure that any equipment in use does not become a trip hazard to other unsuspecting persons. Remember the hazard of trailing machine cables. Do not leave buckets, mops, brushes and machines where someone can fall over them and never place a ladder or steps behind a closed door.

3.6 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Many of the chemicals used for cleaning are hazardous chemicals in terms of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1994, as is the case for chemicals used by handypersons, ie wood preservatives, paints etc. Other hazardous substances which are found in school are wood/pottery dust & chemicals used in Science.

The School COSHH assessment, which is kept in the Campus Manager's office, contains information on hazards associated with each of these substances and the precautions required to control the risk. The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must make themselves familiar with this information and ensure that any precautions identified are implemented.

NB Never mix chemicals and always follow the manufacturers instructions.

3.7 HEALTH PROBLEMS

There are a number of potential health problems associated with the work Site Team Members/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) undertake. The following are of particular significance and the precautions indicated must be complied with, in order to minimise the risks of contracting them.

3.7.1 DANGERS OF CONTRACTING DERMATITIS

People react differently to bodily contact with chemicals/substances and in some cases they can set up a skin reaction known as Dermatitis. This normally affects the parts of the body that are in constant contact with the chemical/substances, ie hands, wrists and arms. In most cases, it is very difficult to determine which chemical or substance is causing the complaint, as once it is established other chemicals or substances in contact with the affected area can aggravate the condition.

The following precautions must be followed in order to prevent this condition developing:

- a) all persons are advised that when using any type of chemical or substance, protective gloves should be worn.

- b) care should be taken, when using chemicals/substances mixed with water, that the liquid is not allowed to flow over the wrist section of the gloves by immersing hands too deeply into the solution.
- c) hands, wrists, etc should be washed thoroughly with soap and running water to remove all traces of chemicals.
- d) the gloves used should be well rinsed after use.

3.7.2 DANGERS OF SKIN CANCERS

These are very rare and when they do occur are mostly confined to industries where cutting oils are used. However, there may be some risk where "Fuel Oils" are used.

The greatest risk is confined to male operators who come into contact with Fuel Oils as it is possible for a man to contract Cancer of the Scrotum if personal hygiene is not observed.

The following precautions must therefore be followed to prevent this condition developing:

- a) great care must be taken to ensure that hands are always washed after contact with Fuel Oils, especially before using the toilet.
- b) overalls must be worn at all times when dealing with Fuel Oils and contaminated overalls are not to be worn again until thoroughly washed.
- c) any other clothing that becomes contaminated is to be removed as soon as possible and washed, and any part of the body that has contact with Fuel Oils is to be washed thoroughly.
- d) do not carry oil-impregnated rags in overall pockets.

3.8 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Protective Clothing and Equipment is provided by the school for use by the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) They must ensure that:

- a) overalls are worn at all times;
- b) protective gloves are worn when there is any risk of damage to hands, especially when using certain types of chemicals (see COSHH assessment);
- c) goggles are to be worn when there is any possibility of injury to eyes
- d) respirators are used when there is a risk or possibility of inhaling anything which could prove to be harmful to throat or lungs, and especially when using Dry Acids or when cleaning boiler flues. Respirators should be used at all times when any operation is being carried out where Chlorine Gas is involved.

3.9 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

These are contained in the school fire log book but the Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) have an important task in ensuring that:

- a) Plant rooms and Boiler houses are free of inflammable materials and kept clean and tidy.
- b) corridors and gangways are not obstructed. Waste and rubbish must be moved to the collection area as soon as practicable.
- c) all fire doors are kept closed and never wedged open.
- d) they are aware of the position of water valves and fire points and that these are kept free for access.
- e) the fire alarm is tested weekly using a different call point each time and that this information is recorded in the school fire log book.

3.10 ICE AND SNOW ON PATHS ETC.

- a) The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must clear, grit or salt pathways, as appropriate, as soon as possible.
- b) The Site Team/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) must ensure that warning notices indicating slippery conditions are, where appropriate, displayed at entrances.

3.11 WORKING ALONE

Lone working is not prohibited but it should be avoided where practicable. See the "Safety of Vulnerable Workers Policy" on S2 Page 2.910. Site Team members/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) may from time to time be working alone, ie whilst locking or unlocking the building, and consequently the following precautions are to be followed:

- a) wherever possible someone should be made aware of what, where and when the Site Team member/Handyperson(s)/Cleaner(s) is working alone and when he/she should finish.
- b) whenever working alone on site with electrical equipment the equipment must be plugged into a socket with RCD protection or a plug-in RCD used.
- c) if called out due to a break-in or as the result of the burglar alarm sounding, the Site Team Member is not to enter the premise unaccompanied. He/she should ideally wait until the police are in attendance but as the police do not always attend other arrangements may need to be made.

3.12 SITE TEAM MEMBERS AND HANDYPERSON(S)

The Site Team/Handyperson(s) are only to attempt work that is:

- a) mutually agreed between him/her and their Line Manager
- b) which they are capable and competent to undertake

This work will include remedial painting and decoration, day to day maintenance and small scale improvements.

NB Work involving fixed electrical installation is prohibited.

Before attempting any work the Site Team member/Handyperson(s) will:

- a) identify the tools and materials required for the task;
- b) identify where the work is to be carried out and the need to undertake work when area is unoccupied or the need for cordoning off and signs;
- c) prior to any drilling operations into walls/ceilings or floors the Site Team/Handyperson(s) must establish if there are any services therein. (This should be possible either from service plans or using a hand held detector).
- d) prior to any drilling operations into walls/ceilings, work in any ducts etc. the Site Team/Handyperson(s) must ensure that there is no asbestos present. (The presence of asbestos should be known but where there is any doubt always assume asbestos is present until proven otherwise).
- e) when using chemicals ensure adequate ventilation is provided, ie by opening windows;
- f) if intending to use electrical equipment identify a socket which is protected by a RCD or, if none available, use a plug-in RCD.

D Plumbridge – October '07