



# Health & Safety Policy

**We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.**

**This policy was last reviewed on: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

## Rationale

Good health & safety management is an integral part of Switch Midlands, it's employees, Children and Young People, partners and all other people with whom we work.

Switch Midlands will ensure compliance with legal standards/approved codes of practice, along with, where relevant, health and safety guidance. Wherever possible, and where statutory standards and requirements are not in place, Switch Midlands will meet best practice standards. It is furthermore the policy of Switch Midlands to ensure that:

- All plant, equipment and premises meet appropriate safety standards
- Appropriate health and safety training is in place for all staff
- A high concern for health and safety among all employees is encouraged
- Information and advice is provided to maintain safe working practices.

Switch Midlands expects employees to show a proper personal concern for their own, Children and Young Peoples' and others' safety, and the safety of equipment, by exercising due care and attention and observing authorised methods and codes of practice.

## The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO of Switch Midlands is responsible for the following:

- The production of a school Health and Safety Policy, to be reviewed as required.
- Ensuring that the requirements of health and safety legislation are met and to promote best practice.
- Ensuring that the company's budget is managed on a risk priority basis, so that health, safety and welfare are maintained
- Ensuring that effective health and safety planning and target setting takes place within the school and that regular monitoring, auditing and reviewing of health and safety performance is undertaken.
- Ensuring that all staff are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities and that they are competent to meet these expectations.

- Ensuring effective communication with employees, partners, Children and Young People and parents in respect of health and safety matters
- Ensuring that adequate resources are made available to ensure effective health and safety management.
- Provide an effective risk assessment process which:
  - a) Eliminates accident potential as far as is reasonably practicable
  - b) Regularly reviews and updates risk assessment as appropriate, including post-accident risk assessment  Conforms to statutory regulations, Local Authority policies and procedures, codes of practice and guidance, and to best practice
  - c) Takes account of individual personal requirements, such as disabled people, individuals with poor literacy skills and those for whom English is a second language
  - d) Pays particular attention to pupils, service users, visitors and contractors who may be unaware of dangers and risks
- Ensure that accidents, incidents of aggression, near miss accidents and ill health conditions are investigated and reported according legal requirements.
- Provide the instruction, information, training and supervision necessary to secure the health and safety of all persons under their control
- Ensure that all employees under their control know and accept their individual responsibilities regarding health and safety and related legislation and are adequately trained to carry out these responsibilities
- Ensure that all employees act so as to adequately control risks to health and safety associated with work places and work activities under their control.
- Ensure that health and safety responsibilities are identified within job descriptions, as required.
- Evaluate, monitor and review health and safety arrangements and performance formally once a year, or where there are significant changes
- Consult with the appropriate specialists support services and any employees' representatives so that any issue that may affect the health and safety of employees at work can be effectively dealt with
- Arrange for health and safety representatives, who may be appointed under statutory regulations, to carry out their duties
- Ensure that premises are managed in line with health and safety requirements, that statutory inspections of plant and equipment are undertaken and that site inspections take place each term
- Ensure that all welfare facilities are provided and maintained to an appropriate standard
- Ensure that this policy is communicated to all employees and others operating at the site.

If you have any concerns relating to the organisation's policy, or its implementation, please contact the CEO, who will respond to you within 10 working days.

**Contact for Switch Midlands CEO:**

Tim Wakefield

Switch Midlands, Ryefield, Pendeford, Wolverhampton, WV8 1TX.

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Telephone: 01902552288

## Employees

All employees are required to take health and safety seriously and perform their work in such a way that does not place themselves or others at risk. Every employee has a legal duty to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by what they do or do not do
- Co-operate with their employer in allowing the employer to fulfil their health and safety obligations
- Correctly use work items or anything provided in the interests of health and safety
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for their health, safety or welfare
- Provide specialist or professional knowledge required to inform risk assessments in their area.

Employees at Switch Midlands must:

- a) Report any hazard or malfunction to the CEO. Employees must use all normal lines of internal communication before contacting external enforcement agencies.
- b) Follow all written and verbal instructions they are given to ensure personal safety and the safety of others, particularly Children and Young People and service users who may not have sufficient maturity or understanding to have due regard for their own health and safety
- c) Use their professional and specialist training to undertake dynamic risk assessments in difficult or emergency situations
- d) Be sensibly and safely dressed for their particular working environment and conduct themselves at all times in an orderly manner in the workplace and refrain from any form of horseplay
- e) Avoid any improvisations or shortcuts that could create unnecessary risks to health and safety
- f) Maintain tools and equipment in good condition, reporting all defects to the CEO
- g) Report to the CEO all accidents, incidents of aggression, work related ill-health and near misses

- h) Attend appropriate health and safety training courses and have knowledge of all relevant processes, materials and substances they use
- i) Understand all fire evacuation procedures and the location, position and function of fire safety equipment. Understand the risk assessments in their areas and comply with the control measures arising from them.

## Accident reporting

All accidents to employees and pupils should be recorded in the accident book and reported to the CEO. **The accident book is located at the First Aid point in the Switch Midlands staff kitchen.**

Notifiable accidents/incidents are reportable to the Health and Safety Executive, such as a member of staff being absent from work for over seven days due to a work-related accident. All accidents will be investigated by the CEO to try to prevent it happening again. This investigation will be documented.

## Administration of medication

It is recognised that staff do not have any obligation under their contract to administer medication to Children and Young People and that such administration is on a voluntary basis. There is a requirement however under the DfES to assist Children and Young People with medical needs. Switch Midlands accepts the need for some Children and Young People to receive medication during the day, but Switch Midlands will not treat ailments with medication, purely assist with the administering of prescribed medication. To this extent, the following guidelines apply:

- Medicine will be administered by qualified first aiders only.
- Only medication prescribed by a doctor will be accepted for administration.
- A medicine administration risk assessment will be conducted for each child or young person who requires medication.
- The medication will only be accepted with written authorisation from the parent or guardian.
- The written authorisation must contain clear instructions about the dosage and time of the administration.
- A standard form will be issued by Switch Midlands for this permission to be given. The form includes a statement that the member of staff administering the medication does not claim to be any form of medical practitioner providing treatment.
- Medication will be administered in the presence of another member of staff.
- The medication will be stored in a secure place; and kept cool if it is necessary.
- This medication policy will be brought to the attention of any parents who require it.
- Inhalers are normally outside of this procedure and other arrangements will be made.

## **Blood, avoiding contamination**

All staff should be familiar with this procedure before having to handle blood.

- Wash hands first.
- Put on non-permeable disposable gloves.
- Clean any wound as necessary and dress any wound if necessary.
- Dispose of the gloves and wipe or contaminated material in a plastic bag, seal if possible, and dispose of in the main bin.
- Wash hands thoroughly again.
- Record incident in the accident book.

## **Good Hygiene Practice**

All staff should be familiar with this procedure to help improve the hygiene and cleanliness of the working environment and help prevent the spread of virus and illness.

- Report to work in good health, clean, and dressed in clean attire.
- Take care to ensure working and communal areas are clean and sanitized.
- Wash hands properly, frequently, and at the appropriate times, such as:
  - Before starting work
  - After using the toilet
  - After sneezing, coughing, or using a handkerchief or tissue
  - After touching hair, face, or body
  - After eating and drinking.
  - After any clean up activity such as sweeping, mopping, or wiping counters/desks
  - After touching equipment, in particular shared computer equipment
  - After handling general waste

## **Smoking**

Switch Midlands operates a no-smoking policy. There is no smoking onsite, or within a reasonable radius of the premises that would result in any child or young person attending Switch Midlands services witnessing staff smoking during the working day.

## **Communication**

The CEO is responsible for disseminating information on health and safety issues. Employees will be made aware of how they can assess information such as outcomes of inspections and risk assessments, and local procedures for health, safety and fire during inductions and at regular update meetings. Health and safety will also be a regular item on the agenda of team meetings. A copy of the Health & Safety Policy is located on Switch Midlands's website. The CEO

ensures that all new employees know where to find copies of the health and safety policy.

## **Activities**

Switch Midlands is committed to delivering all practical subjects in a safe way. Staff are responsible for the maintenance of safe working conditions. They should anticipate potentially dangerous situations and act to prevent them from developing. Staff should set an example in maintaining safe working and discipline during activities. Work needs to be well planned in order to prevent accidents. Children and Young People must obey Switch Midlands rules at all times and behave with thought and care when using materials and equipment.

## **Display Screen Equipment**

Assessments will be undertaken for all employees who are required to use display screen equipment as a significant part of their work role and evaluation of the health risks associated with its use. Where the results of an assessment indicate a risk to the user of such equipment, all reasonable steps are undertaken by the school to eliminate these risks or otherwise reduce them to avoid the adverse health effects.

Best practice guidelines will be adopted when setting up Children and Young People on computer workstations. Children and Young People use display screen equipment for short durations. Staff are responsible for connecting and disconnecting computers/iPads etc. Food and drink should not be consumed by Children and Young People near the computers. Children and Young People are regularly reminded by staff of the importance of not spending too many hours in front of a monitor. Where a student has physical disabilities, staff must be aware of any implications for computer work, before that work arises, to avoid any embarrassment for the student and inline with the Equal Opportunities and accessibility policies.

## **Driving at Work**

The CEO will ensure that those persons who drive their own vehicle as part of Switch Midlands business must have the appropriate licence, insurance, MOT (if applicable) and tax. The CEO will require sight of these documents which will be recorded in a log in the appropriate staff file. Any staff member not processing the above will not be permitted to drive on school business.

## **Vehicles on the school site**

Vehicular access to the school is restricted to staff and visitors only and not for general use by parents/guardians when bringing children to school or collecting them. If a member of staff sees children being dropped off on the car park then they should be asked not to drive onto the school car park.

The maximum speed limit entering the school is 5 miles per hour.

The access from the road shall be kept clear for emergency vehicles.

## Off Site Visits by Children and Young People

The CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that educational visits meet employer's requirements.
- Ensuring a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out for all educational visits.
- That staff supervising visits are trained and responsible to do so safely
- Being aware of the DfE publication "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits".

## Electricity

- Staff must not undertake any work on electrical equipment or installations, including resetting trip fuses, without receiving sufficient training.
- Electrical socket outlets must not be overloaded.
- The use of extension leads will be minimised.
- Before using any piece of electrical equipment, staff must undertake a visual inspection to ensure that the plug tops, leads and outer castings are free from defects. Look for signs of burning, damaged cables, loose covers etc. The electrical equipment must be suitable for the environment in which it is to be used. Only portable or low voltage equipment should be used in outside areas. Repairs to electrical equipment will only be undertaken by trained and competent persons. Any member of staff identifying broken, damaged or faulty electrical equipment should ensure that the equipment is not used
- Records are retained of testing, maintenance and repair to equipment.

## Fire

Fire safety and evacuation procedures are set out in the Dovecotes Primary School's Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan within their Health and Safety Policy, available at <https://www.dovecotesprimary.co.uk/policies>. In summary:

- Fire drills will be carried out at least once per term. The time taken to evacuate the whole school will be recorded. If it takes longer than the recognised time investigate and consider carrying out the drill again. The time should normally be less than two minutes.
- Any faults on the systems to be reported immediately.
- All checks as defined in the Fire Log Book will be undertaken.
- Registers must be taken to the assembly point to carry out a roll call.
- At the beginning at each school year, staff make their Children and Young People aware of the fire procedures.

- All electrical equipment that need not be left on, such as, photocopiers, printers and kettles are to be switched off.
- Equipment needed to be left on should be kept clear of combustible material in case of a fault developing when unattended.
- Combustible rubbish is to be regularly disposed of and flammable liquids are to be stored properly in order to reduce the risk of fire.
- Dovecotes Primary School Site Manager and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring the Fire Risk Assessment for the site is up to date and communicated to staff and shared users of the school site. The fire risk assessment will be regularly updated to reflect changes within the school.

## First Aid

Switch Midlands has a duty as an employer to assess its requirements for first aid, and ensure that there is adequate provision to meet those requirements.

Current first aiders:- ***Tim Wakefield, Christian Esson.***

In the event of an injury or ill health, the first-aider in the building should be summoned. First aid team is responsible for ensuring first aid boxes are sufficiently stocked.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring first aid training is up to date and refresher training is undertaken in a timely manner.

Portable first aid kits must be available, suitably stocked and taken on all visits away from the site.

In the event of a more serious injury, such as:

- unconsciousness;
- severe bleeding;
- object stuck in throat;
- deep cut that may require stitching;
- suspected fracture;
- severe asthma attack;
- severe reaction to bites or stings;
- swallowing or suspected swallowing of toxic substance;

Dial 999 and ask for an ambulance. If the first aider considers it necessary, the injured person will be sent directly to hospital (normally by ambulance). Parents and/or guardians will also be informed. No casualty should be allowed to travel to hospital unaccompanied and an accompanying adult (a first aider) will be designated in situations where the parents cannot be contacted.



## **Lone working**

Lone working is undesirable but in some circumstances it cannot reasonably be avoided. Where staff are lone working on site, particularly out of normal working hours, they should ensure all external doors are secured to prevent access by any unauthorised persons. If a lone worker discovers an intruder, they must NOT put themselves at personal risk. Where appropriate, ensure their own security and contact the Police or raise the alarm. Working Off Site - (e.g. when visiting homes) notify a colleague of their whereabouts and the estimated time of return. Staff undertaking home visits to obtain as much background information as possible about the student/family being visited. Avoid lone working, go in pairs. Managers must ensure they are aware of where their staff are working and the procedures to take should a staff member not return to school.

## **Manual Handling**

All staff should be aware of the risks associated with manual handling. Staff are advised to avoid manual handling as much as possible. Manual handling includes lifting, pulling, pushing, moving and carrying. Where there are routine manual handling tasks to be carried out then a suitable risk assessment will be carried out to determine if the risk can be reduced. Seeking assistance with the task can often reduce the risks for simple handling tasks. Staff are discouraged from manual handling of heavy loads and should seek help and the appropriate equipment if required.

## **Missing Pupils**

If a pupil goes missing and cannot be located, the CEO or other senior staff should be informed immediately. If necessary a search of the site and local environments should be made urgently. If it appears that the child may have left the site or have been abducted, parents, referring organisation and police should be informed immediately.

On educational visits it is the responsibility of the visit leader and other staff to maintain a check on pupil numbers and to be aware of the location of pupils at all times. If a pupil goes missing, staff at the venue should be informed immediately, Switch Midlands and referring organisations contacted.

## **New and Expectant Mothers**

New or expectant mothers are employees who are pregnant or who have given birth within the previous six months or who are breast feeding. Pregnancy places extra strain on new or expectant mothers and closer attention needs to be given to their health and safety at work.

Switch Midlands is aware that expectant mothers may have health and safety concerns that need to be addressed and a risk assessment will be completed by the CEO. The same general principles apply in relation to Children and Young People who are expectant or new mothers and, though the employer's legal duties do not specifically apply in such situations, our policy is that risks must be assessed. Participation by a pregnant student in activities and educational visits will need to be reviewed by Switch Midlands, the student's parent/guardian and medical adviser.

A person specific risk assessment will be conducted with the staff member concerned and any reasonable action necessary should be mutually agreed and the assessment retained on the personnel file for future reference.

### **Physical Restraint**

Switch Midlands has a policy of no physical restraint unless it is as a last resort to prevent personal harm to any child, young person, member of staff, volunteer or visitor. Risk Assessments will be undertaken should the need arise relating to physical intervention and staff are trained in physical restraint, however it should only ever be used as a last resort.

Intervention training is recorded and refresher training carried out in accordance with the training provider's recommendations. All incidents where a physical intervention has been used are recorded. Other information e.g. factors which may have triggered the event, must be used to review any risk assessments and management plans.

### **Risk Assessments**

Switch Midlands will seek to ensure that no employee, student, visitor, contractor or other person is exposed to an unacceptably high level of risk from any of the property, equipment, processes or activities undertaken, for which Switch Midlands has a legal responsibility.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out for activities with significant risk and for appointing a sufficient number of staff in order to assist in carrying out the assessments. Risk assessments should be carried out by competent staff. Anyone likely to be affected by a risk assessment must be informed of any risks to their health and safety and must be shown the risk assessments and any control measures that is considered necessary. Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually.

When an accident/ incident has occurred, the risk assessment will also be reviewed. Specific risk assessments relating to individuals, e.g. staff member or Children and Young People are held on that person's file and will be undertaken by the CEO.

## **Visitors**

Visitors to the school site are directed to the main reception by signs outside. Visitors, even regular visitors, contractors etc, should sign-in at reception. Switch Midlands issues badges for all visitors.

If unknown visitors are encountered in the school, or not wearing a valid badge, they should be challenged politely as referred to in the intruder section below.

Visitors should report to the office at the end of the visit.

## **Valuable equipment**

All valuable equipment should be security marked and an inventory compiled and maintained by Switch Midlands.

## **Personal property**

Staff are responsible for the security of their own personal items. These can be deposited in the office during the day if needed.

Children and Young People are discouraged from bringing valuables into school

Children and Young People can ask the office to look after valuables if they do bring them in they may bring in, for example phones/iPods etc

## **Cash handling**

Switch Midlands does not handle money for Children and Young People unless it is absolutely necessary.

## **Intruders**

In the event of a potential intruder, common sense and a due regard for personal safety and the safety of others should be exercised. All legitimate visitors should be identifiable from intruders by their visitors' badge.

Parents should not enter the building without reporting to the office.

If appropriate a potential intruder may be challenged, i.e. "Can I help you? Are you looking for reception?"

If the intruder appears threatening or dangerous the CEO or another senior member of staff should be sought. If necessary evacuation procedures may be called upon if this situation is likely to make the situation safer. Police should be called as soon as possible. The safety of Children and Young People is paramount and they should be moved from the presence of the intruder immediately.

## **Training**

Staff will be provided with appropriate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and work in a safe and efficient manner.

Specific job-related health and safety training will be undertaken as necessary.

The CEO will ensure that details of health and safety training are retained and will arrange refresher training as necessary and will assess the effectiveness of training received. Each member of staff is also responsible for drawing the CEO's attention to their own personal needs for training and for not undertaking duties unless they are confident that they have the necessary competence

## **Violence**

Violence at work is defined as any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public, staff, young person or contractor while they are at work. Such incidents must be reported to the CEO.

Each incident is investigated by the CEO in order to prevent a recurrence of a similar incident. Staff with responsibilities for undertaking risk assessments must consider activities that may result in violence and ensure measures are taken to reduce the likelihood of a violent act occurring. Where it is identified that there is a potential for violence arising from the activity the measures taken could include additional security or training for staff at risk.

## **Waste**

Internal waste bins should be emptied weekly at a minimum by the cleaning contractor, however if a member of staff is concerned about the level of waste in a bin then they can empty the bins safely in the external refuse bins on site. External refuse bins are chained and stored at least six metres from the building.

Consideration is given to the need for removing clinical waste in yellow bags. Sanitary bins will be emptied regularly by the contractor employed to do so. All waste material that could cause harm to any member of staff, young person or other persons should be properly packaged to prevent injury and disposed of (i.e. all glass should be wrapped in newspaper and securely taped).

## **Wellbeing and Stress**

Switch Midlands is committed to promoting high levels of health and wellbeing, and recognise the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stress.

The CEO operates an 'open door' policy and encourages staff to discuss any concerns or issues they may have.

A Supervision Scheme is in operation that allows staff to visit a trained practitioner to discuss their work and well-being, which is confidential.

Regular team meetings are held, where staff are encouraged to voice their opinions and raise any concerns they may have.

The CEO has a duty to minimise levels of stress caused by work and assist staff in maintaining work / life balance. Life events can also contribute to levels of stress and anxiety. All staff are encouraged to discuss situations when they feel that the level of stress they are feeling is detrimental to their health and wellbeing. All staff should be aware that stress is not a sign of weakness and that it should be discussed openly. Appropriate support will be given to staff that need it.

### **Young and Inexperienced Workers including Work Experience**

A 'young person' is defined as anyone who is under 18 years old. Switch Midlands will ensure that young persons are protected from risks to their health and safety as a consequence of their lack of experience, absence of awareness of existing or potential risk or the fact that they have not yet fully matured. Risk assessments for work activities will be carried out for every young/ inexperienced person before they start work. Children and Young People are likely to need more supervision than adults. Good supervision will help us as a company get a clear idea of the young person's capabilities and progress in the job and monitor the effectiveness of their training. Induction and training will be tailored to the tasks the person will be undertaking.

Switch Midlands does, on occasion, have students on work experience and understand we have the secondary responsibility for the health and safety of the student and should be managing any significant risks. Risk assessments, induction and training will be provided and a member of staff assigned to the work placement student as a Mentor.

### **Temporary Workers**

All agency or temporary staff will be inducted by the CEO. A brief induction will be given covering fire procedures, first aid, accident reporting and welfare arrangements. In addition to this risk assessment that relate to the staff members area of work will be covered.