Health and Safety Policy and Manual

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1.0 Health and Safety Statement

The employer, Cobham Montessori School Limited via its Director, Yvonne Cooke, is accountable for health and safety and therefore cannot delegate health and safety duties. We require staff to cooperate with us and to follow what they are told, we may ask an employee to prepare a risk assessment, for example, but it falls to us the employer to ensure it is done and it is suitable and sufficient. It is up to the employer to have a system in place to ensure all documents are sufficient and up to date.

At Cobham Montessori School, we provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and a safe learning environment in which children learn and are cared for. To develop and promote a strong health and safety culture within the school for the benefit of all staff, children, parents and carers, we provide information, training and supervision. We also accept our responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities such as contractors. The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement our health and safety procedures are set out within this policy and we make sufficient resources available to provide a safe environment.

1.1 Legal Framework

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education on health and safety in schools, guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on incident reporting in schools, and the following legislation:

- The requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework: Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which sets out the general duties employers have towards employees and duties relating to lettings
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, which require employers to make an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which require employers to carry out risk assessments, make arrangements to implement necessary measures, and arrange for appropriate information and training
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, which require employers to control substances that are hazardous to health
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013, which state that some accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive and set out the timeframe for this and how long records of such accidents must be kept
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, which require employers to carry out digital screen equipment assessments and states users' entitlement to an eyesight test
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, which require work on gas fittings to be carried out by someone on the Gas Safe Register
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which requires employers to take general fire precautions to ensure the safety of their staff
- The Work at Height Regulations 2005, which requires employers to protect their staff from falls from height
- Any guidance provided by The UK health Security Agency, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Healthy Surrey, and government guidance when responding to infection control issues.

The Health and Safety poster can be found on the Notice Board by the back door in the Children's House classroom.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy statement is to ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons using the premises in relation to our school operation. To achieve this we will actively work towards the following objectives:

1. Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment throughout the school including outdoor spaces
2. Establish and maintain safe working practices amongst staff and children
3. Make arrangements for ensuring safety and the minimising of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of hazardous articles and substances
4. Ensure the provision of sufficient information, instruction and supervision to enable all people working in or using the school to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety and to ensure that staff have access to regular health and safety training
5. Maintain a healthy and safe school with safe entry and exit routes
6. Formulate effective procedures for use in case of fire and other emergencies and for evacuating the school premises; we practice this procedure on a regular basis to enable the safe and speedy evacuation of the school
7. Maintain a safe working environment for pregnant workers or for workers who have recently given birth, including undertaking appropriate risk assessments
8. Maintain a safe environment for those with special educational needs and disabilities and ensure all areas of the school are accessible (wherever practicable)
9. Provide a safe environment for students or trainees to learn in
10. Encourage all staff, visitors and parents to report any unsafe working practices or areas to ensure immediate response by the management.

We believe the risks in the school environment are low and we will maintain the maximum protection for children, staff and parents. The school will (inter alia):

- Ensure all entrances and exits from the building, including fire exits are clearly identifiable and remain clear at all times.
- Regularly check the premises room by room for structural defects, worn fixtures and fittings or electrical equipment and, in conjunction with the Landlord, take the necessary remedial action.
- Ensure that all staff, visitors, parents and children are aware of the fire procedures and regular fire drills are carried out.
- Have the appropriate fire detection and control equipment which is checked regularly to make sure it is in working order.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the procedure to follow in case of accidents for staff, visitors and children.
- Ensure that all members of staff take all reasonable action to control the spread of infectious diseases and wear protective gloves and clothing where appropriate.
- Ensure there are suitable hygienic changing facilities (see intimate care policy).
- Prohibit smoking on the school premises.
- Prohibit any contractor from working on the premises without prior discussion with the Head of School.
- We will ensure that any work at height is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people with the skills, knowledge and experience to do the work.
- Encourage children to manage risks safely and prohibit running inside the premises unless in designated areas.
- Risk-assess all electrical sockets and take appropriate measures to reduce risks where necessary and ensure no trailing wires are left around the school.
- Ensure all portable electrical appliances are tested annually.
- Ensure all cleaning materials are placed out of the reach of children and kept in their original containers.
- Wear protective clothing if cooking food.
- Prohibit certain foods that may relate to children's allergies, e.g. peanuts are not allowed in the school.
- We identify the 14 allergens listed by EU Law that we use as ingredients in any of the dishes we provide to children and ensure that all parents are informed.
- Follow the Allergies and Chronic Medical Conditions policy for children who have allergies.

- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken on the storage and preparation of food produce within the school.
- Familiarise all staff with the position of the first aid boxes and ensure all know who the appointed first aiders are.
- Provide appropriately stocked first aid boxes and check their contents regularly.
- Ensure children are supervised appropriately.
- Ensure staff paediatric first aid certificates are up to date.

3.0 Responsibilities

The designated Health and Safety Officer in the school is **Shona Dolan**. The employer, **Yvonne Cooke**, has overall and final responsibility for this policy being carried out at: Cobham Montessori School, The Hall, 21-23 Spencer Road, Cobham KT11 2AF. The deputy manager, Blanca Rosall-Balsells, will be responsible in her absence.

All employees have the responsibility to cooperate with senior staff and the head teacher to achieve a healthy and safe school and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

Neglect of health and safety regulations/duties will be regarded as a disciplinary matter (see Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Policy).

Whenever a member of staff notices a health or safety problem, which they are not able to rectify, they must immediately report it to the appropriate person named above.

Parents and visitors are requested to report any concerns they may have to the Head of School or health and safety officer.

Daily contact, weekly group meetings and supervision meetings provide consultation between management and employees. This will include health and safety matters.

4.0 Health and Safety Training

It is recognised that Cobham Montessori School has a legal responsibility to instruct and train their staff on health and safety issues, including safe systems of work, in order to ensure their health, safety and welfare and of that of other people affected by their work, e.g., children, contractors and members of the public.

Person responsible for monitoring staff training is **Yvonne Cooke**.

Health and safety is covered in all induction training for new staff. Ongoing training is provided during Inset days and 'on the job' as appropriate. Health and Safety topics are also covered during weekly staff meetings and noted in the meeting minutes.

There is often a need for specialist training in safety either for particular job holders or for employees who have additional responsibilities such as first aiders. The following list suggests some roles and activities where specialist training should be considered:

- First aiders
- Lifting and handling
- Hygiene
- Job specific activities
- Food preparation

The most common current training requirements are summarised below:

Area	Training Required	Who
First Aid	Approved 12 hour Paediatric first aid training course	All designated first aid staff (all full-time permanent teaching staff)
Safeguarding/Child Protection	External SSCP Annual Update plus Specific Safeguarding Issue straining as required	DSL
Safeguarding/Child Protection	Initial external training then at least inhouse annual updates	All staff

Health and Safety Training	External Training	Health and Safety Officer
Health and Safety Training	In house	All staff
Risk Assessments	In house	All staff
Fire Safety	In house	All staff
Food Hygiene	External Training	All staff who prepare snack
Use of Adrenaline Auto Injector pens	Manufacturer's training video	All first aid staff
Manual Handling	In house	All staff
Allergy Awareness	In house	All staff
Intimate Care	In house	All staff who have intimate care responsibilities

At present at least one member of staff on duty MUST hold a full Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate in the school and when on outings. In addition to this, all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who have completed a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016, must also have either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an early years setting.

All trained first aiders are listed on the staff board.

5.0 Health and safety arrangements

- All staff are responsible for general health and safety in the school
- Risk assessments will be conducted in all areas of the school, including teaching spaces (including activities), ancillary spaces (including cleaning equipment), outdoor areas and resources.
- These are reviewed each term and when arrangements change.
- All outings away from the school (however short) will include a prior risk assessment – more details are included in our Offsite Activities Policy.
- All equipment, rooms and outdoor areas will be checked thoroughly by staff before children access them or the area. These checks will be recorded daily and initialled by the staff responsible. Unsafe areas will be made safe and / or items removed from the area by the responsible staff member to promote the safety of the children. If this cannot be achieved the head teacher will be notified immediately.
- We provide appropriate facilities for all children, staff, parents and visitors to receive a warm welcome and provide for their basic care needs, e.g., easy to access toilet area and fresh drinking water.
- The school will adhere to the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) to ensure all children, staff, parents and visitors are safe in relation to any chemicals we may use on the premises (see Appendix A)
- All staff and students will receive appropriate training in all areas of health and safety which will include risk assessments, manual handling and fire safety. We may also use benefit-risk assessments for particular activities and resources for children
- We have a clear First Aid and Emergency Treatment Policy to follow in the case of any person in the school suffering injury from an accident or incident.
- We have a clear Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Procedure which supports the prevention of fire and the safe evacuation of all persons in the school. This is to be shared with all staff, students, parents and visitors to the school.
- We review accident and incident records frequently at the team meeting to identify any patterns/hazardous areas. In addition, we carry out a termly review of accidents to consider broader patterns or changes needed to staff or the use of school space.

- All health and safety matters are reviewed informally on an ongoing basis and formally every term or when something changes.
- Staff and parents can contribute to any policy by informing a member of staff, by email and during the regular meetings held at school.
- Reporting of accidents is undertaken in accordance with Appendix K

The policy is kept up to date and reviewed regularly, especially when changes in the nature and size of the school may change. It is revised at least biannually, and as and when required. We therefore welcome any useful comments from members of staff, parents and visitors regarding this policy.

August 2025 Review date: August 2026

Adopted by: Yvonne Cooke, Director

Read and understood (Health and Safety Officer): Shona Dolan

Appendix A: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Purpose of Section

Cobham Montessori School recognises its responsibilities regarding hazardous substances and the need to ensure that all chemicals used on the site have been registered and assessed and to ensure they are appropriate to the tasks for which they are required and are the safest available product. Further, to ensure that where an element of risk is present measures have been taken to control that risk.

Legislation

These assessments are a requirement of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999. (COSHH).

COSHH Risk Assessments

Schools are required to control hazardous substances, which can take many forms, including:

- Chemicals
- Products containing chemicals
- Fumes
- Dusts
- Vapours
- Mists
- Gases and asphyxiating gases
- Germs that cause diseases, such as leptospirosis or legionnaires disease

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) risk assessments are completed by the Health and Safety Officer – Shona Dolan and circulated to all employees who work with hazardous substances. Staff will also be provided with protective equipment, where necessary.

The COSHH risk assessment details the Hazard, the risk and any procedures for dealing with spillages or accidental contact. These risk assessments are updated annually or when a new substance is brought onto school premises. A copy is kept in the locked cupboard in the Elementary kitchen where hazardous products are kept.

Our staff use and store hazardous products in accordance with instructions on the product label. All hazardous products are kept in their original containers, with clear labelling and product information. Where possible the product data sheets are kept in the health and safety folder and are used to inform the risk assessment.

No hazardous product may be brought onto the school premises without informing the Health and Safety officer.

Any hazardous products are disposed of in accordance with specific disposal procedures.

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Appendix B: Electrical Safety

Cobham Montessori School recognises the potentially fatal hazards associated with electrical supply.

Legislation

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 requires employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all electrical equipment and installations are safe and without risk to health. Employees also have a responsibility to co-operate with the employer and to comply with those regulations that are within their control. An Approved Code of Practice is available from the HSE ref. HS(R)25.

General Guidance

- All staff must ensure that electrical faults and hazards are reported immediately to their supervisor who should ensure that the relevant corrective action is taken immediately.
- Once a faulty piece of equipment is identified it must not be used under any circumstances and if possible (without risk to personal safety) it should be isolated from the mains supply. If there is any likelihood of the equipment being reconnected by mistake, then the plug should be removed.
- All Class 1 portable electrical equipment will, where necessary, receive regular appliance tests and any defects rectified before being issued or re-issued to staff.
- Routine visual inspections should be made using an "Electrical Equipment Register"
- No person is to attempt to repair any faulty electrical appliances or carryout any electrical work without being 'competent' and without having management authority, suitable training and correct equipment. Where necessary a permit to work may be required before certain high-risk work can begin.
- Keep a record of all formal inspections and repairs carried out to equipment or installations.

Under no circumstances must electrical equipment be used if a fault is recognised and either an approved electrical contractor or a “competent” electrician may only carry out repairs.

Golden Rules for Electrical Safety

A number of "Golden Rules" apply to electrical safety:

1. Ensure electrical systems are designed, installed and maintained by competent persons in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and the latest edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations.
2. Ensure that "competent" persons are actually competent for the particular task they are being asked to perform. Blanket competence for all tasks may not be good enough.
3. Ensure electrical equipment conforms to relevant British Standards and is kite marked or CE marked.
4. Ensure equipment is regularly maintained to the relevant British Standard
5. Ensure a procedure exists for suspect electrical equipment to be taken out of service until inspected by a competent person.
6. Ensure visual inspections of electrical equipment, flexible cables, plugs and sockets are included in safety surveys, etc.
7. Ensure electrical equipment is used safely by trained staff.

Training

Effective training in the safe use of electrical equipment should be provided and recorded on staff training records. Reference should be made to the "Risk Assessment" and "Safe System of Work" sections for training information.

Procedure

1. An inventory of all the electrical equipment provided in their various work locations should be created using the "Electrical Equipment Register". Include all portable electrical equipment

such as radios, hand tools, etc. Once listed, the forms should be collated and held centrally or electronically.

2. Once identified all electrical equipment may be given a unique code number that can be displayed on the body of the equipment or plug and logged in the register.
3. At least every 12 months a 'competent person' should carry out a comprehensive electrical check (PAT test) of all Class 1 portable electrical equipment. The date of this check should be recorded in the main register and on the body or plug of the electrical equipment.
4. When a new piece of electrical equipment is purchased or brought on site it should be entered onto the register under the appropriate location for the subsequent PAT test. At least every 12 months the whole register should be updated and any redundant and isolated equipment removed from the register.
5. Staff should be instructed to carry out a basic visual check each time a piece of equipment is used, moved or altered in any way.

   Class 1 equipment is earthed and has three wires in the cable -
   Earth - green and yellow
   Neutral - blue (formerly black)
   Live - brown (formerly red)
   Class 2 equipment is usually called 'double insulated' and has only two wires in the cable, and should be marked with a double square symbol, one inside the other.

Appendix C: Installation, Safe Use and Storage of Mains Gas

Purpose of Section

It is recognised that gas is an extremely dangerous substance that can be lethal if inhaled, injurious if it burns uncontrolled or explodes; and can affect one or more persons. The basic precautions and maintenance checks contained in this section must be established to ensure that any potential hazards associated with gas are controlled.

Mains Gas Supply: General Guidance

Gas fittings must be installed and maintained by competent persons trained in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) Standards of Training in safe gas installations. All companies carrying out gas work must be Gas Safe Registered.

Note: The Regulations define 'gas fittings' as including gas pipe work, valves, regulators, meters, and fittings apparatus and appliances designed for use by gas consumers for the purposes of heating, lighting, cooking or other reasons (except for the purpose of an industrial process undertaken on industrial premises). The definition does not include disposable gas cylinders or cartridges, gas storage vessels or any part of a distribution main or other up-stream pipe or service pipe.

Employer Responsibility

- Employers are required to ensure that any gas appliance, flue or installation pipe work installed at a place of work they control is maintained in a safe condition. The gas boilers are owned and maintained by the Landlord, Cobham Friends of Guiding. Consequently, the Employer must ensure that the Landlord maintains the equipment in a safe condition.
- An employer or person responsible for any premises must not permit the use of any unsafe appliance.

Employee Responsibility

- All employees must ensure that any gas faults and hazards are reported immediately to their line manager or the safety co-ordinator. If the safety co-ordinator is unavailable, then the line manager must contact the approved gas contractor and request immediate attendance.
- Once a faulty piece of equipment is identified it must not be used under any circumstances and if possible (without risk to personal safety) it should be isolated from the mains supply. If there is any likelihood of the equipment being reconnected by mistake then the control tap must be either locked off or if not possible a sign affixed to the tap warning of a hazard and instructing people not to reconnect the supply.

Routine visual inspections of the site should be made

- No person is to attempt to repair any faulty gas fitting or appliance or carry out any work on gas fittings or appliances. Only employees who are Gas Safe registered and have management authority may work on gas equipment. Where necessary a permit to work may be required before work can begin.
- A record must be kept of all formal inspections and repairs carried out to gas equipment or installations.

In the event of an emergency

1. Shut off the gas supply at the emergency control point (Located under the counter below the boiler in the Children's House Kitchen) in the event of an escape of gas, and ventilate accordingly;
2. If gas continues to escape after the emergency control has been closed, clear the area and contact the gas supplier emergency service (the number should be on the emergency control point). Do not smoke, and extinguish all sources of ignition;
3. Do not re-open the emergency control, until all steps have been taken to prevent the re-escape of gas.

The National Freephone Emergency Service telephone number is: 0800 111999

Under no circumstances must gas equipment be used if a fault is recognised and the site gas contractor or a nominated "qualified" gas fitter must only carry out repairs.

Requirements for Gas Appliances

All gas appliances on the premises or premises owned or occupied by Cobham Montessori School must be logged together with details of routine inspections.

Any employee intending to purchase a gas appliance or gas fitting must get the purchase approved by the safety co-ordinator or nominated deputy. This is to ensure that it will comply with the following criteria:

1. Appliances and fittings must be safe when properly used, presenting no danger to persons, domestic animals or property.
2. When purchased they must be accompanied by comprehensive technical instructions for the installer.
3. There must be provided instructions and all necessary information for safe use and servicing by the user.
4. The appliance and all packaging must carry appropriate warning notices that must emphasise the need for sufficient ventilation at the point of installation.
5. Materials must be capable of withstanding the stresses imposed during foreseeable use.
6. The manufacturer or supplier must guarantee that the properties of materials used are designed to ensure safety.
7. Appliances must be constructed in such a way as to ensure safety during normal use.
8. It is an offence to supply an appliance or fitting that does not have a valid EU type-examination certificate (CE Mark) or a corresponding certificate of approval.

A CE mark is confirmation that an appliance conforms to all relevant Directives and is of a type for which a type-examination certificate is in force. The CE mark must be affixed to each appliance in a visible form and must be legible and indelible. A data plate is acceptable provided that it cannot be re-used. A certificate of conformity must accompany all of the Organisation's gas fittings.

A competent person employed by the approved gas contractor must inspect all gas equipment and installations annually.

Gas Meters

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 require that gas meters must be sited so as not to impede any emergency escape from the premises. When meters are replaced they must be housed in fire resistant compartments and protected from risk of damage by electrical apparatus. They must be readily accessible for inspection and maintenance and must be tested for gas tightness immediately after installation.

Where a gas meter is attached to an outside wall, escaping gas must disperse to external air. Flammable materials must not be stored in a meter box or meter compounds. If the meter box/compound is lockable there must be a readily accessible and labelled key. Where a primary meter is installed or adapted and is sited more than 2 meters away from the nearest upstream emergency control, a notice must be displayed on the meter indicating the procedure to be followed in the event of an escape of gas. (Example below)

Gas Emergency Control

- Shut off gas supply at main emergency control: Under the counter in the Children's House Kitchen
- If gas continues to escape notify gas supplier immediately.
- Do not reopen supply until a competent person has taken a remedial action.
- Gas Supplier's name, address & telephone number should be available at the meter.
- Date notice first displayed.

Appendix D: Legionellosis

Purpose of Section

It is recognised that there is a need to take all reasonable measures to prevent the organism Legionella pneumophila from coming into contact with employees, non-employees or members of the public in a potentially hazardous manner.

General Guidance

Legionnaires' disease is the name commonly given to Pneumonia caused by the organism Legionella pneumophila. The organism is found in most parts of the world, including the United Kingdom, in water supplies, particularly air conditioning cooling towers and plumbing systems.

It is thought that the organism gains nutrient from the sludge in the bottom of calorifiers and cooling tower ponds and gains access to the respiratory system of a susceptible person, by inhalation of the droplets in water vapour.

The disease cannot be contracted through drinking contaminated water.

Risk Assessment

Systems that are believed to be susceptible to colonisation by Legionella and may cause its 'distribution' require identification and assessment. In the 21-23 Spencer Road premises there are no water storage tanks, cooling towers, air conditioning systems or spa pools on the premises. However, water sources and pouring activities are routinely cleaned as part of the daily checks. Hot water in the Elementary kitchen is produced by the electric water heater and limited to 45°C to prevent scalding. Water is not stored at this temperature.

See Termly Risk Assessments

Appendix E: Lone Working

General Guidance

Cobham Montessori School accepts its duty to organise and ensure the safety of solitary workers. Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in the discharge of their legal obligations.

People who are likely to have to work alone

People who work by themselves without close or direct supervision may be found in a range of situations. These may include:

- Teaching staff who may be working late or undertaking home visits
- Staff who open up in the morning or close up in the evening
- Caretakers and porters
- Security staff
- Ground-keepers
- People, including contractors, who work outside normal hours: e.g. cleaners, maintenance or repair staff
- Contractors who carry out construction work, plant installation, maintenance electrical repairs, lift repairs, painting and decorating, cleaning etc., on Organisation premises

Law relating to lone working

There is no general prohibition on working alone, but some specific legislation stipulates that at least two people must be involved in the work and specifies those safe systems of work to be followed. In some cases exemptions are available which permit lone working. In others the law stipulates the standard of supervision to be provided (e.g. for young people undergoing training) and limits the extent to which people may work on their own.

Safe systems of work for lone work

Where there is no specific legal prohibition on working alone, the senior member of staff will carry out an 'area risk assessment' exercise (see Risk Assessment section) and identify any potential hazards or risks associated with the work. Where risks or hazards are identified the health and safety officer will devise and implement safe systems of work to ensure that the risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled. When it is not possible to devise arrangements for the work to be done safely by one person, alternative arrangements providing help or back up will have to be agreed.

In the majority of instances when employees are required to work alone the job will have been assessed as being capable of control by one person and that the employee concerned will not be exposed to significantly more risks than employees who work together.

Safety Precautions for Lone Workers

Cobham Montessori School staff visiting other premises

All Cobham Montessori School staff, when leaving their normal place of work to visit non-Cobham Montessori premises, should follow the following procedure:

1. Inform your line manager where you are going and how long you expect to be
2. If you have not returned within an hour of your expected return the alarm will be raised and steps taken to determine your whereabouts
3. If there is any doubt about personal safety then you should take either a mobile telephone and/or a colleague

Care must be taken at all times and you should never knowingly place yourself in any danger. Familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures for any other Organisation or large building you are visiting.

Setting Up/Packing Away, Maintenance staff and contractors

- Avoid lifting heavy objects - if in doubt do not lift, wait and seek help.
- If using ladders - you may require another person to foot a ladder, do not attempt to use a ladder unless it can be secured or footed by a second person.

- If you are to undertake work away from your usual place of work in a remote area, inform someone of what you are doing, where you will be and what time you expect to be finished.
- Regular checks must be made whilst lone contractors are on site to ensure their safety. This is particularly important when lift engineers, electricians and other maintenance workers, are carrying out work

Precautions to be taken by all lone workers

You must ensure that you are medically fit and suitable to work alone. Routine checks by doctor may be appropriate to ensure that you have no medical conditions that make you unsuitable for working alone. You must consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional physical and mental burdens on you. Don't put yourself at risk.

If you know you are suffering from a medical condition that could put you at increased risk you are obliged to inform the Head of School in order that it may be taken into consideration. This does not necessarily mean that you will be unable to carry on doing the job, merely that additional precautions may be taken where necessary.

Specific training may be required to ensure proficiency in safety matters. This is particularly important in work activities where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. It may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations. As a solitary worker you need to understand fully the risks involved in the work, the necessary precautions and be sufficiently experienced. There should be established, clear, safe systems of work to set the limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone. These safe systems should specify how to behave in circumstances that are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, e.g. when to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor.

Although as a solitary worker you cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still Cobham Montessori School's duty to provide appropriate control of the work. Supervision complements information, instruction and training and helps to ensure that you understand the risks and precautions associated with work and that is carried out. It can also provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.

The extent of supervision required will depend on the risks involved and your proficiency and experience to identify and handle safety issues. If you are a new employee undergoing training, doing a job that presents special risks, or dealing with new situations you may need to be accompanied at first.

The extent of supervision required is a decision that will be made by your line manager. It should not be left to you to decide that you require assistance. Safety supervision will generally be carried out when visits are made to check the progress and quality of your work and may take the form of periodic site visits coupled with discussions in which safety issues are assessed.

Illness, accident and emergency situations may arise and as a solitary worker you should be capable of responding correctly. Emergency procedures are established within Cobham Montessori School and all employees are trained to implement these procedures. Information about emergency procedures should be fully understood and you must ensure you know the location of and have access to adequate first-aid facilities. If you are a mobile worker you should carry a first-aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

Appendix F: Manual Handling Operations

Purpose of Section

Manual handling of loads is one of the most common causes of injury at work and every effort must be made to prevent this. The back, neck, shoulders and upper limbs are particularly at risk. Injuries include backache, slipped discs, upper limb disorders, tenosynovitis, pain, numbness, swelling and tingling in the hands and wrists.

This appendix sets out Cobham Montessori School's approach to managing manual handling risks in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and current Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance.

Legal Requirements

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 require employers to:

1. **Avoid** hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable
2. **Assess** any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided
3. **Reduce** the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable

Employees have a duty to:

- Follow systems of work laid down for their safety
- Make proper use of equipment provided
- Co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters
- Inform their employer if they identify hazardous handling activities
- Take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk

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Hierarchy of Control Measures

Cobham Montessori School will follow the HSE's hierarchy of controls for manual handling:

1. Avoid hazardous manual handling where possible

We will eliminate or minimise the need for manual handling through:

- Careful planning of the learning environment and storage arrangements
- Ordering supplies in smaller, more manageable quantities
- Positioning frequently used items at accessible heights (between hip and shoulder height)
- Using wheeled equipment where appropriate (e.g., trolleys for moving resources)

2. Assess risks that cannot be avoided

We will conduct formal risk assessments for:

- All regular manual handling tasks
- New tasks or activities
- Tasks following an incident or near-miss
- When there are changes to the task, load, environment, or individual capability
- At least annually as part of our overall health and safety review

3. Reduce risk through appropriate control measures

Where manual handling cannot be avoided, we will reduce risks through:

- **Task redesign** – breaking tasks into smaller parts, reducing carrying distances
- **Load modification** – using smaller containers, improving packaging, providing handles
- **Environmental improvements** – ensuring clear pathways, adequate lighting, level surfaces
- **Mechanical aids** – providing trolleys, hoists, or other equipment where appropriate
- **Training and technique** – ensuring all staff receive appropriate manual handling training

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Risk Assessment Process

Responsibility for Risk Assessments

Yvonne Cooke (Director) is responsible for ensuring manual handling risk assessments are completed and reviewed.

Shona Dolan (Health and Safety Officer) will conduct manual handling risk assessments with input from relevant staff members.

When Risk Assessments Must Be Conducted

Risk assessments must be carried out:

- Before introducing new manual handling tasks
- When there are changes to existing tasks, equipment, or working environment

- Following any manual handling incident or near-miss
- When an individual's circumstances change (e.g., pregnancy, return from injury, health condition)
- At least annually as part of routine review

Assessment Methodology

We will use the HSE's Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC tool) or similar structured approach to assess:

THE TASK – Does it involve:

- Holding or manipulating loads at distance from the body?
- Unsatisfactory bodily movement or posture (twisting, stooping, reaching upwards)?
- Excessive lifting or lowering distances?
- Excessive carrying distances?
- Excessive pushing or pulling of loads?
- Risk of sudden movement of loads?
- Frequent or prolonged physical effort?
- Insufficient rest or recovery periods?
- A rate of work imposed by a process?

THE LOAD – Is it:

- Heavy, bulky or unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable, or with contents likely to shift?
- Sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging?

THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT – Are there:

- Space constraints preventing good posture?
- Uneven, slippery or unstable floors?
- Variations in level of floors or work surfaces?
- Extremes of temperature or humidity?
- Poor lighting conditions?

INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITY – Does the job:

- Require unusual strength, height, etc.?
- Create a hazard to those who might reasonably be considered to be pregnant or to have a health problem?
- Require special information or training for its safe performance?

OTHER FACTORS – Consider:

- Movement or posture, particularly twisting the trunk or sideways bending
- Handling while seated
- Exertion of force at the start or end of the range of movement
- Frequent repetition of the task
- Insufficient rest or recovery time
- Lack of control over work rate
- Systems of work that are unpredictable

Documentation

All manual handling risk assessments will be:

- Recorded in writing using our standard risk assessment template
- Stored in the Health and Safety electronic folder under Risk Assessments
- Made available to all relevant staff members
- Reviewed and updated as required

Weight Guidelines

The HSE provides guideline figures for lifting and lowering operations. **These are guidelines, not safe weight limits.** Individual capability varies significantly, and many factors affect what is safe for each person.

HSE Guideline Weights for Lifting and Lowering

For men:

- At waist height, close to body: 25kg
- At shoulder height: 10kg

- At floor level: 10kg
- At arm's length: 5kg

For women:

- At waist height, close to body: 16kg
- At shoulder height: 7kg
- At floor level: 7kg
- At arm's length: 3kg

These figures are reduced further if:

- The load is held at arm's length or to the side
- Handling is done with arms extended or at high or low levels
- Handling involves twisting
- The load is difficult to grasp
- The load is unstable or unpredictable
- Handling is done frequently or over long periods

When to Use Mechanical Aids or Team Handling

Staff should use mechanical aids (trolleys, hoists) or seek assistance from colleagues when:

- Loads exceed the guideline weights above
- The task involves any of the risk factors identified in the risk assessment
- They feel uncomfortable or uncertain about handling a load safely
- Individual circumstances (see below) mean standard guidelines don't apply

No member of staff should feel pressured to handle a load they consider unsafe.

Individual Risk Factors

General Considerations

Manual handling capability varies between individuals based on:

- Age
- Physical fitness and strength
- Previous injury or health conditions
- Pregnancy
- Disabilities
- Experience and training

Pregnant Workers

We will conduct a specific risk assessment for any pregnant employee as soon as we are informed of the pregnancy. This will consider:

- Risks from manual handling, particularly in later pregnancy
- Postural problems and changes to centre of gravity
- Risks from lifting above shoulder height or from floor level
- The need to avoid heavy lifting in the months after childbirth

Adjustments may include:

- Reducing or eliminating manual handling tasks
- Providing additional assistance
- Modifying working arrangements
- Temporary redeployment to alternative duties

Staff with Health Conditions or Disabilities

Staff must inform **Yvonne Cooke** or **Shona Dolan** if they have any health condition that may affect their ability to handle loads safely. This includes:

- Back problems or previous back injury
- Joint problems (shoulders, knees, hips, wrists)
- Hernias
- Recent surgery
- Any condition affecting strength, balance, or mobility

We will conduct an individual risk assessment and implement reasonable adjustments, which may include:

- Modified duties
- Additional equipment
- Assistance from colleagues

- Temporary alternative arrangements

All information will be treated confidentially and used only to ensure the individual's safety.

Return to Work After Injury

Staff returning to work after a manual handling injury or any condition affecting their physical capability will:

- Have a return-to-work meeting with their line manager
- Undergo a specific risk assessment before resuming manual handling tasks
- Be provided with a phased return or modified duties if appropriate
- Receive additional support and monitoring during their return

Young Workers and Trainees

We will take particular care with young workers (under 18) and trainees, ensuring:

- They receive thorough manual handling training before undertaking any tasks
- They are closely supervised initially
- Tasks are appropriate to their physical development and capability
- Risk assessments specifically consider their needs

Training Requirements

Who Needs Training

All staff members will receive manual handling training appropriate to their role.

Training Content

Manual handling training will cover:

- The risks of manual handling and how injuries occur
- How to carry out safe manual handling, including practical techniques
- Appropriate systems of work for their specific tasks
- Use of mechanical aids and equipment
- The importance of reporting hazards and difficulties
- Individual responsibilities under health and safety law
- How to adapt techniques to different situations
- Recognition of when a task is beyond their capability

Frequency of Training

- **Initial training**: All new staff during induction
- **Refresher training**: Annually for all staff
- **Additional training**: When:
    - New equipment or tasks are introduced
    - Risk assessments identify the need
    - Following an incident or near-miss
    - An individual's circumstances change significantly

Training Delivery

Training will be:

- Practical and task-specific, relating to actual activities staff perform
- Delivered by a competent person (either externally qualified trainer or internally by someone with appropriate knowledge and experience)
- Documented, with records kept of who attended and when

Training Records

The Health and Safety Officer will maintain records of all manual handling training, including:

- Names of staff trained
- Date of training
- Content covered
- Name of trainer
- Date refresher training is due

Manual Handling in Early Years Settings: Specific Guidance

Lifting and Carrying Children

General Principles:

- Children should be encouraged to be as independent as possible
- Lifting should be avoided where the child can walk, climb, or move independently

- Always consider the child's weight, age, and mobility
- Never lift a child if you feel it's unsafe to do so

Safe Techniques for Lifting Children:

For babies and toddlers:

- Get close to the child before lifting
- Bend your knees, keep your back straight
- Hold the child close to your body
- Support the child's head and body
- Avoid twisting – move your feet instead

For older children who need assistance:

- Encourage the child to help (e.g., holding onto you)
- Use both hands and keep the child close
- Avoid lifting above shoulder height
- Consider using a step or raised surface to reduce lifting distance
- Use two-person lifts for heavier children or those with limited mobility

When NOT to lift a child:

- If the child's weight exceeds safe guidelines for your capability
- If you have any back pain or injury
- If the environment is unsuitable (e.g., wet floor, obstacles)
- If you're carrying other items
- If you feel uncertain or uncomfortable

For children with special educational needs or disabilities:

- Follow individual IHPs and handling plans
- Use appropriate equipment (hoists, slings, transfer boards) as specified
- Ensure all staff are trained in the specific techniques required
- Review handling arrangements regularly with parents/carers and healthcare professionals

Moving Furniture and Montessori Materials

Storage arrangements:

- Heavy materials should be stored between hip and shoulder height
- Frequently used items should be easily accessible
- Shelving should be stable and appropriate for the load
- Clear labels should indicate heavy items

Moving shelving and furniture:

- Use trolleys or furniture sliders where possible
- Always use two people for heavy or bulky items
- Plan the route and clear obstacles first
- Take breaks when moving multiple items

Community Playthings Shelving:

- With one person at each end of the unit, tip slightly forward or back to allow the toe trim to pivot
- One person keeps the item tipped, while the other rotates the toe trim to the desired position by pulling or pushing on one of the handholds at each end of the toe trim
- Tip the unit slightly to the other side and repeat the procedure with the other toe trim
- Never change the position of the toe trim with less than two people
- Always use the handholds provided at each end of the toe trim

Handling Supplies and Deliveries

When receiving deliveries:

- Check the weight of items before attempting to move them
- Ask the delivery driver to place items in the most convenient location
- Use a trolley to move items from the delivery point to storage
- Break down large deliveries into smaller, manageable loads
- Never sign for damaged packaging that might contain broken/sharp items

Storing supplies:

- Store heavy items (e.g., paper reams, paint containers) at waist height
- Use step stools (not chairs) to access high shelves

- Keep storage areas tidy and well-organised
- Ensure clear access routes to storage areas

Setting Up and Packing Away Activities

Daily setup:

- Use trays to carry multiple small items
- Make multiple trips rather than overloading
- Organise materials so children can help with setup where appropriate
- Plan the layout to minimise carrying distances

Outdoor equipment:

- Use wheeled storage for outdoor toys and equipment
- Ensure pathways are clear before moving items
- Check equipment for damage before handling
- Store frequently used items in accessible locations

Understanding Manual Handling Techniques

Important Note on Lifting Techniques

There is no single "correct" way to lift. Good manual handling technique depends on:

- The nature of the task
- The characteristics of the load
- The working environment
- The individual's capability
- The frequency of the activity

Staff should be trained to **adapt their technique to the situation** rather than following a rigid formula. The key principle is to **avoid extreme movements** of any joints while maintaining control of the load.

Key Biomechanical Principles

Background Understanding:

- Excessively bending the back can increase the load on the body by as much as two and a half times that exerted when lifting without extreme back bending
- A load carried at arm's length exerts a five-fold increase in strain compared to a load held close to the body
- Lifting above shoulder height reduces safe load capacity to three-quarters of that at lower levels
- Frequent lifting can reduce safe load capacity to as little as one quarter of that for a single lift
- Twisting while handling loads significantly increases injury risk

Practical Guidance for Two-Handed Symmetrical Lifts

1. DON'T LIFT OR HANDLE MORE THAN YOU CAN EASILY MANAGE

There is a difference between what you can lift and what you can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.

2. THINK BEFORE YOU LIFT

- Plan the lift: Where is the load going to be placed?
- Use appropriate handling aids if possible
- Do you need help with the load?
- Think about the best way of lifting the load
- For a long lift (e.g., floor to shoulder height), consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench to change grip
- Ensure your vision over the top of the load will not be obstructed
- Test the object for weight first by lifting one corner slightly
- Determine which side is heaviest

3. CHECK THAT THE AREA TO WHERE YOU INTEND TO MOVE THE LOAD IS CLEAR AND NOT OBSTRUCTED

- Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials
- Open any doors on your route
- Ensure there is a safe place to put the load down once you arrive at your destination

4. ADOPT A STABLE POSITION

- Stand close to the object with feet approximately 12-15 inches apart
- Position one leg slightly forward to help maintain balance (alongside the load if it is on the ground)
- Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain a stable posture

5. ENSURE A GOOD HOLD ON THE LOAD

- Use the whole of the hand, not just the fingertips
- If possible, hug the load as close to the body as possible
- Ensure any handles or grip points are secure

6. AVOID EXTREME BENDING OR STOOPING

- At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is appropriate
- Avoid extreme flexion (bending) of any joints
- The best posture depends on the task – there is no single "correct" position
- Focus on avoiding extreme movements rather than achieving a specific posture

7. KEEP THE LOAD CLOSE TO YOUR WAIST

- Keep the load close to your trunk for as long as possible
- The distance of the load from the spine is a critical factor in the load on your back
- If a close approach to the load is not possible, try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it

8. AVOID TWISTING YOUR TRUNK OR LEANING SIDEWAYS

- Keep shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips
- Turn by moving your feet after lifting, rather than twisting while lifting
- If you need to turn, put the load down, turn, and pick it up again

9. KEEP YOUR HEAD UP

- Look ahead, not down at the load once you have grasped it and secured it
- This helps maintain better posture

10. MOVE SMOOTHLY

- Avoid jerking or snatching at the load
- Smooth movements help maintain control and reduce injury risk
- Start the lift slowly and maintain a steady pace

11. PUT THE LOAD DOWN FIRST, THEN ADJUST IT

- If precise positioning is necessary, put the load down first then slide it into position
- Use the same technique to lower the load as to lift it
- Keep the movement as smooth as possible
- Avoid lowering loads to the floor if they can be placed on a surface at waist height

12. KNOW YOUR LIMITS

- If a load feels too heavy or awkward, stop and seek assistance
- Don't continue if you feel pain or discomfort
- Report any difficulties to your line manager

Situations Where Standard Techniques Cannot Be Applied

In many real-world situations, the principles above cannot be fully applied due to:

- The system of work (e.g., repetitive handling of small objects)
- Characteristics of the load (e.g., hot items cannot be held close to the body, live loads such as children require special techniques)
- Environmental constraints (e.g., limited headroom, confined spaces)

However, the following principles should **always** be applied where possible:

- **Plan the task**
- **Minimise the horizontal distance** between your lower back and the centre of gravity of the load
- **Get a secure hold**
- **Avoid extreme movements** of any joints
- **Don't twist** while handling loads

Specific Situations

One-Handed Lifting:

- If lifting in front of the body, two hands should ideally be used

- If this is not possible, lifting with one hand on that side is preferable to twisting to use both hands
- Keep the load as close to your body as possible

Large Bulky Loads:

- Keeping the load close to the body is more important than extreme knee bending
- Avoid extreme flexion of all joints
- Consider using mechanical aids or team handling

Large Flat Vertical Loads (e.g., large boards, panels):

- Lift in front of the body, even if this requires slight stooping
- Avoid lifting at the side, which involves twisting
- If carrying any distance, lift in front then move the load to the side

Lifting From a Container:

- Get the load as close as possible to the body
- If safe to do so, lean (brace) against the side of the container
- Avoid bending knees and twisting to the side
- Don't place one foot in the container (creates instability)

Lifting in Places with Limited Headroom:

- Where headroom is limited, some stooping may be necessary
- Follow other principles as much as possible
- Consider whether the task can be redesigned to avoid working in confined spaces

Lifting While Seated:

- When seated, movements such as twisting, leaning forward, or lateral bending primarily involve the spine
- Adherence to basic lifting principles is even more important
- Avoid seated lifting where possible – stand up to lift

Lifting Light Loads from Low Down:

- Extreme knee bending for light loads can place disproportionate strain on the knees
- Slight flexion of back, hips, and knees is appropriate
- Avoid extreme flexion of any joint

Carrying Loads:

- Discomfort and local muscle fatigue are warning signs of excessive loading
- Use techniques that minimise discomfort
- Change carrying position if possible during longer carries
- Use mechanical aids for longer distances

Team Lifting:

- Team handling can enable loads beyond one person's capability to be moved
- However, it introduces additional risks (impeded vision, coordination difficulties)
- **Planning and communication are critical**
- Designate one person to coordinate and give instructions
- Ensure all team members understand the plan before starting
- Use clear verbal signals (e.g., "lift on three: one, two, three, lift")
- Move at the pace of the slowest person
- Ensure all team members are capable of their share of the load

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Pushing and Pulling Heavy Objects

General Principles:

- Pushing is generally preferable to pulling (better control and posture)
- Keep hands between knuckle height and shoulder height
- Ensure footwear has good grip on the floor surface
- Ensure the path is clear and smooth
- Check the load is stable and won't shift

Technique:

- Tuck the chin in
- Keep the back and arms as straight as possible
- **To push**: Thrust with the front foot and use the back foot to maintain balance
- **To pull**: Thrust with the back foot and use the front foot to maintain balance

- Take small steps and maintain control
- Avoid sudden movements

When to use mechanical aids:

- For loads requiring more than light force to move
- For long distances
- On slopes or uneven surfaces
- When frequent pushing/pulling is required

Ways of Reducing Risks of Manual Handling Injury

The Task

- **Improve task layout**: Optimise flow of materials, ensure best position for storage
- **Store items appropriately**: Heaviest items should be stored around waist height
- **Reduce twisting, stooping, or stretching**: Change layout or sequence of operations
- **Use the body more efficiently**: Hold loads close to the body, place feet close to the load
- **Replace lifting with controlled pushing or pulling** where possible
- **Improve the routine**: Consider frequency of handling, flexible break/rest periods, job rotation
- **Avoid handling while seated** except for small, light loads
- **Plan team handling carefully**: Ensure adequate space, access, handholds; use stretchers or slings where appropriate
- **Provide personal protective equipment**: Gloves, aprons, overalls, safety footwear as needed
- **Consider alternative methods** if there is a risk from the contents
- **Ensure good maintenance** and accessibility of equipment
- **Establish an efficient defect reporting system**

The Load

- **Make it lighter**: Order products in smaller containers, sort goods into weight categories
- **Make it easier to grasp**: Provide handles, hand-grips, indents
- **Improve stability**: Ensure containers holding liquids or powders are well-fitted; consider alternative handling methods
- **Keep loads clean**
- **Avoid sharp corners and jagged edges**: Use handling aids or personal protective equipment
- **Consider risks from temperature**: Hot or very cold surfaces, equipment, and products

Working Environment

- **Remove space constraints**: Ensure adequate room, maintain high standards of housekeeping
- **Maintain floor condition**: Floors should be flat, well-maintained, properly drained, and slip-resistant
- **Clear spillages promptly**
- **Avoid working at different levels**: Transfer between levels using gentle slopes where possible; avoid manual handling on steep slopes
- **Ensure working surfaces are at uniform height**
- **Maintain comfortable temperature**: Where this is not possible, provide personal protective equipment
- **Provide sufficient lighting**

Individual Capability

- **Consider personal capacity**: Take into account individuals' concerns regarding their suitability for manual handling duties, including age, sex, strength, pregnancy, and any health conditions
- **Provide knowledge and training**: Design handling operations to suit individuals; involve employees in developing and implementing training
- **Focus training on**:
    - Recognition of hazardous loads
    - Dealing with familiar loads
    - Use of handling aids

- Use of personal protective equipment
- Importance of good housekeeping

Monitoring and Review

Incident Investigation

All manual handling incidents and near-misses will be:

- Reported immediately to the Health and Safety Officer
- Recorded in the accident book
- Investigated to identify root causes
- Used to inform updates to risk assessments and procedures
- Reviewed at termly health and safety meetings

Regular Monitoring

The Health and Safety Officer will:

- Conduct workplace inspections to observe manual handling practices
- Review accident and incident data for trends
- Monitor the effectiveness of control measures
- Ensure risk assessments remain current and suitable
- Check that staff are following safe systems of work

Annual Review

Manual handling arrangements will be reviewed annually, including:

- All risk assessments
- Training records and effectiveness
- Incident data and trends
- Equipment condition and suitability
- Staff feedback on manual handling issues
- Changes to tasks, environment, or workforce

Staff Consultation

Staff will be consulted on manual handling through:

- Weekly staff meetings (where manual handling issues can be raised)
- Individual supervision meetings
- Specific consultation when introducing new tasks or equipment
- Feedback following incidents or near-misses

Reporting Concerns

Employee Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Report any manual handling task they consider unsafe
- Inform their line manager or the Health and Safety Officer of any difficulties
- Report any pain, discomfort, or injury related to manual handling
- Suggest improvements to manual handling arrangements

How to Report

Staff should report concerns:

- Immediately to their line manager for urgent issues
- To **Shona Dolan** (Health and Safety Officer) for general concerns
- To **Yvonne Cooke** (Director) if the Health and Safety Officer is unavailable
- In writing if preferred, using the incident report form

Response to Reports

All reports will be:

- Acknowledged within 24 hours
- Investigated promptly
- Acted upon with appropriate control measures
- Followed up to ensure effectiveness

No member of staff will be penalised for reporting a manual handling concern or refusing to carry out a task they consider unsafe.

Equipment and Mechanical Aids

Available Equipment
The following equipment is available to assist with manual handling:
- trolleys, step stools, wheeled furniture, trays

Maintenance
All manual handling equipment will be:
- Inspected regularly for damage or wear
- Maintained in good working order
- Replaced when no longer fit for purpose
- Subject to formal inspection, termly

Requesting Additional Equipment
Staff who identify the need for additional manual handling equipment should:
- Discuss with their line manager
- Complete an equipment request form
- Provide details of the task and why equipment is needed

All reasonable requests for equipment will be approved and procured promptly.

Summary of Key Points
1. **Avoid** manual handling where possible through good planning and organisation
2. **Assess** all manual handling tasks that cannot be avoided
3. **Reduce** risks through appropriate control measures
4. **No single correct technique** – adapt to the situation
5. **Keep loads close** to your body
6. **Avoid extreme movements** and twisting
7. **Know your limits** – seek help if unsure
8. **Use equipment** provided
9. **Report concerns** immediately
10. **Training is essential** – attend all required sessions

Further Information and Support
Staff requiring further information or support on manual handling should contact:
Shona Dolan (Health and Safety Officer) **Yvonne Cooke** (Director)
External guidance is available from:
- Health and Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manual-handling
- HSE Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC tool)
- HSE guidance on manual handling at work (L23)

Policy Review Date: August 2026
Adopted by: Yvonne Cooke, Director
Read and understood (Health and Safety Officer): Shona Dolan

Appendix F: Manual Handling Risk Assessment Template
[A separate template document should be created with the following structure:]
Task Description:
Location:
Frequency: (e.g., daily, weekly, occasionally)
Staff Involved:
Assessment Date:
Assessor:
Review Date:
The Task
- Holding loads away from body?
- Twisting?
- Stooping?
- Reaching upwards?
- Large vertical movement?
- Long carrying distances?

- Strenuous pushing or pulling?
- Unpredictable movement of loads?
- Repetitive handling?
- Insufficient rest or recovery?
- A work rate imposed by a process?

The Load

- Heavy?
- Bulky/unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable/unpredictable?
- Intrinsically harmful (e.g. sharp/hot)?

The Working Environment

- Constraints on posture?
- Poor floors?
- Variations in levels?
- Hot/cold/humid?
- Strong air movements?
- Poor lighting conditions?

Individual Capability

- Unusual capability required?
- Hazard to those with a health problem?
- Hazard to those who are pregnant?
- Special information/training required?

Other Factors

- Movement or posture?
- Handling while seated?
- Exertion at start/end of range of movement?
- Frequent repetition?
- Insufficient rest or recovery?
- Lack of control over work rate?
- Unpredictable system of work?

Risk Level: (Low / Medium / High)
Control Measures:
Residual Risk: (Low / Medium / High)
Action Required:
By Whom:
By When:
Review Date:

Appendix G: Personal Protective Equipment

Purpose of Section

Cobham Montessori School recognises that all employees must be provided with all appropriate personal protective equipment and hygiene wear for any task requiring it.

General Guidance

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to identify and assess the risks to health and safety present in the work place, so enabling the most appropriate means of reducing those risks to an acceptable level. There is in effect a hierarchy of control measures, and PPE should always be regarded as "the last resort" to protect against risks to safety and health; engineering controls and safe systems of work should always be considered first.

There are several reasons for this approach. Firstly, PPE protects only the person wearing it, whereas measures controlling the risk at source can protect everyone at the workplace. Secondly, theoretical maximum levels of protection are seldom achieved with PPE in practice; and the actual level of protection is difficult to assess. Thirdly, PPE may restrict the wearer to some extent by limiting mobility, visibility, etc.

Employers should, therefore, provide appropriate PPE and training in its usage for their employees wherever there is a risk to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled by other means.

PPE must be suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used. It must be maintained in good condition and replaced as and when necessary. Employers are required to provide suitable information, instruction and training for their employees, to enable them to make effective use of PPE.

- The managers and supervisors should list all jobs or tasks within their areas which may require the provision of personal protective equipment and record this information.
- The safety co-ordinator should then check to make sure that the tasks couldn't be carried out in an alternative, safer way that would not require the use of any PPE for no further action.
- Following the assessment a decision will be required on what personal protective equipment is required to provide sufficient protection to the employee(s) carrying out the task.
- PPE should not be issued unless the task for which it is intended is clearly identified.
- No PPE should be purchased for the first time without written authorisation by the safety co-ordinator.
- PPE must conform to the relevant British Standard or European CU standard and be of the appropriate grade for the task specified, e.g. the correct grade of safety goggle for the task; the correct respirator or respirator filter for the task, etc.

Appendix H: Stress

Purpose of Section

Work related stress can impair the safe performance of individuals whilst at work. It can also affect sickness absence and lead to high staff turnover.

Definitions

The Health and Safety Executive's defines stress as:

'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed on them', or

'a process that can occur when there is an unresolved mismatch between the perceived pressures of the work situation and an individual's ability to cope.'

Stress is a person's natural reaction to excessive pressure - it isn't a disease. But if stress is excessive and goes on for some time, it can lead to mental and physical ill health, e.g. depression, nervous breakdown, and heart disease.

Legislation

There is no specific law on controlling stress at work, but broad health and safety law applies. All employers have a legal duty under section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. This duty can extend to protecting employees from excessive or sustained levels of work-related stress. It is implied in section 2 of the Act that the employer should consider the potential effects on employees of physical and mental health or welfare.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, requires the employer to carry out a risk assessment covering both risks to employees and to those who are not employed but may be affected by Cobham Montessori School's undertaking. The employer must identify the preventative measures needed and record the significant findings of the assessment and any group of employees identified as specifically at risk. Clearly the risks arising from work-related stress should be included in Cobham Montessori School's Risk Assessment, and reasonable care should be taken to ensure that employee's health is not put at risk through excessive or sustained levels of stress caused by the way work is organised, or the day-to-day demands placed on the workforce.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also require employers to provide employees with health surveillance if the risk assessment shows that there is a reasonable likelihood that ill health caused by stress could result from the work an individual is undertaking.

The Working Time Regulations 1998 limit the average an employee can be required to work to 48 hours per week. Excessively long working hours are one cause of increased stress levels.

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require employers to assess the risks from the use of display screen equipment/visual display units. Stress is one of the hazards associated with the use of DSE/VDUs.

General Guidance

Stress at work is a legitimate problem and is likely to become more evident as a result of the increasingly competitive environment in which companies find themselves. Although some groups of people report more stress-related problems than others (managers, professionals, road transport workers and security personnel), feeling stressed at work is not confined to particular occupational groups or levels within organisations. Stress can be a problem for people in jobs that are unsatisfying and repetitive as well as high-powered executives with excessive workloads.

There is no easy solution to stress in Cobham Montessori School’s environments due to the wide variations in staff and management personalities, leadership styles, management philosophies and work cultures. Cobham Montessori School should, however, fully investigate and analyse all reported incidents of stress arising from work pressure. It should attempt to identify the underlying causes for the stress and, in consultation with the affected member of staff, agree a stress control strategy and personal action plan.

Employee's personal circumstances can combine with pressures at work to make people more vulnerable to stress. Employers have no legal duty to prevent ill health due to stress that is not associated with work, but a sympathetic response may be in Cobham Montessori School's best interest if it helps the employee cope better with work pressures.

Signs of Stress

The symptoms of stress can manifest themselves in a range of unpleasant emotions such as tension, frustration, anxiety and depression. Those suffering from stress may also exhibit behavioural changes and physical symptoms, for example they may suffer from disturbed sleep and complain about their health, for example frequent headaches. Many of the signs of stress should be noticeable to managers and colleagues. The consequence of these symptoms can lead to the affected individual losing interest in their jobs which in turn leads to loss of performance and reduced job satisfaction.

The paragraphs below shows the affects that stress can have on work performance, work relationships and personal appearance.

Work Performance

- Loss of concentration and lapses of memory
- Regularly overworking and a failure to delegate
- Drop in work performance levels, uncharacteristic errors in work
- Inability to make decisions
- Difficulties with training and/or examinations
- Increased incidence of absenteeism and poor time keeping
- Customer complaints

Work Relationships

- Increase in irritability and aggression towards staff and management
- Withdrawing from work colleagues and becoming unsociable
- Resentment of advice or constructive criticism
- Reduced willingness to participate or co-operate with colleagues

Personal Appearance and Habits

- Deterioration of personal appearance, unhappy appearance, shuffling walk
- Increased consumption of coffee, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Changes in eating habits. Large loss or gain in weight
- Emotional & irrational behaviour - crying, sulking
- Inability to rest or vice versa
- Insomnia and early waking
- Feeling inadequate and constant tiredness
- Obsessive behaviour
- Recurring health problems, e.g. colds, headaches and stomach disorders

Stress may also affect the individual's health with symptoms such as headaches, indigestion and muscle tension. Over a longer period, it may give rise to chronic health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease and stomach ulcers.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment for stress should include:

- Looking for pressures at work which could cause high and long-lasting levels of stress
- Deciding who might be harmed by these, and
- Deciding whether enough is being done to prevent that harm, e.g. flexible work schedules and well-defined responsibilities

If necessary, companies must then take reasonable steps to deal with those pressures.

Causes of Stress

A person's experience of stress at work is affected by:

- The level of control they have over the pressures of work
- The support they receive from others in meeting those pressures
- The strategies they use to respond to work pressures

The information below outlines the work-related factors that individually or collectively can contribute to stress amongst individuals and groups of workers.

Relationship with colleagues
- Lack of communication
- Personality conflicts
- Inequitable distribution of work

Relationship with subordinates
- Inappropriate workers to workload ratios
- Actual or potential fear of violence
- Uncertainties about limits of discipline
- Working with inexperienced or untrained staff

Management issues
- Management style, e.g. autocratic
- Change in management style
- Quality of supervisory support
- Low level of input in decision making process
- Conflicting demands from supervisors/managers
- Unclear responsibilities
- Poor communication
- Job design, e.g. continual physical or intellectual demands, frequent contact with the public, repetitive or monotonous tasks
- Dealing with unfamiliar subjects (outside comfort zone)
- Introduction of new, unfamiliar technology
- Poor physical working environment, machinery or equipment
- Career development difficulties, over/under promotion
- Work overload, e.g. excessive workload due to absent colleagues
- Long hours of work at home seldom acknowledged and rewarded
- Attitudes and behaviour of staff, e.g. prolonged confrontation between individuals, including sexual or racial harassment and bullying

Societal issues
- Poor perceived status and organisation ethos
- Role ambiguity, uncertainty about limits of authority vested in job
- Changing societal expectations and concern about role of the Organisation
- Dealing with anxious, aggrieved or aggressive customers/pupils/visitors

Personal perspective
- Unrealistic expectations
- Sense of injustice/bitterness

Identifying if Stress is a Problem in the Workplace

In order to identify whether or not stress is a problem in the workplace, employers should:

- Take steps to discover if staff are disillusioned with their work. This may manifest itself as an increase in absenteeism (especially frequent short spells of sickness), lateness, disciplinary problems, staff turnover, or a reduction in output or quality of product or service.
- Talk and listen to employees. Discuss issues such as responsibilities, relationships with colleagues, working conditions, management attitudes, balancing work and home. Ask employees to describe the three 'best' and 'worst' aspects of the job, and whether these put them under uncomfortable pressure.
- Use the information gleaned to identify common and persistent pressures, and people who might be harmed by them.

During this process employers should:

- Respect the confidentiality of employees
- Tell employees what will be done with the collected information
- Involve employees as much as possible in subsequent decisions
- Involve any safety representatives in plans and decisions
- Document key findings as part of the risk assessment

Stress Control Strategy

Cobham Montessori School should recognise and advise staff that pressure of work can trigger illness and that stress and illness can be related. In their turn, employees must inform their employer if they are suffering from work related stress or make it obvious that there is impending harm to their health. Stress related illness should not be seen as an indication of weakness, laziness or incompetence and all reported cases should be taken seriously. Most people who suffer from mental ill health recover if they are treated correctly. Cobham Montessori School should recognise that stress at work must be approached from both an individual basis and also an organisational basis.

Individual Approach

People respond to stress in various ways depending on factors such as expectations, past experience, personality, vulnerabilities and resources. A situation perceived as threatening by one person may be seen as challenging, or of no significance, by another. One person may also respond to similar circumstances in different ways at different times.

People also differ in the way they cope with stress; no single approach works for all people, and no single approach helps all situations. Flexibility is the key to effective coping; the greater the range of strategies someone can call upon, the more likely they are to cope effectively.

Individuals may be able to control their stress levels better if they are aware of:

- Their personal sources of stress
- The symptoms stress produces in themselves
- Their own stress levels so they can take action if it is getting out of control
- The importance of relaxation and a method that works for them (exercise, reading, breathing exercises)

Steps that individuals can take to reduce individual stress levels may include:

- Identifying personal causes of stress and taking steps to control it
- Learning new skills, e.g. how to use new technology, managing people, etc
- Prioritising jobs and pacing yourself
- Sharing and delegating work where possible
- Scheduling breaks, e.g. for lunch away from your desk
- Talking to your manager about work related stress
- Seeking support - from work colleagues, family and friends
- Positive thinking
- Improving your lifestyle - eat healthily, stop smoking, avoid excessive drinking, reduce caffeine intake, keep physically active, use relaxation techniques, give yourself time for fun

Organisation Approach

Cobham Montessori School should approach stress control as an ongoing process in which whole organisation debate will be encouraged and commitment at the highest levels given. Directors should adopt a positive policy towards health at work, including mental health, and should:

- Provide additional training support for existing and/or new staff
- Revise work practices, e.g. reallocating workloads, increasing flexibility, providing help with disruptive staff
- Review job roles, e.g. by annual appraisals and performance monitoring. Matching responsibility with ability
- Review job descriptions, making clear what the role, responsibilities and goals of each job are

- Make improvements in the physical work environment e.g. improving ventilation, humidity, temperature, lighting, noise levels or workplace layout and hygiene
- Review immediate or company management style if perceived as causing stress
- Ensure good two-way communication, especially at times of change.
- Not tolerating harassment or bullying. There is a disciplinary and grievance procedure to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour
- Ensure fair and consistent treatment of all employees
- Facilitate professional stress counselling if necessary
- Ensure that people returning to work after a stress related illness are brought back gradually and, if possible, not to the situation that caused the stress in the first place
- Review external factors such as local political or racial issues

Where stressful situations are identified the safety co-ordinator, together with the department head in consultation with the affected employee, should draw up action plans to help control the situation. These plans may include:

- Additional training support for existing and/or new staff on induction
- Revision of work practices i.e. reallocation of workloads, increased flexibility, help with disruptive staff, etc.
- Reviewing job roles, e.g. by annual appraisals and performance monitoring
- Improvements in the physical work environment e.g. improved ventilation, or improved workplace layout if computers or machines are used.
- A review of immediate or organisation management style if perceived as causing stress.
- Ensuring good two-way communication, especially at times of change.
- An intolerance of harassment or bullying.
- Fair and consistent treatment of all employees.
- A review of external factors such as local political or racial issues.

It may require a systematic assessment and analysis of work tasks similar to the risk assessment process. This assessment should be aimed at management tasks that, if not well managed, can increase stress. Staff should be encouraged to identify changes, whether minor or major, which will both improve the quality of management and be beneficial to individuals. Whole organisation debate should be encouraged on these issues.

Where there are any areas of doubt, consideration should be given to obtaining professional help from occupation health specialists. Occupational health professionals, such as psychologists, nurses and doctors can increase awareness of stress both in individuals and organisations as a whole. Cobham Montessori School's online adviser will be the first point of reference if professional advice is required. Staff will be encouraged to seek confidential advice from Cobham Montessori School's confidential counselling adviser who may refer them to specialists or give advice on treatment through family doctors.

Counselling

Via our school insurance, all staff have access to a 24 Hour Stress Counselling Helpline 0345 074 2799 - this is confidential and we will not be informed if you contact the helpline.

The NHS provides mental health support for anyone living in Surrey. Similar support is available in other counties. https://www.iesohealth.com/areas/surrey

Bullying and Harassment at Work

Workplace bullying is recognised as one of the leading causes of stress. The HSE defines 'bullying' as:

> *'persistent unacceptable behaviour (or a single, grossly unacceptable act) by one or more individuals working in the organisation against one or more employees'*

Harassment is defined as:

'unwanted conduct based on sex (including transgender status), race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origin or disability that affects the dignity of people at work.'

There is no specific legislation covering bullying at work, however employers have a legal duty to ensure that employee's health is not put at risk through bullying or harassment in the workplace. Companies should introduce anti-bullying/harassment policies that cover interpersonal conflict, bullying and sexual and racial harassment. The policies should include a formal procedure for reporting grievances and investigating complaints of bullying.

Appendix I: Waste Disposal

Purpose of Section

Cobham Montessori School recognises that, as a producer of waste, it is under a duty to deal properly with all waste produced. Cobham Montessori School also recognises that there may be occasions when employees have to handle and dispose of potentially hazardous waste. This section outlines our policy on the safe handling and disposal of waste.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 imposes a duty of care on anyone producing, importing, transporting, keeping, treating or disposing of controlled waste, or brokers having control of such material, to ensure their waste is disposed of by a licensed body. They must also prevent waste escaping and provide a written description of the waste to the transferor. The only exceptions to this are householders, and the waste they produce in their own homes.

The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 2 requires employers to provide systems of work which are safe and without risks to health in the use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances.

General Guidance

The Duty of Care regarding controlled waste producers requires that they:

1. Secure waste in suitable containers with all loose material covered;
2. Use contractors for the removal and disposal of waste that are legally authorised i.e. a registered carrier;
3. Provide a general description of the waste;
4. Formally record the removal of waste on a Waste Transfer Note;
5. Retain copies of transfer notes for a two-year period.

Procedure to be followed:

1. A Transfer Note describing type, quantity and how the waste is transferred and how it is produced must be completed and signed by all parties involved in the transfer.
2. If there is any reason to suspect that the Carrier is failing to exercise his duty of care over the waste then the local Waste Regulation Authority, usually the County Council in England and Wales should be notified as soon as possible.

Disposal of Hazardous Waste

Staff involved in the disposal of potentially hazardous waste, e.g. housekeeping or cleaning staff, etc, should adopt the following advice.

1. Bodily Waste and Fluids

Protective gloves, and where appropriate protective clothing, should be worn when disposing of bodily waste and fluids.

Urine and faeces should be disposed of down a toilet in the usual manner. After use, commodes and potties should be washed and disinfected then either air-dried or dried with disposable paper towel.

Soiled waste, e.g. incontinence pads, nappies, sanitary towels should either be burnt or:

- small quantities should be double bagged in sealed plastic bags by knotting and they can then be disposed of in the main refuse system provided this is not easily accessible to wildlife.
- Where there are significant quantities of waste or regular smaller amounts of waste then the services of a specialist collection service should be sought.

2. Hypodermic Needles, Syringes, etc.

Used syringes, needles, razor blades, etc. must be placed in a suitable "sharps" container, substantial enough to withstand a needle puncture and disposed of as follows:

- Large numbers of hypodermic needles and syringes should be disposed of using a special collection service.
- Where health authority staff gives injections, the district health authority is responsible for disposing of the equipment.
- Small quantities may be placed in stout containers, tightly sealed and disposed of via the normal refuse collection arrangements.
- Purpose made "Sharps" containers can be purchased, but if not available then stout plastic or metal containers with screw tops can be used. No attempt should be made to bend, break or re-sheath needles or any other sharp instrument after use. "Sharps" should not be put down carelessly because they may find their way into plastic waste sacks or laundry bags and could result in injury and infection.
- Local hospitals or doctor's surgeries may be able to assist with the disposal of sharps.

3. Waste from Food preparation

It is unlikely that the level of catering provided at the school will generate any hazardous waste, but they may generate a great deal of general waste. All organic food waste is composted in the food composter which must be checked weekly for signs of vermin.

Appendix J: Outdoor Play Equipment / Plants

Purpose of Section

The purpose of this section is to provide the Health and Safety co-ordinator with guidance regarding the outdoor play equipment and play area at the school and to ensure that Cobham Montessori School meets its legal requirements.

It seeks to identify the key points to consider including a programme of inspections, maintenance and repair.

Factors to Consider

Access - for children, disabled and staff.

Access routes – hard surfaces should be non-slip so that they are not affected by weather conditions. If surfaces are slippery, children need to be reminded to walk. The relationship to toilets and other facilities should also be considered.

Supervision – Suitable and adequate staffing levels must be maintained in the vicinity of the play equipment whilst it is in use.

Security – Such issues as protection from vandalism or improper use outside of school hours must be taken into account.

Topology – The play area should be level and have adequate drainage so as to reduce the risk of corrosion to equipment and surfaces.

Installation – equipment must be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and clearance distances around equipment adequate.

Zones – can be used to separate moving equipment from that which is static reducing the risk of accidental collision.

Routes – children will naturally take the direct route from one piece of equipment to another, this may create the risk of collision with other children on moving equipment. Therefore, landscape should be used to direct them safely between equipment. Such features as thorny bushes or fencing with sharp edges should be avoided.

Emergencies – The layout of the play area should permit staff access to all areas in the event of emergency.

Maintenance – daily, weekly, monthly and annual checks should be carried out in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

Litter – like glass can cause injury, frequent checks should be made for glass in the play area.

Vandalism - vandalism of play equipment can be a problem. Making access difficult for an intruder is a sensible precaution. It is for consideration that if an intruder injures themselves on the equipment there is a degree of responsibility on the part of the school.

Animal faeces (diseases) – animal faeces can harbour a wide range of bacteria and viruses etc. that can cause serious illness in adults and children. For this reason the play area must be checked at least each day before use. Any faeces found must be removed and disposed of correctly.

Ice – ice is a slip hazard and should be checked for in winter months on a daily basis and the appropriate action taken.

Equipment Hazards

All equipment should have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment carried out on it. The following information should help in this assessment.

The following information states some of the equipment commonly found in play areas, hazards and safety requirements that should be in place. The information is based on the BS EN1176:1998 Playground Equipment and BS EN1177: 1998 Impact absorbing Playground Surfacing.

Slides

Hazards

Include falls from heights, burns from hot metal on the chutes, cuts and splinters from poorly maintained equipment and the risk of entrapment.

Safety Requirements

- Maximum angle of chute should be 60^0 or an average 40^0
- Any angle changes over 150^0 should be curved
- Run outs of 300mm are required if less than 1.5m long
- Width of slides over 1.5m long should be either less than 700mm or more than 950mm
- Spiral and curved slides should have width less than 700mm

Rocking Equipment

There are several types including, traditional single central pivot up and down seesaws, single spring rocker moving in one or more directions and multi pivot rocking equipment.

Hazards

Include the risk of falls, entrapment and being knocked by the item rocking back and forth.

Safety Requirements

- Gaps to all accessible parts should be under 12mm
- Footrests should be provided where ground clearance is less than 230mm
- Handgrips should be provided for each seat or standing position
- Footrests and handgrips should be securely fixed and must not rotate
- There should be at least 1m between equipment

Sand Pits

Hazards

Include the risk of injury from foreign objects such as needles, glass and rubbish. Animal faeces present a disease hazard - Toxoplasmosis can be spread from cats to humans through dirty sandpits. Toxoplasmosis can harm an unborn child, but is usually a mild illness in children and adults. It causes a rash, swollen glands, fever and feeling unwell.

Cobham Montessori School will only use sand that is suitable for play and purchased from a recognised source. We will ensure that the sandpit has adequate drainage to prevent the sand from becoming waterlogged.

Security Requirements

- Daily inspection for foreign objects and animal faeces
- Suitable cover when not in use
- Cleaning of the area as required
- Replacement of sand to appropriate level as required and to the appropriate grade.
- Provision of suitable drainage
- Children will be supervised whilst using the sandpit and guided as to how to keep the sand in and how to avoid it getting in their own and others eyes.

Surfacing

Hard surfaces are not recommended on play areas other than those between the play equipment. The type of surface selected will depend on the site, the equipment and the amount of maintenance required.

Grass areas are not ideal surfaces as they can become as hard as concrete or alternatively slippery in certain weather conditions. Therefore, care must be taken when playing in the garden, taking account of the ground conditions.

BS EN1177 standard recommends the use of impact absorbing surfaces where the fall height from equipment is greater than 600mm.

Impact absorbing surfaces include:

- Wood chipping to a minimum depth of 200mm
- Sand to a minimum depth of 300mm
- Pea gravel (rounded not angular) to a minimum depth of 300mm
- Purpose made synthetic materials

Loose fill surfaces must be regularly cleaned, maintained and replenished.

https://www.cpa-horticulture.co.uk/download/WicksteedPlayStandards.pdf

Plants

A register of any toxic plants will be kept and a risk assessment carried out in relation to the specific toxicology and physical characteristics

Inspection and Maintenance

In order to comply with current legislation all hazards must be promptly identified and immediate action taken to remove them. Cobham Montessori School will maintain a comprehensive and documented inspection programme at all times.

The three categories of inspection are:

1. Daily checks and
2. More detailed checks every term informing the Risk Assessments
3. A full certified inspection will be commissioned if any visual check of the equipment indicates any signs of damage or wear which could impact safety.

All inspections should cover the whole play area and not just the play equipment. Facilities such as fencing, gates access etc. should be assessed.

Records of all inspections should be maintained in a register which will include:

- Full equipment details
- Documentation of the planning and development of the play area
- Inspection and maintenance requirements and programmes
- Details of responsibility for inspections and action on hazards

These records must be regularly reviewed. They will demonstrate compliance with legal requirements.

Training should be given to staff responsible for the inspections.

Appendix K: Accident Reporting

Purpose of Section

There is a need to pay heed to accidents that occur during or due to work activities and to examine the cause of such accidents to prevent a recurrence. Furthermore, it is recognised that information regarding accidents is needed to provide comprehensive data about trends, the use of particular equipment or workplaces and certain practices. See also our Accident and Incident Records Policy.

Legislation

The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)
Social Security (Claims & Payments) Regulations 1979
A Guide to RIDDOR - HSE - 1999 - L73

Duty of Employer

All employers have a duty to report to the relevant enforcing authority by the quickest practicable method (e.g. by telephoning the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 Mon to Fri 08.30 to 17.00 or online at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor) any injury or dangerous occurrence where:

- any person dies as a result of an accident arising out of or in connection with work;
- any person at work suffers a major injury as a result of an accident arising out of or in connection with work;
- any person not at work, e.g. a pupil or visitor, suffers an injury as a result of an accident arising out of or in connection with work and that person is taken from the site of the accident to a hospital for treatment in respect of that injury. Examples of accidents "arising out of or in connection with work" include those attributable to:
    - the work organisation (e.g. the supervision of a field trip)
    - plant and substances (e.g. lifts, machinery, experiments)
    - the condition of the premises
- any person not at work suffers a major injury as a result of an accident arising out of or in connection with work at a hospital; or
- there is a dangerous occurrence.

You can still send a written report using form F2508.xls within 10 days to the Incident Contact Centre, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly, CF83 3GG.

It is required that similar reporting takes place for any incident where an employee is incapacitated for work for more than three consecutive days (excluding the day of the accident but including weekends). This means in practice the report is made on the fourth day following the accident even if this includes a weekend.

An accident as described above includes an act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work. This has the effect of making physical injuries arising from such acts reportable if they fall within the definitions given above. The act of violence is not, however, reportable if there is no death, major injury or over three days absence. The act of violence must be work related not a domestic dispute or a disagreement over non-work issues. An example of a work-related act of violence would be an employee assaulted by a member of the public over a work-related issue, e.g. a dispute about car parking. Another example would be a member of staff assaulted by a colleague after being given feedback on work performance. A member of staff assaulted by a member of the public or colleague over a private issue not connected with work would not be reportable, e.g. a husband assaulting a wife.

Employers also have a duty in law to investigate the circumstances of every accident reported (or entered into the accident book) which results in personal injury to one of its employees.

This provision of the Social Security (Claims & Payments) Regulations 1979 (SI 1979 No628) imposes an additional duty on the employer to record any discrepancy between the circumstances found by him/her as a result of the investigation and the circumstances reported or recorded by the injured employee. This information must be furnished to an officer of the department of social

security in the event that the injured person presents a claim for social security industrial injury or disablement benefit.

As well as the duty to report accidents and dangerous occurrences employers are under a duty to make a report to the relevant enforcing authority if:

- they receive, in respect of an employee, a written diagnosis (for example a medical certificate) of one of the occupational diseases given in column 1 of Schedule 3, Part 1 of the RIDDOR regulations; and
- the ill employee's current job involves the corresponding work activity specified in column 2 Part 1 of the schedule.

A summary of some of the occupational diseases that could arise is given towards the end of this section (C. Reportable Diseases).

Duty of Employees

Every employee, who is injured at work, must inform his/her employer as soon as possible after the accident took place. The employee will have complied with this duty if he/she enters the required particulars in the accident book (or by having a colleague or first aid attendant enter those particulars on his/her behalf).

If the injured employee neglects to report the accident in the manner described above, he/she may forfeit any subsequent right to social security industrial injury benefit.

The information below should be available to staff either by inclusion within the staff handbook/guidance or by being displayed next to the accident book locations.

Information to Employees and Third Parties

It is now necessary for employers to make information available (i.e. respond to requests for clear and relevant details of accidents) to employees and their representatives (e.g. solicitor) within 21 days of date of post-mark of the written claim.

The basis for this, and a whole raft of detail regarding accidents and compensation claims, is to speed-up claims processing and make both employers and insurers take rapid action.

The process is now based on all parties being reasonable. The most common process will be with regard to 'fast track' claims relating to compensation under £15,000.

In the event of receiving a claim you must react quickly and cause your insurers to do likewise. The Judiciary is being required to be hard on any party who is unreasonable or fails to provide proper information within the various time limits set.

General Guidance

All accidents to staff, however minor, sub-contractor's staff or non-employees must be recorded in the relevant accident book held in the location(s). All accidents to staff, however minor, should also be recorded on the appropriate "Report of Accident" forms and sent to the safety co-ordinator for analysis.

In the case of accidents that necessitate the injured person leaving the premises for treatment, the appropriate Directress and/or the safety co-ordinator using the “Accident Investigation” form must hold a formal investigation.

Particulars that must be recorded in accident books include:

- Full name, address and occupation of injured person
- Date and time of accident
- Place where accident happened
- Cause and nature of injury
- Name and address of person giving notice, if other than the injured person

From 1 January 2004 all businesses must use a style of accident book that complies with the Data Protection Act.

RIDDOR 1995

In the event that any person suffers an accident arising out of, or in connection with, work which results in that person being off work for more than three consecutive days (excluding the day of the accident) the department head will notify the safety co-ordinator on the fourth day.

In the event that any person, including a member of the public or a sub-contractor's employee, suffering an accident arising out of, or in connection with work, dies, or suffers any of the injuries listed overleaf (or where there is a dangerous occurrence which might have caused injury), the department head will immediately notify the safety co-ordinator.

Accidents described above include any act of non-consensual violence to a member of staff.

In the event of an accident/injury to a member of the public or any non-employee, all details must be taken and reported to the safety co-ordinator immediately. If the accident results in the member of public being taken from the premises to a hospital for treatment then the accident must be reported as indicated above.

In all these situations the safety co-ordinator will be responsible for completing RIDDOR Form F2508. (Pads of F2508 forms are available from all HMSO bookshops). The safety co-ordinator must ensure that copies are sent to the Caerphilly address shown above and the contracted insurance company:

RIDDOR Definitions

A. Major Injuries

- Any fracture, other than to the fingers, thumbs or toes.
- Any amputation.
- Dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine.
- Loss of sight (whether temporary or permanent).
- A chemical or hot metal burn to the eye or any penetrating injury to the eye.
- Any injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn (including any electrical burn caused by arcing or arcing products) leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- Any other injury:
    - leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness, or
    - to unconsciousness, or
    - requiring resuscitation, or
    - requiring admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- Loss of consciousness caused by asphyxia or by exposure to a harmful substance or biological agent.
- Either of the following conditions which result from absorption of any substance by inhalation, ingestion or through the skin:
    - acute illness requiring medical treatment, or
    - loss of consciousness.
- Acute illness which requires medical treatment where there is reason to believe that this resulted from exposure to a biological agent or its toxins or infected material.

B. Dangerous Occurrences

The list below gives examples of the type of incident that qualifies as a "dangerous occurrence" whether any injury arises or not.

- The collapse of, the overturning of, or the failure of any load-bearing part of any - lift; hoist; crane or derrick; mobile powered access platform; access cradle or window-cleaning cradle; excavator; pile-driving frame or rig having an overall height, when operating, of more than 7 meters; or fork lift truck.
- The failure of any closed vessel/pressure system (including any boiler or boiler tube) or any associated pipework, in which the internal pressure was above or below atmospheric pressure, where the failure has the potential to cause the death of any person e.g. Stills water boiler, air receiver or CO2 cylinder.

- Electrical short circuit or overload attended by fire or explosion, which resulted in the stoppage of the plant for more than 24 hours or which has the potential to cause the death of any person.
- Any accident or incident that resulted or could have resulted in the release or escape of a biological agent likely to cause severe human infection or illness.
- Any incident in which breathing apparatus malfunctions:
  - while in use, or
  - during testing immediately prior to use in such a way that had the malfunction occurred while the apparatus was in use it would have posed a danger to health or safety of the user.
- Collapse or partial collapse of :
  - any scaffold which is more than five meters high or erected over or adjacent to water
  - the suspension arrangements (including outrigger) of any slung or suspended scaffold which causes a working platform or cradle to fall.
- Collapse of any building or structure.
- An explosion or fire occurring in any plant or premises which results in the stoppage of that plant or as the case may be the suspension of normal work in those premises for more than 24 hours. An example would be a fire that caused a classroom to be out of use for 24 hours or more.
- The sudden, uncontrolled release inside a building:
  - of 100 kilograms or more of a flammable liquid
  - 10 kilograms or more of a flammable liquid at a temperature above its normal boiling point, or
  - of 10 kilograms or more of a flammable gas, or
  - in the open air, of 500 kilograms or more of any of the substances referred to above.
- The accidental release or escape of any substance in a quantity sufficient to cause the death, major injury or any other damage to the health of any person. Examples of these would be asbestos fibres, dangerous chemicals as a vapour, etc.

C. Reportable Diseases

On receipt of a written diagnosis from a registered medical practitioner the following diseases become reportable under RIDDOR. As a guide those persons who may be at most risk from such diseases are also indicated.

Occupational Diseases

- Conditions due to the physical demands of work
- Any disease of skin, bone or blood arising from ionising radiation

Those at risk: Staff working with radioactive material.

- Cramp of the hand or forearm due to repetitive movements - any person involved in long periods of handwriting, typing or other repetitive movements of the fingers, hand or arm.

Those at risk: office staff, site maintenance staff, persons using lap top computers etc.

- Bursitis or subcutaneous cellulitis to the knee or elbow - any person involved in physically demanding work causing severe or prolonged friction or pressure to these joints.

Those at risk: persons involved in loading/unloading/moving heavy items on a regular basis, etc.

- Traumatic inflammation of the tendons of the hand or forearm or of the associated tendon sheaths.

Those at risk: any person involved in physically demanding work with frequent or repeated movements, constrained posture or extremes of extension or flexion of the hand or wrist. Any persons involved in loading/ unloading/ moving heavy items on a regular basis and those engaged in frequent reaching.

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome - Work involving handheld vibrating tools.

Those at risk: Maintenance staff and building workers.

- Hand vibration syndrome. - Work involving chainsaws, handheld circular saws, handheld rotary tools, holding of material being sanded or polished by rotary tools, handheld percussive metal working tools, use of handheld percussive tools.

Those at risk: production, maintenance and ground-keeping staff.

Conditions due to biological agents

- Avian chlamydiosis - Work involving contact with birds infected with chlamydia psittaci or remains of such birds.

Those at risk: Staff or others with responsibility for caring for any birds kept on the premises.

- Hepatitis - any person engaged in work that involves the handling of blood or material likely to be infected with blood containing this biological agent.

Those at risk: employees working in first aid, and especially those involved with cleaning duties or the disposal of waste materials.

- Legionellosis

Those at risk: anyone working on or near water-based air-cooling systems or hot water service locations.

- Leptospirosis - work in places which are liable to be infested by rats, field mice, voles or other such rodents. Work at a kennels or on a farm.

Those at risk: ground-keeping and maintenance staff.

- Lyme disease - those exposed to ticks.

Those at risk: ground-keepers or countryside workers.

- Tetanus - Work involving contact with soil likely to be contaminated by animals or sharp objects.

Those at risk: ground-keeping and maintenance staff.

- Tuberculosis - Work with persons, animals, human or animal remains or any other materials that might be a source of infection.

Those at risk: persons working within first aid and especially those involved with cleaning duties or the disposal of waste materials.

Conditions due to substances

- Poisoning by any of the following:
  arsenic, benzene, cadmium, carbon disulphide, ethylene oxide, lead, manganese, mercury, methyl bromide, oxides of nitrogen, phosphorus.

Those at risk: Science and research staff.

- Mesothelioma, Lung cancer or Asbestosis caused by exposure to dust associated with a building, plant or machinery. Exposure may arise during maintenance or cleaning operations.

Those at risk: are essentially specialist contractors involved with removal or maintenance of asbestos material.

- Occupational Dermatitis - arising from work involving any of the following; metalworking fluids, acrylates, epoxy resins, organic solvents, antibiotics, strong acids/alkalis (e.g. bleach), soaps and detergents, plants and plant derived material, and any other material which may cause sensitisation by skin contact.

Those at risk: employees within cleaning teams, maintenance departments and any other person exposed to such materials.

- Extrinsic alveolitis - exposure to moulds, fungal spores or heterologous proteins during work in loading/ unloading of mouldy vegetable matter.

Those mainly at risk: are likely to be cleaners, ground-keeping and maintenance staff.

- Occupational Asthma - work involving exposure to isocyanates, fumes arising from use of hardening agents, fumes arising from use of rosin based soldering flux, animals including insects used for research, dusts arising from farm activities, wood dust, fumes from stainless steel welding or any other agent causing sensitisation through inhalation.

Those at risk: are staff involved in production, science, groundskeeping and maintenance work.