

Part of the Branches Education Group



**BRANCHES**  
Education Group

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



Approved By	Rebecca Warhurst	Head Teacher	March 2026
Amendments Made			
Linked Policies	See section 21.0 - LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES and GUIDANCE		
Signed	<i>R Warhurst</i>	Head Teacher	March 2026
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## Statement of intent

At The Willows School, we are committed to the health and safety of our staff, pupils, and visitors. Ensuring the safety of our community is of paramount importance and this policy reflects our dedication to creating a safe learning environment.

We are committed to:

- Providing a productive and safe learning environment.
- Preventing accidents and any work-related illnesses.
- Compliance with all statutory requirements.
- Minimising risks via assessment and policy.
- Providing safe working equipment and ensuring safe working methods.
- Including all staff and representatives in health and safety decisions.
- Monitoring and reviewing our policies to ensure effectiveness.
- Setting high targets and objectives to develop the school's culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensuring adequate welfare facilities are available throughout our school.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to address health and safety issues, so far as is reasonably practicable.

## 1.0 AIMS

Our school aims to:

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment.
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, pupils and all visitors to the school.
- Have robust procedures in place in case of emergencies.
- Ensure that the premises and equipment are maintained safely and are regularly inspected.

## 2.0 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education on health and safety in schools and the following legislation:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which sets out the general duties' employers have towards employees.
- 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.

The school follows HSE guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive on children's play and leisure activities <https://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childs-play-statement.htm>

The school follows national guidance published by Public Health England when responding to infection control issues.

## **3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 The Proprietor**

The Proprietor has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the school, but delegates responsibility for the strategic management of such matters to the Head Teacher and school management team, including the Health and Safety Lead.

The Health and Safety Lead delegates operational matters and day-to-day tasks to the Head Teacher and staff members.

### **3.2 Health and Safety Lead**

The Health and Safety Lead will oversee the strategic management of health and safety matters in the school and will delegate operational and day-to-day responsibility to the Head Teacher.

The Health and Safety Lead has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off the school premises.

Branches Education Group, as the employer, also has a duty to:

- Assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify and introduce the health and safety measures necessary to manage those risks.
- Inform employees about risks and the measures in place to manage them.
- Ensure that adequate health and safety training is provided.

### **3.3 Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for health and safety day-to-day. This involves:

- Implementing the health and safety policy.
- Ensuring there is enough staff to safely supervise pupils.
- Ensuring that the school building and premises are safe and regularly inspected.
- Providing adequate training for school staff.
- Reporting to directors on health and safety matters.
- Ensuring appropriate evacuation procedures are in place and regular fire drills are held.
- Ensuring that in their absence, health and safety responsibilities are delegated to another member of staff.
- Ensuring all risk assessments are completed and reviewed.
- Monitoring cleaning and ensuring cleaners are appropriately trained and have access to personal protective equipment, where necessary.

In the Head Teacher's absence, the Deputy Head Teacher or a named senior member of staff will assume the above day-to-day health and safety responsibilities.

### **3.4 Health and Safety Ambassador**

As the school becomes established, the Head Teacher will identify a Health and Safety Ambassador, who will act as a 'champion' for health, safety and well-being across the school.

### **3.5 Staff**

School staff have a duty to take care of pupils in the same way that a prudent parent would do.

Staff will:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work.
- Co-operate with the school on health and safety matters.
- Work in accordance with training and instructions.
- Inform the appropriate person of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger so that remedial action can be taken.
- Model safe and hygienic practice for pupils.
- Understand emergency evacuation procedures and feel confident in implementing them.

### **3.6 Pupils, Parents and Carers**

Pupils and parents are responsible for following the school's health and safety advice, on-site and off-site, and for reporting any health and safety incidents to a member of staff.

### **3.7 Contractors**

Contractors will agree health and safety practices with the Head Teacher before starting work. Before work begins the contractor will provide evidence that they have completed an adequate risk assessment of all their planned work.

## 4.0 SITE SECURITY

The Head Teacher is responsible for the security of the school site in and out of school hours. They are responsible for visual inspections of the site, and for the intruder and fire alarm systems.

The Head Teacher and/or designated staff members are key holders and will respond in an emergency.

Out of school hours visitors to the school, for example maintenance personnel, cleaners, may be given a key for entry to the school but will be briefed on site security and fire safety measures before attending the school.

## 5.0 FIRE

### Refer to the School Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan

Emergency exits, assembly points and assembly point instructions are clearly identified by safety signs and notices. Fire risk assessment of the premises will be reviewed annually.

Emergency evacuations are practised at least once a term.

The fire alarm is a loud continuous bell.

Fire alarm testing will take place weekly.

New staff will be trained in fire safety and all staff and pupils will be made aware of any new fire risks. Named Fire marshals are suitably trained and clear about their role.

In the event of a fire:

- The **alarm** will be raised immediately by whoever discovers the fire.
- The **emergency services** contacted by the Head Teacher or deputising leader.
- **Evacuation procedures** will begin immediately.
- Staff and pupils will evacuate the building in an orderly manner and congregate at the assembly points. School evacuation procedures identify these assembly points. All visitors will be informed of the fire assembly points when entering the school.
- **Fire extinguishers** may be used by staff only, and only then if staff are trained in how to operate them and are confident, they can use them without putting themselves or others at risk.
- The School Administrator will take the **pupil register** to the Tutors at the assembly point so they can confirm all pupils are present and assembled. The Tutor will notify the School Administrator and Head Teacher immediately if any pupils are not present.

- The School Administrator will take the **staff and visitor sign in/ out books to Leader 2** who will check names against all adults present. Leader 2 will notify the Head Teacher immediately if any adults are not present.
- Staff and pupils will remain outside the building until the emergency services, or Head Teacher in the event of a practice or false alarm, say it is **safe to re-enter**.

Where necessary, the school will have special arrangements in place for the evacuation of people with mobility needs and fire risk assessments will also pay particular attention to those with disabilities. See **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) template – Appendix 1 of Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedure**.

There will be no unaccompanied visitors to the school whilst pupils are on site.

## 6.0 COSHH

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 Head Teacher or designated staff member and circulated to all employees who work with hazardous substances. Staff will also be provided with protective equipment, where necessary.

Hazardous products are stored out of reach from pupils. Occasionally, pupils will have access to hazardous substances under the supervision of an adult. For example, in science lessons. Where this occurs, pupils will be provided with the required personal protective equipment.

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

Emergency procedures, including procedures for dealing with spillages, are displayed near where hazardous products are stored and in areas where they are routinely used.

### 6.1 Gas Safety

- Installation, maintenance and repair of gas appliances and fittings will be carried out by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Gas pipework, appliances and flues are regularly maintained.

- All rooms with gas appliances are checked to ensure that they have adequate ventilation.

## **6.2 Legionella**

- The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the identified operational controls are conducted and recorded appropriately.
- The legionella risk assessment will be reviewed when significant changes have occurred to the water system and/or building footprint.
- The risks from legionella are mitigated by the following: temperature checks, heating of water etc.

## **6.3 Asbestos**

- Staff are briefed on the hazards of asbestos, the location of any asbestos in the school and the action to take if they suspect they have disturbed it.
- Arrangements are in place to ensure that contractors are made aware of any asbestos on the premises and that it is not disturbed by their work.
- Contractors will be advised that if they discover material which they suspect could be asbestos, they will stop work immediately until the area is declared safe.
- A record is kept of the location of asbestos that has been found on the school site.
- The above is not applicable to the new school building as no asbestos is present.

## **7.0 EQUIPMENT**

- All equipment and machinery are maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In addition, maintenance schedules outline when extra checks should take place.
- When new equipment is purchased, it is checked to ensure that it meets appropriate educational standards.
- All equipment is stored in the appropriate storage containers and areas. All containers are labelled with the correct hazard sign and contents.

### **7.1 Electrical Equipment**

- All staff are responsible for ensuring that they use and handle electrical equipment sensibly and safely.
- Any pupil or volunteer who handles electrical appliances does so under the supervision of the member of staff who so directs them.
- Any potential hazards will be reported to the Head Teacher immediately.
- Permanently installed electrical equipment is connected through a dedicated isolator switch and adequately earthed.
- Only trained staff members can check plugs.
- Where necessary a portable appliance test (PAT) will be carried out by a competent person.

- All isolator switches are clearly marked to identify their machine.
- Electrical apparatus and connections will not be touched by wet hands and will only be used in dry conditions.
- Maintenance, repair, installation and disconnection work associated with permanently installed or portable electrical equipment is only carried out by a competent person.

## **7.2 PE Equipment**

- Pupils are taught how to carry out and set up P.E. equipment safely and efficiently.
- Staff check that equipment is set up safely.
- Any concerns about the condition of the outdoor play area/ flooring or other apparatus will be reported to the Head Teacher.

## **7.3 Display Screen Equipment**

- All staff who use computers daily as a significant part of their normal work have a display screen equipment (DSE) assessment carried out. 'Significant' is taken to be continuous/near continuous spells of an hour or more at a time.
- Staff identified as DSE users are entitled to an eyesight test for DSE use upon request, and at regular intervals thereafter, by a qualified optician (and corrective glasses provided if required specifically for DSE use).

## **8.0 LONE WORKING**

Please refer to the Lone Working Policy. In summary, lone working may include:

- Late working
- Home or site visits
- Weekend working
- Site manager duties
- Site cleaning duties
- Working in a single occupancy office

Potentially dangerous activities, such as those where there is a risk of falling from height, will not be undertaken when working alone. If there are any doubts about the task to be performed, then the task will be postponed until other staff members are available.

If lone working is to be undertaken, a colleague, friend or family member will be informed about where the member of staff is and when they are likely to return.

The lone worker will ensure that they are medically fit to work alone.

## **9.0 WORKING AT HEIGHT**

We will ensure that work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people with the skills, knowledge and experience to do the work.

In addition:

- Pupils are prohibited from using ladders.
- Staff will wear appropriate footwear and clothing when using ladders.
- Contractors are expected to provide their own ladders for working at height.
- Before using a ladder, staff are expected to conduct a visual inspection to ensure its safety.
- Access to high levels, such as roofs, is only permitted by trained persons.

## **10.0 MANUAL HANDLING**

It is up to individuals to determine whether they are fit to lift or move equipment and furniture. If an individual feels that to lift an item could result in injury or exacerbate an existing condition, they will ask for assistance.

The school will ensure that proper mechanical aids and lifting equipment are available in school, and that staff are trained in how to use them safely.

Staff and pupils are expected to use the following basic manual handling procedure:

- Plan the lift and assess the load. If it is awkward or heavy, use a mechanical aid, such as a trolley, or ask another person to help.
- Take the more direct route that is clear from obstruction and is as flat as possible.
- Ensure the area where you plan to offload the load is clear.
- When lifting, bend your knees and keep your back straight, feet apart and angled out.
- Ensure the load is held close to the body and firmly.
- Lift smoothly and slowly and avoid twisting, stretching, and reaching where practicable.

## **11.0 OFF-SITE VISITS**

Please refer to the **Educational Visits Policy**.

When taking pupils off the school premises, we will ensure that:

- Risk assessments will be completed where off-site visits and activities require them.
- All off-site visits are appropriately staffed.
- Staff will take a school mobile phone, a portable first aid kit, information about the specific medical needs of pupils along with the parent/ carer contact details.
- There will always be at least one first aider on school trips and visits.

## **12.0 LETTINGS**

There are no plans for the school building to be let out or hired in any way. If the decision changes in the future, then any person hiring the building or any facilities out of school hours will be made aware of the content of this Health and Safety Policy and will be responsible for complying with it.

## **13.0 VIOLENCE AT WORK**

We believe that staff should not be in any danger at work and will not tolerate violent or threatening behaviour towards our staff. All staff will report incidents of aggression or violence (or near misses) directed to themselves to their line manager/ Head Teacher immediately. This applies to violence from pupils, visitors, or other staff.

## **14.0 SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted on the school premises or in view of pupils.

## **15.0 INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

We follow national guidance published by Public Health England when responding to infection control issues. Staff will complete suitable training and we will encourage staff and pupils to follow this good hygiene practice, outlined below, where applicable.

### **15.1 Handwashing**

Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water, and dry with paper towels.  
Always wash hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food, and after handling animals.  
Cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.

### **15.2 Coughing and sneezing**

Cover mouth and nose with a tissue.  
Wash hands after using or disposing of tissues.  
Spitting is discouraged.

### **15.3 Personal protective equipment**

Wear disposable non-powdered vinyl or latex-free CE-marked gloves and disposable plastic aprons where there is a risk of splashing or contamination with blood/body fluids (for example, nappy or pad changing).

Wear goggles if there is a risk of splashing to the face.

Use the correct personal protective equipment when handling cleaning chemicals.

#### **15.4 Cleaning of the environment**

Clean the environment frequently and thoroughly.

#### **15.5 Cleaning of blood and body fluid spillages**

Make spillage kits available for blood spills. Clean up all spillages of blood, faeces, saliva, vomit, nasal and eye discharges immediately and wear personal protective equipment.

When spillages occur:

- clean using a product that combines both a detergent and a disinfectant and use as per manufacturer's instructions,
- ensure it is effective against bacteria and viruses and suitable for use on the affected surface,
- never use mops for cleaning up blood and body fluid spillages, use disposable paper towels and discard clinical waste as described below in 15.7.

#### **15.6 Laundry**

Wear personal protective clothing when handling soiled clothing or other material.

Bag children's soiled clothing to be sent home, never rinse by hand.

#### **15.7 Clinical waste**

Always segregate domestic and clinical waste, in accordance with local procedures.

Used gloves, aprons and soiled dressings are stored in correct clinical waste bags in foot operated bins.

Remove clinical waste with a registered waste contractor.

Remove all clinical waste bags when they are two-thirds full and store in a dedicated, secure area while awaiting collection.

#### **15.8 Animals**

In the event that the school has a pet, or hosts a visit from an animal:

- Wash hands before and after handling any animals.
- Keep animals' living quarters clean and away from food areas.
- Dispose of animal waste regularly and keep litter boxes away from pupils.

- Supervise pupils when playing with animals.

## **15.9 Pupils vulnerable to infection**

Some medical conditions make pupils vulnerable to infections that would rarely be serious in most children. The school will normally have been made aware of such vulnerable children. These children are particularly vulnerable to chickenpox, measles, or slapped cheek disease (parvovirus B19) and, if exposed to either of these, the parent/carer will be informed promptly, and further medical advice sought. We will advise these children to have additional immunisations, for example for pneumococcal and influenza.

## **15.10 Exclusion periods for infectious diseases**

The school will follow recommended exclusion periods outlined by Public Health England in its guidance. Details of the time period an individual should not attend a setting to reduce the risk of transmission during the infectious stage can be found at [Children and young people settings: tools and resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

In the event of an epidemic/pandemic, we will follow advice from Public Health England about the appropriate course of action.

## **16.0 NEW AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS**

Risk assessments will be carried out whenever any employee or pupil notifies the school that they are pregnant.

Appropriate measures will be put in place to control risks identified. Some specific risks are summarised below:

- Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. Expectant mothers should report exposure to antenatal carer and GP at any stage of exposure. Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox, so anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles.
- If a pregnant woman comes into contact with measles or German measles (rubella), she should inform her antenatal carer and GP immediately to ensure investigation.
- Slapped cheek disease (parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child. If exposed early in pregnancy (before 20 weeks), the pregnant woman should inform her antenatal care and GP as this must be investigated promptly.

## **17.0 OCCUPATIONAL STRESS**

We are committed to promoting high levels of health and wellbeing and recognise the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors through risk assessment. Systems are in place within the school for responding to individual concerns and monitoring staff workloads.

## **18.0 ACCIDENT REPORTING**

### **18.1 Accident record**

- An accident form will be completed as soon as possible after the accident occurs by the member of staff or first aider who deals with it.
- Accident books will be kept in the staff office.
- As much detail as possible will be supplied when reporting an accident.
- Information about injuries will also be kept in the pupil's educational record.
- Records held in accident logs will be retained by the school for a minimum of 3 years, in accordance with regulation 25 of the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979, and then securely disposed of.

### **18.2 Near-Miss Incidents**

- Near-miss incidents are workplace accidents and occurrences where no-one has actually been hurt or become ill, but where the consequences could have been serious.
- Staff must report a near-miss incident if it is felt that the consequences could have been serious. For example, if medical attention would have been required had any injury illness occurred and/or it would be reportable under RIDDOR.
- Reporting near-misses helps us to identify hazards we were not aware of and helps us to learn from such incidents. This can help prevent future accidents and protect individuals from harm. It helps us to move towards proactive, rather than reactive risk management.

### **18.3 Reporting to the HSE**

The Head Teacher will keep a record of any accident which results in a reportable injury, disease, or dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013 legislation (regulations 4, 5, 6 and 7).

The Head Teacher will:

- Inform the Group Health and Safety Lead for support to report these to the Health and Safety Executive as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 10 days of the incident.

Reportable injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences include:

- Death
- Specified injuries. These are:
  - Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes.

- Amputations.
  - Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight.
  - Any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs.
  - Serious burns (including scalding).
  - Any scalping requiring hospital treatment.
  - Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia.
  - Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which leads to hypothermia or heat induced illness or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- Injuries where an employee is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 7 consecutive days.
  - Where an accident leads to someone being taken to hospital.
  - Where something happens that does not result in an injury but could have done.
  - Near-miss events that do not result in an injury but could have done. Examples of near-miss events relevant to schools include, but are not limited to:
    - The collapse or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment.
    - The accidental release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness.
    - The accidental release or escape of any substance that may cause a serious injury or damage to health.
    - An electrical short circuit or overload causing a fire or explosion.

Information on how to make a RIDDOR report is available here:

How to make a RIDDOR report – <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm>

#### **18.4 Notifying Parents/ Carers**

The Head Teacher will inform parents/ carers of any accident or injury sustained by a pupil, and any first aid treatment given, on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

#### **18.5 Reporting to Child Protection Agencies**

The Head Teacher will notify local child protection agencies of any serious accident or injury to, or the death of, a pupil while in the school's care. Please see the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### **19.0 TRAINING**

Our staff are provided with health and safety training as part of their induction process. Staff who work in high-risk environments, such as in science labs or with woodwork equipment, are given additional health and safety training.

## **20.0 MONITORING and REVIEWING**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE and/ or HSE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Proprietor and school management team.

The school follows the government guidance for Health and Safety in schools and adopts a Plan Do Check Act approach to the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the health and safety management system within the school. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>

The school follows national guidance published by Public Health England when responding to infection control issues.

## **21.0 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES and GUIDANCE**

This health and safety policy links to:

- First Aid Policy – The Willows School,
- Safe Administration of Medication Policy – The Willows School,
- Risk Assessment Policy,
- Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedure – The Willows School,
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions, DfE,
- Accessibility Plan,
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – The Willows School
- Educational Visits Policy

## **APPENDIX 1 – Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedure**