

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for all matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of all staff employed by the County Council and for ensuring that members of the public who may be affected by any of its activities are not exposed to risks to their health or safety. The Chief Executive is charged to review the corporate statement of policy on health and safety at work and to sign an amended safety policy statement on at least a five yearly basis

Health and Safety Champions

The implementation of strategic health and safety arrangements is coordinated and promoted by an Officer Champion, who is the Director of Local Services and Housing Delivery. The key duties of the Officer Champion are to Chair the Corporate Health and Safety Group and present six monthly reports on corporate health and safety performance to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). A Member Champion, who is also the Deputy Leader of the Council, is charged to promote a strong health and safety culture within the council and specifically champion high standards of health and safety performance with other Members.

Directors

Directors have specific health and safety responsibilities in respect of the Directorate they manage, namely to:

- ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to protect, as far as is reasonably practicable, all employees and persons affected by the activities of the Directorate with regard to their health, safety and welfare. This duty is to be fully implemented in accordance with Northumberland County Council's general statement of policy on health and safety at work.
- nominate competent officers to be responsible for the various aspects of health and safety arrangements within the Directorate.
- Maintaining the routes for communication of health and safety issues e.g. safety groups. Maintaining the written communication routes for safety issues, for example distribution of minutes of meetings, updating safety manuals and safety policies
- evaluate the safety performance of the Directorate so that appropriate action may be taken as necessary and resources may be targeted in priority areas.

- implement appropriate disciplinary procedures in the event that employees transgress health and safety requirements and procedures.

School Governors

The Chairs of the governing bodies should take steps to discharge their own responsibilities for health and safety performance in school. Details of the responsibilities of the governing bodies in relation to the Local Authority is given in section 'E1 - Safety Management'. However, some of the principle responsibilities are given below:

- Ensure that Headteachers have made adequate arrangements to discharge their responsibilities for health and safety within the school as detailed below.
- Take an active role in the development of the health and safety policy for the school that reflects local procedures and policies.
- In conjunction with the Headteacher, provide a monitoring role for the school for health and safety performance. Any inspection reports should contain the following:
 - action allocated to individuals who are responsible for the function
 - time limits set for action
 - remedial action to deal with the problems identified
 - identification of any long term action required in order to address underlying causes of problems
- Ensuring that health and safety issues are covered at meetings of governing bodies, either through a special meeting or a standard agenda item. This should include discussion of any safety reports or information issued to the Headteacher by the County Council.
- To provide information to the Local Authority on Health and Safety matters when requested.
- To ensure adequate resources are given to safety issues.
- To review performance periodically.
- To ensure that safety training is given priority for both governors and staff.
- To ensure that the protocols detailed in section E3 are followed.

Headteachers

In a managerial role, Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that the Local Authority Health and Safety Policies are adhered to within the school. Headteachers will also co-operate with the Director of Education and Skills and his nominated officers in order that they may discharge their responsibilities and fulfil the duties of the County Council, as an employer, as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work Act.

In particular, Headteachers are responsible, so far as is reasonably practicable, for:

- Ensuring that all full and part-time employees under their control, including part-time youth leaders and adult education tutors, carry out their work so as to avoid, so far as is reasonably practicable, risk to the health or safety of pupils, students, employees, or any member of the general public.
- Ensuring that health and safety is an integral part of the management of the school. This will include setting of objectives as part of a planned approach to full legislative compliance. Producing and updating, as necessary, a school health and safety policy document which details arrangements with respect to implementing local policies and procedures in school.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of any literature and follow any instructions or procedures issued by the County Council relating to health and safety.
- Where appropriate, nominating staff to be responsible for specific aspects of health and safety and ensuring that all staff are aware of such delegations.
- Ensuring that only appropriately qualified and experienced members of staff supervise potentially hazardous activities.
- Ensuring that there are adequate arrangements for the supervision of pupils at all appropriate times.
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements exist for the reporting of accidents and potential hazards, and that such reports are forwarded to the County Council and relevant statutory authorities (HSE).
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements exist for emergency evacuations and that all staff and pupils are aware of such arrangements.
- Ensuring that fire safety advice forwarded by the County Council is adhered to, and that all reasonable precautions are taken by staff to minimise the risk of fire. Fire Risk Assessments should also be completed.

- Procedures are in place to ensure that statutory maintenance and testing of equipment and plant is undertaken by a competent contractor (this is arranged via the Property Services Section where the school has utilised this SLA).
- Carrying out procedures to ensure that only competent contractors are brought onto school sites to carry out works (this can be done in liaison with the Council's Property Services Section where the school has utilised this SLA).
- Making adequate arrangements for the site induction of any contractor brought onto the site so that the activities do not interfere or cause a risk to the safety of staff and children on site. (in some cases this can be done in liaison with the Council's Property Services Section where the school has utilised this SLA).
- Immediately informing the County Council of any unsafe practice or condition arising from the work of a contractor on the site, which may endanger the health or safety of staff, pupils or members of the general public.
- Ensuring that all staff are fully aware of any asbestos material in the school and make arrangements to ensure that no person brought onto site is exposed to risks from asbestos. Any asbestos that is disturbed should be reported to the Asbestos Manager in the Property Services Section and staff and pupils removed from its vicinity.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place for staff to report defects and unsafe conditions and that appropriate action is taken to remedy concerns. The Property Services Section are contacted where appropriate (when the school has utilised this SLA).
- To consult with school safety representatives on all matters that arise relating to the health, safety or welfare of staff under their control and take appropriate action in response to reports received.
- Ensuring that members of staff receive adequate health and safety information, instruction and training with respect to their work activities. To ensure that induction and any training identified as part of the risk assessment process are included.
- Ensuring that risk assessments have been completed and are regularly reviewed for all activities on site as required by health and safety legislation.
- Maintaining appropriate safety records in accordance with County Council policy.
- Ensuring that all purchases have been assessed for suitability and compliance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

- Making suitable arrangements to ensure that all plant and equipment is maintained in safe and serviceable condition.
- Maintaining the routes for communication of health and safety issues, e.g. safety committees and/or safety groups. Maintaining the written communication routes for safety issues, for example distribution of notes of meetings, updating safety manuals and school safety policies.
- Ensuring adequate liaison with the Corporate Health and Safety Team and the Occupational Health Team, as required.
- Ensuring that the health and safety standards and compliance with procedures are adequately monitored.
- Reviewing the health and safety performance of the school on a regular basis in conjunction with the school governing body.

Heads of Department

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires all supervisors to accept responsibility for the safety of processes under their direct control. In order to achieve this objective Heads of Departments are responsible to the Headteacher, so far as is reasonably practicable, for:

- Ensuring that all members of staff in the department are aware of any safety precautions to be taken when undertaking potentially hazardous activities.
- Ensuring that the curriculum of the department includes instructions in the correct and safe methods of carrying out potentially hazardous activities.
- Ensuring that the curriculum of the department does not involve staff and pupils in procedures likely to cause accidents.
- Ensuring that all equipment and machinery is maintained in safe and serviceable condition, and defective equipment not used until the necessary repairs have been carried out.
- Ensuring that competent members of staff carry out risk assessments for all the activities within their control. These assessments should cover general risks as well as the specific risks involved with the teaching and supervision of children. Consideration should be given to the use of hazardous substances, provision of personal protective equipment and selection of work equipment.

- Ensuring that any best practice guidance available in relation to activities undertaken is adhered to e.g. CLEAPSS, AfPE, DATA.
- Ensuring that all members of staff under his/her control adhere to all relevant aspects of the Safety Policy.
- Reporting all potential hazards to health or safety and all accidents to the Headteacher.

Senior Technicians

In respect of laboratory and workshop technical staff the Senior Technician is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all members of staff working in laboratories or workshops are aware of any safety precautions to be observed when undertaking potentially hazardous procedures.
- Ensuring that only appropriately trained members of staff use potentially hazardous chemicals, equipment or machinery.
- Ensuring that members of staff wear appropriate protective clothing.
- Reporting all accidents to the Headteacher or Head of Department and ensuring that the appropriate accident report form(s) are completed.
- Reporting any faulty equipment or machinery or potential safety hazards to the Head of Department.

Site Managers, Caretakers and Cleaners in Charge

These personnel are responsible to the Headteacher for the safe organisation and work of the caretaking and cleaning services. They are responsible for reporting accidents, defects to the building or their equipment, and any other relevant matters to the Headteacher.

Where these services are provided by an external contractor, the Headteacher will then assume all client health and safety roles in relation to the contractor as described in section J2.

Kitchen Managers

Kitchen Managers are directly responsible to the Headteacher for the safe organisation and work of the school kitchen, for reporting accidents, defects to the building or kitchen equipment and any other relevant matter to the Headteacher.

Where the school utilises the services of an external contractor to manage the catering service, the headteacher still retains overall responsibility for the health and safety of these employees. The Headteacher will also assume all client health and safety roles in relation to the contractor as described in section J2.

In all school managed services, it is the responsibility of the governing body to develop appropriate procedures to maintain effective Health and Safety compliance.

Employees

Employees also have responsibilities under health and safety law. These are detailed below:

- To take care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- To ensure there is no interference or reckless abuse of anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.
- To comply with the provisions of specified statutory regulations so far as they relate to matters within an employee's control.
- To report to their line manager any hazard, accident or dangerous occurrence that has or might have caused injury or damage to persons or equipment and to co-operate in any investigation of an accident or dangerous occurrence.
- To notify their line manager if they have any of the 'notifiable diseases' (see section F1).
- To adhere to the agreed procedures for safe working, observe any safety rules or instructions relevant to particular work or locations and to use protective clothing and safety equipment provided.
- To notify their line manager when personal protective equipment requires renewal or repair.

- To assist officers of the Council in their audits, inspections and investigations.
- To assist Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive to carry out inspections and investigations.

Safety Representatives

Within the County Council, Safety Representatives are essentially Trade Union appointments which are entirely voluntary. Safety Representatives have the function of representing their fellow trade union members in consultations with their employer regarding health and safety, and may represent other trade union members by agreement between the Trade Unions involved. To this end there is an entitlement to carry out safety inspections of the workplace, receive information from visiting Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and to examine the cause of accidents.

The employer is obliged to allow such time off as is necessary, with pay, to allow Safety Representatives to fulfil their functions and to receive appropriate training.

Corporate Health and Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team has a corporate role with respect to the provision of health and safety advice. It has the following responsibilities:

- To advise the Directors and other Senior Managers on the demands of existing and proposed legislation with respect to health and safety issues.
- To support management in the effective implementation of health and safety legislation, through assistance in the following areas:
 - workplace inspection
 - risk assessment (both workplace and personalised)
 - devising safe systems of work
 - sampling and measurement of workplace hazards, such as noise, vibration and fumes
 - control of contractors
 - health surveillance (in conjunction with the Occupational Health Team)
- To liaise with the Learning and Organisational Development Team to develop and provide health and safety training courses to support managers and staff in complying with their health and safety responsibilities.

- To assist Directors and Senior Managers to identify priorities to enable them to fulfil their Health and Safety obligations.
- To assist managers in the thorough investigation of accident and violent incidents and to advise on the appropriate course of remedial action to prevent recurrence. This is undertaken by scrutinising reports submitted through the corporate accident reporting systems or by carrying out full accident investigations, as appropriate.
- To liaise with the Council's Insurance Team regarding any claim for compensation arising from accidents to employees or members of the public in the course of work activities.
- To compile the corporate safety policy documentation and review the contents on an ongoing basis.
- To advise Directors and Senior Managers on priorities relating to any budgets allocated for the provision of health and safety equipment.
- Liaise with the Health and Safety Executive on all matters regarding health and safety at work, as required
- To assist in the establishment and operation of safety forums. To attend any meeting that has been set up as a forum to communicate health and safety information and to give advice, as appropriate.

Occupational Health Team

The role of the Occupational Health Team, in relation to Health and Safety, is to contribute to the prevention of occupationally related diseases and to monitor the health of the workforce.

Occupational Health Staff are responsible for:

- The assessment of all prospective employees on their fitness for work.
- Liaising with Managers and Health and Safety Advisers with respect to work activity risk assessments and personalised risk assessments.
- Assisting Managers and their staff with the management of sickness absence, offering advice on ill health and a person's medical capability to work.

- Carrying out health surveillance, required by health and safety legislation, upon request by Managers.
- Working closely with Managers, trade unions and personnel, to develop and implement the policies and guidelines that may have influence on the health and/or welfare of employees.

The Occupational Health Team maintains health records on all Northumberland County Council's employees. The Occupational Health Practitioners have in the course of professional practice a legal and ethical duty to maintain confidence with respect to this information.