

White Trees
independent school



Health & Safety Policy

See also, 'Who We Are, What We Do & How We Do It', Physical Intervention and First Aid & Medical Condition in School Policy

Including policies and procedures on risk assessments

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave us with the opportunities and are able to become positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

- Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another
- We have high expectations in everything we do

Wonderful
Excellent
Lovely
Clever
Outstanding
Magnificent
Enthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

Reviewed by Governors, December 2018

Created by White Trees Independent School, July 2019

INTRODUCTION

This document states our aims, principles and strategies for ensuring a high standard of Health & Safety at White Trees School, comprising our three sites at 13a London Road, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 5NA and Mission Hall, Gaston Green, Little Hallingbury, CM23 7QS and Purley Farm, Colne Road, Coggeshall, Colchester, Essex, CO6 1TH.

White Trees Independent School aims to provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, pupils and visitors at all times and recognises and adheres to Health and Safety legislation, current guidance and Risk Assessments: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. As a result, we recognise that it is our duty to manage our school in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that anybody at White Trees School is not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

We accept that we have a responsibility to take all reasonably practicable steps to secure the health and safety of pupils, staff and others using the school premises and believe that the prevention of accidents, injury or loss is essential to the efficient operation of the school and is part of the effective education of our pupils.

RESPONSIBILITIES

White Trees Independent School recognises that everyone plays a role in ensuring the safety of themselves and each other and within this section, aims to identify responsibilities that staff, pupils and wider members of the community.

The Leadership Team

- Providing and maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and the pupils we provide education to. We will provide them with such information, training and supervision, as they need for this purpose.
- Recognising that there are higher levels of risk due to the nature of our pupils and providing further training to staff to be able to safely manage any behaviours that may pose any higher risks. Likewise, our employees have a responsibility, which includes taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others that may be affected by what they do or do not do.
- Recognising a greater level of care and vigilance is required in our schools for our pupils and Contractors in terms of safety procedures, within the vicinity of the school building.
- Establishing a system for reporting, recording and the investigation of accidents and near-misses and ensuring that this is applied rigorously.
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy, ensuring that necessary revisions are undertaken.
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the Health and Safety policy of the school.

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- Taking active steps to ensure that equipment, buildings and grounds are safe, secure and well maintained and that any damage is quickly rectified.
- Continually improving Health and Safety Standards in line with relevant good practice, and not merely within the legal minimum standards.
- Ensuring that there are speedy arrangements for the safe evacuation of the building in case of fire or other emergency and that firefighting equipment is available and maintained.

Executive Head Teacher, Head of Operations, Deputies

- Taking responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Health and Safety Policy, reporting practical aspects to the maintenance team

All staff

- Promoting a culture of safety consciousness and using resources and training to develop the pupils' understanding of their own responsibilities in taking reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.
- Being good role models – vigilant and careful.
- Taking quick action to ensure that pupils are not allowed to jeopardise their own safety or that of others. In cases where the Pupil is intent on this, using training provided and following the Care and Control Policy to minimise the risk to the pupil, others, and the property of the school.
- Providing opportunities and therapeutic forums to discuss appropriate health and safety issues.
- To make sure risk assessments are carried out before any off-site visits or trips.

Pupils

- Taking an active part each morning, buying into plans for their day – expressing any H & S concerns and reporting any issues they have throughout the day. Pupils also have the opportunity to discuss and voice any issues at termly Pupil voice meetings.

Parents/Carers

- Ensuring that the pupils attend the school in good health.
- Providing prompt communication to explain any absences.
- Ensuring school staff have a full handover regarding any incidents, behaviours and any other matters that have occurred at home which may mean the pupil could require extra support, understanding or the opportunity to talk with someone before starting their school day.
- Ensuring the school has up to date emergency contact details for parents and other professionals involved in the Pupils care.

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PROCEDURES

White Trees understands that our principles have to be underpinned by effective and robust procedures that are undertaken and reviewed routinely.

To ensure all members of the school community are aware of health and safety, SLT:

- Have regular discussion to review health and safety issues.
Longstanding permanent discussion point on all SLT meeting agendas

For providing pupils with opportunities to discuss health and safety:

- Daily meetings at the start of every school day, and pupil voice meetings throughout the term
- A programme of personal and social education designed to promote self-esteem, mutual respect, self-discipline and social responsibility.

For accident prevention, reporting and investigation we have:

- Risk assessments formulated and regularly reviewed.
- Vigilance by staff to recognise potential causes of accidents (to include pupils' behaviour) and to act to prevent these where possible.
- Promptness in reporting potential hazards to the Head Teacher or Deputy and an immediate response to such reports using the Hazard & reporting system we have in place.
- Completion of the appropriate accident reporting paperwork to include any injuries sustained and body map completion if applicable.
- Prompt investigation of all accidents by the Head of Operations and/or Executive Head Teacher in order to establish the cause and adopt any remedial measures.
- Report sent to Directors for monitoring purposes

For First Aid provision we have:

- Trained, recognised first aiders in school at all times.
- Provision of fully stocked first aid boxes in the first aid rooms and also school cars.
- A system of notification to home residential staff of any head injuries or minor injuries.
- Medical room facilities available at all sites.
- Summoning of an ambulance where necessary by any responsible adult and arrange to meet and guide the ambulance if needed. A member of either residential or school staff will accompany a pupil to hospital.
- All staff will be trained in Emergency First Aid and a list of training dates will be held by Head Office.

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For fire precautions we have:

- A dedicated procedure for emergency evacuation which is displayed in the school and is shown to all visitors on their arrival.
- At least termly, recorded fire drill – organised by staff who undertake H & S checks for each site.
- Daily and weekly checks of equipment, procedures and exits by the staff responsible for H & S at each site and maintenance of equipment yearly by Essex Fire Safety Limited.
- All fire exits clearly signed.
- As required by the Electricity at work Regulation 1989, the school will ensure that an annual electrical safety test of fixed wiring will be undertaken by a trained competent person qualified to do so and certified documentation will be kept onsite.
- Dedicated Fire Marshall training for all staff.

For the use and control of substances hazardous to health we have:

- If storage of such substances, then they are to be locked and not accessible to pupils. - cleaning agency bring own cleaning materials with them, so therefore no storage of such substances needs to be stored on site
- The issue of personal protection equipment (eg rubber gloves) when necessary.

For electrical safety we have:

- Siting of equipment to avoid trailing wires.
- Annual PAT testing electrical contractors on all portable electrical equipment.
- Fixed wiring checks are 5 yearly checks with an annual Fire Safety Risk Assessment being completed by Essex Fire Safety.

For coping with special medical conditions, we have:

- Information given to all staff about any special medical conditions of pupils attending the school and about what response may be necessary in an emergency.
- Medication for pupils is to be given to pupils before and after school at home. If a pupil requires medication throughout the day, then identified staff will be required to undergo dispensing medication training (Edu-care) before systems are put into place where pupils can have their medication during the school day.
- A requirement would be that all medicines brought to school must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name along with their dedicated recording sheets which will inform the dosage and frequency.
- For dispensing of medication (only medication prescribed by the doctor) please see our first aid policy.

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For developing understanding around the importance of personal hygiene we:

- Remind and support pupils day to day to encourage personal hygiene routines which include pupils washing their hands after using the toilet and the provision and maintenance of suitable facilities for this.
- A programme of health education.

For ensuring outside safety we:

- Regularly review the use of offsite locations and dynamically assess any risk and take appropriate steps to reduce risk.
- Supervision of pupils at all times

For planning and responding to works:

- The Head of Operations or the Executive Headteacher are to be alerted via email if there are any concerns or works required – then passing that onto Head Office to be processed and actioned. Weekly Health and Safety checks are undertaken on all sites, where any issues will also be picked up and reported as and when required, by identified Health and Safety representatives. These checks include a weekly check/log of the first aid boxes on site, weekly sharps check along with fire alarm/panel, lighting, carbon monoxide, door and fire extinguisher & blanket checks.
- Maintenance lists for each site are sent in before the end of each term for routine and scheduled works to take place to be completed during school closures.

Hazard Reporting Form

- Files are in Classroom 1 at the PTC site and the offices at Gaston Green and Purley Farm, in a plastic wallet where there are Hazard reporting forms. Staff are to use these forms to report any workplace hazards.
- The identified Health and Safety Representatives at each site are responsible for checking the files daily.
- They are then to share concerns with their appropriate site leads, who will then report any concerns to the Head of Operations or the Executive Head Teacher who will then deal with the concerns accordingly.

Hazardous waste disposal and cleaning of spillages

- We have contractors who dispose of hazardous waste including sanitary bins, blood bin and sharps bin.
- Hazardous spillages/leaks including bodily fluids should be cleaned in a timely manner. The priority is to protect staff and pupil health from any contact with this.
- Cover any cuts/grazes/broken skin with a plaster. Disposable gloves should be used. Hands should be washed thoroughly after any cleaning.

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- Cover the spillage entirely with an absorbent material if it is wet or use hot soapy water with disinfectant in it to soak into dried on infected waste.
- Dispose of waste appropriately into clinical waste bags, found in the medical rooms at all sites.
- Thoroughly disinfect any equipment/clothing used to clean up waste.
- Report any accident involving hazardous waste.
- More information on dealing with hazardous cleaning of bodily fluids can be found [here](#).

RISK ASSESSMENTS

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation.

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. fire).
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring (e.g. a chip pan will catch fire if left unattended).
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property).
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).

Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focusing on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong. Many cases simple measures are very effective and not costly.

Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly. At White Trees Independent School, we are very aware that all staff and pupils need to receive training. Risk assessment proforma, and completed documents are maintained by the Head Teacher, and are available to all staff. The company Head office is responsible for keeping records of staff training.

WHAT ACTIVITIES REQUIRE A SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT?

There are numerous activities carried out in White Trees School, each of which requires a specific risk assessment. The most important of these include Fire safety procedures and risk assessments and educational visits and trips. As a guide we separate risk assessments into 3 tiers:

- Tier 1 – a regular activity that is risk assessed each full term. This may include cooking, PE, use of libraries etc. Permission for these is acknowledged on the parent/carer pack.
- Tier 2 – a one-off trip that is organised but is low/moderate risk. This may include trips to the cinema, for lunch, a museum etc. A risk assessment is created for each trip. Permission for these is acknowledged on the parent carer pack.
- Tier 3 – a trip that carries a moderate risk and/or additional considerations. This may include theme parks, paint balling, go-karting. This requires specific permission for each trip or block booking (a clock of swimming lessons for example). Permission will be sought in writing, and we will keep a record of this.

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All pupils have individual risk assessments where the risk is assessed for each activity they undertake. We obtain the venue's general risk assessment and also their public liability insurance and hold that on file, however the pupils' risk assessments will be specific to their needs and potential risks and how we will manage those.

Activities that may require risk assessments include, but are not limited to:

Educational

- Food Technology
- Each physical activity
- Art
- Gardening
- Vocational activities
- Travel in the school cars
- Duke of Edinburgh activities
- Outdoor education activities
- Forest Schools

At White Trees Independent School, we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits, which work alongside pupil's individual specific risk assessments. All teaching/school staff receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas.

Pastoral

The aim of our pastoral emphasis is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping him/herself safe on the streets, in the home and in all situations. Our PSHE and social skills programmes are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupil develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken.

Medical and First Aid

Accident forms are maintained in the school office, and the Deputies and DDSL are responsible for ensuring that accident reports are logged on cpoms for pupil accidents and for staff accidents are collated in the Accident File. In the case of a medical emergency, staff are instructed to dial 999 and ask for emergency services. The Head Teacher is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor, or contractor,

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to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR). (Please see our First Aid policy)

Child Protection

Our Safeguarding policies, and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. Safer recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children and are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors, volunteers, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular child protection training, we manage this risk to an acceptable level. (Please see our Safeguarding policy)

Behaviour

Each pupil has an individual risk assessment as explained in detail in 'Risk assessment procedures. This policy should be read in conjunction with this and also individual risk assessments, Visits and trips risk assessments, policies relating to behaviour management and procedures for dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour. (Please see our What we do & How we do it policy). Furthermore, we use impact risk assessments to inform and support making decisions when mixing pupils for activities, accessing school sites and forest schools/outdoor education sessions. Each pupil has their own individualised Behaviour Wave support plan which further aids staff in supporting pupils needs and behaviour.

Lone Working

It will often be safe to work alone on or off-site. However, the law requires employers to think about and deal with any health and safety risks before people are allowed to do so. Employers have a duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. This must include:

- involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them
- taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker is able to perform the required tasks in safety
- instruction, training and supervision
- reviewing risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

This may include:

- being aware that some tasks may be too difficult or dangerous to be carried out on a 1:1 basis
- where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, informing that other employer of the risks and the required control measures
- when a risk assessment shows it is not possible for the work to be conducted safely by a lone worker, addressing that risk by making arrangements to provide help or back-up.

All staff have read and signed the lone working risk assessments and are aware of the systems in place.

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Steps taken by the school to reduce risk

As a school we take many steps in order to reduce the risk of lone working:

- All staff are taken through an induction that includes training on Health and Safety, Safeguarding, the school's systems and processes, housekeeping and more
- During probation all staff undergo face to face training in emergency first aid and fire marshal training
- Conduct effective and robust risk assessments on locations and activities
- All staff read and sign the Local Area Risk Assessment (LARA) for each site
- First aid kits are readily available to on-site staff each member of staff going off-site has one on their person/vehicle
- Mobile phones are available for staff to use
- Cars are available for staff (and maintained regularly via checks and services)
- Use of aerosols (such as deodorant or air spray) is prohibited

Steps staff must take to reduce risk

Staff must take a level of responsibility for their Health and Safety and when working alone, they must:

- **Make a member of the senior leadership team aware they are working**, their location, travel plans, travel updates and when they are no longer working
- **Have a communication device, such as a mobile phone, ready to use (i.e full battery, credit, etc) on their person at all times**
- **Do continuous dynamic risk assessments.** Staff must not engage in any activity to get involved in any situation where the risk is likely to result in harm to themselves or others. On a risk assessment this would be identified as a **H** 'rating'

Support Areas

- Catering and Cleaning: consideration is required for every item of catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Contracted cleaners bring their own cleaning materials and equipment - they are not stored on the school site. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Caretaking and Security: risk assessments cover every room, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school. Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising the risk of both fire and to security by adhering to good practice. Risk assessments also cover manual handling and working at heights Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.

CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT

Our policy at White Trees School is not to carry out any high-risk activity. This is clearly outlined in a very comprehensive guide to organising educational visits. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with pupils, such as high ropes, and canoeing; but only using specialist/qualified instructors. Pupils are always given a safety briefing

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before participating in these activities and are expected to wear protective equipment and to follow instructions.

We will always employ specialists to high-risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage. This might be when working on practical projects in school, or on work experience/placement.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The company's Head office arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety

Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded, when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident. The separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery, and equipment, together with its arrangements for catering and cleaning.

Responsibilities of all Staff

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety (which is recorded). Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. However, staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head Teacher and members of the Governance group, in order to enable the Directors to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the leadership team.

The leadership team keeps an ongoing watch over all these areas, and reports are made to the maintenance team and Governance group outlining any concerns or developments as soon as they become apparent.

Handling and preparation of school food

At White Trees Independent school, we endeavour to offer pupils a selection of options that are healthy and nutritious. Pupils are offered fruit juice with toast, fruit, or a breakfast bar in the morning and at break times. Followed by their cold or hot food at lunch time. They have access to water all day. All staff receive food hygiene training and, should it be required, specific training is provided to food handlers to include allergen training and current safer food better business guidance.

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Lunches for pupils are prepared off-site using an external catering company who will deliver the pupil's chosen hot or cold options each day, chosen in advance.

Storage and use of sharps

Sharpe knives are kept in a separate lockable tin, which is then stored in a lockable cupboard. The keys for these tins are to be kept in the key safe in the school offices (all sites follow this same system) fully labelled along with the cupboard keys where they are stored. All cutlery is counted at the beginning of the day and then at the end of the day, with a log being kept, to ensure that all equipment is accountable and safely stored away.

Pupils are to be always supervised when they are using cutlery, with staff ensuring that they are all returned. Identified Staff at all three sites are responsible for these weekly checks, Pupils' individual risk assessments are adapted accordingly if they access cookery/the kitchen at any point of the school day.

Allergies

When a member of staff or pupil notify White Trees School of any food allergies it is the responsibility of all staff members to act accordingly.

The following measures should be taken:

- All members of staff working with the pupil will be aware of the type of food allergy they present with, as listed on the walls in the kitchen areas, and on their pupil files.
- This information should be easily accessible to staff and highlighted on their pupil files.
- If it is a food allergy then the **PERSON (S)** preparing their lunch should ensure that they follow all procedures to ensure that food is prepared in a separate area of the kitchen, using separate utensils and equipment and PPE. Once prepared the container should be clearly labelled and ideally kept separate from other dishes, especially when delivering to White Trees School.
- All staff who use the kitchen to prepare food or drinks will ensure that they follow correct procedures if they know there is a pupil on site with a food allergy.
- **IF IN DOUBT IT IS IMPORTANT TO ASK**

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