

Health and Safety at Work Policy

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Purpose

To ensure the highest possible standards of health and safety at RBET Norfolk.

Scope

This policy applies to all statutory staff members of RBET Norfolk, contractors and volunteers.

Policy statement

RBET Norfolk has a commitment to protect its staff members and others.

All staff have a duty to ensure that they do not compromise the health and safety of others and themselves in the workplace.

Every individual has a legal responsibility to:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of the other people who may be affected by acts or omissions at work;
- to cooperate with any legal steps RBET Norfolk may take to fulfil its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAW).

Responsibilities

The Chair of Governors and Headteacher are jointly responsible for implementing this policy within the Centre. In particular they will:

- identify a member of staff who has direct responsibility for the management of health and safety at the Centre;
- monitor the effectiveness of the safety policy and the safe working practices described within it and revise and amend it, as necessary, on an annual basis;
- prepare an emergency evacuation procedure and arrange for periodic practice evacuation drills to take place and for the results of these to be recorded;
- ensure that all staff, volunteers and other adults who use the Centre are aware of health and safety practices including evacuation procedures;
- make arrangements for the implementation of the accident reporting procedure approved by Ofsted and ensure all staff and volunteers are familiar with and implement the requirements;
- arrange for the withdrawal, repair or replacement of any item of furniture, fitting or equipment identified as being unsafe by the designated person;
- deal with all aspects of maintenance of the premises and identify and remedy any situation which is unsafe or hazardous.

Responsibilities of staff towards students and others in their care.

All staff are responsible for the health and safety arrangements in relation to staff, volunteers and students. In particular, they must monitor their own work activities and take all reasonable steps to:

- exercise effective supervision over all those for whom they are responsible;
- be aware of, and implement, safe working practices and set a good example;
- identify actual and potential hazards and introduce procedures to minimise the possibility of mishap;

- ensure that all equipment and tools used are appropriate for use and meet accepted safety standards;
- ensure written instructions, warning notices and signs are provided as appropriate;
- evaluate promptly and, where appropriate, take action on, any criticism of health and safety arrangements;
- provide the opportunity for discussion of health and safety arrangements;
- investigate any accident (or incident where personal injury could have arisen) and take appropriate corrective action if deemed to be required;
- provide for adequate instruction, information and training in safe working methods within any learning area for which they are responsible;
- ensure, when transporting students, that all legal requirements are followed including the wearing of seat belts;
- ensure that any perceived issue or problem is discussed promptly with the designated person for health and safety.

Employees

All employees have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of any person who might be affected by their actions at work;
- make themselves aware of all safety rules, procedures and safe working practices applicable to their posts... when in doubt they must seek immediate clarification from the coordinator;
- ensure that all tools and equipment are in good condition and report any defects to the coordinator;
- use protective clothing and safety equipment as required and ensure that these are kept in good condition;
- ensure that offices and general accommodation are kept tidy;
- ensure that any accidents, whether or not an injury occurs, and any potential hazards, are reported to the coordinator;
- draw the attention of the designated person for health and safety to any perceived potential hazards or failings in health and safety arrangements;
- ensure that effective risk assessments are carried out for all necessary activities.

Students

All students are expected, within their expertise and ability, to:

- exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of their fellow students;
- observe standards of dress consistent with safety and hygiene;
- observe all the safety rules of the Centre and, in particular, the instructions of teaching staff in the event of an emergency;
- use items provided for safety purposes.

Fire procedure (see fire policy for greater detail)

Staff will be trained to understand that it is important to minimise the risk to themselves and others should a fire 'break out'. Staff will be required to read, understand and agree to comply with the contents of the Fire Policy. They will further ensure that they are familiar with the location of the fire exits, fire extinguishers and assembly points. and will familiarise themselves with the evacuation plans posted at each exit.

Any staff visiting other sites should observe the fire precautions for that site and familiarise themselves with the fire exits and assembly points at the site.

It is the responsibility of those staff who are trained Fire Safety Officers (with support from the SLT) to carry out a full fire evacuation drill at least once a term.

Advice to staff on the action they should take if they have an accident at work

If you have an accident at work, you should report this to the Headteacher, however trivial you may think it is.

Should you be absent from work as a direct result of an accident at work, you must inform your line manager as soon as possible.

Whilst at work, in the event of an accident, the first aider should be called to assess and deal with the situation. The law requires RBET Norfolk to record all accidents. An accident book is available in the office. Once this has been completed, the page should be removed from the book and given to the H&S Lead who will take any appropriate action and then store it in line with GDPR legal requirements.

Health and safety management

RBET Norfolk will ensure that there is one or more competent person available to assist the organisation in undertaking the measures needed to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed by or under the relevant statutory provisions.

The responsibilities of the competent person are:

- the provision of health and safety advice and the implication of the law;
- the production and maintenance of this policy and associated health and safety procedures, protocols and guidance;
- assisting in the identification and implementation of health and safety training needs;
- providing recommendations and reports as and when required.

Loss or damage to personal items at work

RBET Norfolk's insurance policies do not cover the loss of personal possessions while at work. We therefore direct staff to take care of their personal possessions during office hours, making suitable use of lockable cupboards, pedestals etc. Staff will be asked to inform the Headteacher immediately should they suffer loss or damage to their personal possessions.

Eye tests

RBET Norfolk will reimburse the cost of eye tests, up to a maximum of £25.00, annually or more regularly if required by an optician. Staff who use display screen equipment (DSE) regularly within their work will be advised to make an appointment with an optician. The cost of the eye test can subsequently be reclaimed via the expenses procedure.

Risk assessment

The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate and effective risk assessments are carried out for the following areas:

- use of RBET Norfolk property;
- control and maintenance of entry and exit points to and from the Centre;
- all activities;

- any work that takes place outside the Centre;
- each student that is referred to the Centre.

In ensuring appropriate and effective risk management practice is pursued, the Centre will take heed of the following advice in the DfE's 2013 guidance:

"Sensible management of risk does not mean that a separate written risk assessment is required for every activity (session)."

RBET Norfolk will always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that risk assessment and risk management are tools to enable children to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place.

Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether. Good risk management should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork. Some activities, especially those happening away from school, can involve higher levels of risk. If these are annual or infrequent activities, a review of an existing assessment may be all that is needed. If it is a new activity, a specific assessment of significant risks must be carried out. The Headteacher must ensure that the person assigned with the assessment task understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned.

Where a risk assessment is carried out, the significant findings of the assessment must be recorded.

Risk assessments will:

- be completed for each student during their admission and induction period, and updated as required;
- have been completed for all rooms, teaching areas and 'trips', but will be reviewed annually - should any new accommodation become available, a risk assessment will be completed before it is made available for use;
- be dated and carry clear indication as to who completed the assessment.

The person with ultimate responsibility for ensuring all elements of this policy regarding risk are 'met with' is the Headteacher. However, the person actually completing the assessment will vary, e.g. for room usage it will be the most frequent user of that room, for a student it will be the SENCo, and for trips it will be the lead person for the activity.

Specific areas of concern

Centre security

RBET Norfolk has a limited point of access. Measures are taken to ensure that entry to the building is always monitored by staff and that no unauthorised persons are allowed access to the building.

Violence to staff

Such action will not be tolerated. RBET Norfolk has an exclusions policy that details what action will be taken when the rights of any member of the community are transgressed and a use of reasonable force policy to describe how staff should respond should action be required.

Manual handling

Staff are not expected to lift or handle heavy or bulky items. If it becomes apparent that such action will be required within a person's required activities, then appropriate training will be sought and provided.

Slips and trips

The health and safety representative will ensure that the risk of tripping is kept to an absolute minimum. Risk assessments are carried out for every room and part of the building... such assessments should identify any such risks that exist, assess the likelihood of them occurring and describe action to ameliorate the risk if required.

Management of asbestos

The Centre premises have undergone building safety inspections prior to use by RBET Norfolk. This has determined that there is no evidence of asbestos risk present in the building.

Drinking water

Regular checks are made of the quality of drinking water available in the Centre by an approved contractor. The health and safety officer is responsible for ensuring that taps providing water suitable for drinking are clearly marked, that such 'outlets' are sufficient in number and that they are kept clean.

Hot water

Any taps that are outlets for hot water will be appropriately marked and water will be periodically tested to ensure that there is no risk of scalding (maximum temperature will be 50 degrees centigrade).

Areas for play

RBET Norfolk has very limited outdoor space for leisure use - when students make use of the area, they will always be supervised by staff. Staff will seek to provide supervised indoor areas that can be used during lunch and other breaks, but will also supervise students who want to use nearby parks, or other suitable areas. In such cases appropriate risk assessments will be carried out and supervision undertaken.

Management of threat of legionella's disease

RBET Norfolk pursues strict hygiene arrangements in its kitchens, eating areas and sanitary facilities (any toilets not used regularly will be checked and flushed; water temperature will be checked frequently).

RBET Norfolk contracts an external agency to carry out a risk assessment every year or after any extended period of inactivity.

RBET Norfolk kitchens are used by staff trained in Food Safety and hygienic use.

Students are taught the importance of good hygiene in terms of handwashing, and staff are asked to uphold high standards in these areas.

Whilst it is never possible to guarantee that there will be no occurrence of infection, daily practice is strong and reduces the risk to the lowest possible level. Should there be any indication of infection, immediate action will be taken:

- students and staff sent home until the building is deemed (by medical staff) to be free from infection;

- parents and all involved agencies notified immediately;
- health authority notified;
- appropriate de-infection actions pursued as directed by health authority personnel.

Regular testing of equipment

RBET Norfolk houses little in the way of large equipment. However, the health and safety officer will ensure that any equipment requiring regular testing will be subject to whatever testing is required to meet guidance or statute. Most obviously all electrical equipment will be tested on an appropriate periodic basis (PAT testing) and will be marked to indicate that such testing has been carried out.

As indicated elsewhere in the policy, checks on water supply equipment and any equipment used in the kitchen will be pursued and recorded. Checks on fire safety equipment will be carried out as described in the fire policy.

Any boilers or gas appliances will be serviced on an annual basis to ensure safe and efficient service.

Emergencies

RBET Norfolk holds and annually updates a business continuity plan (available on request). This provides a risk assessment 'level' for identified emergencies, appropriate action to minimise the risk and action to take should the emergency occur.

The display screen regulations

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require RBET Norfolk to minimise any risks associated with DSE use by ensuring that workplaces are well designed. Staff who regularly use a DSE/Laptop for a significant part of their work may be asked to complete a risk assessment to help RBET Norfolk identify potential problems. Staff will be provided with the following advice to reduce the risk of strain or illness resulting from DSE usage:

- Adjust your chair and DSE to find the most comfortable position. As a guide your forearms should be horizontal and your eyes the same height as the top of the screen.
- Make sure you have enough space. A document holder may help.
- Avoid glare on your screen by not placing your screen directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust curtains or blinds to block out unwanted light.
- Make sure there is enough space under your desk for your legs to move freely.
- Try to avoid pressure on the back of your legs and knees from your chair. Obtain a footrest if necessary.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when typing.
- Position the mouse within easy reach to keep the wrist straight when using. Sit upright and close to the desk so as not to overstretch.
- Support your forearm on the desk, rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press hard.
- Adjust the brightness and controls on your screen and make sure the screen is clean.
- Adjust the focus on the screen so it does not flicker or move.
- Take regular breaks and adjust your posture regularly.

Stress

Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure. It is not a disease but if the stress goes on for some time it can lead to mental and physical health deterioration. Common symptoms of stress can include headaches, mood swings, poor sleeping habits,

irritability, indecisiveness, absenteeism or reduced performance. Any staff who feel they are experiencing stress at work should contact the Headteacher for further advice and support.

Electricity

All staff will be advised to treat any electrical equipment with great care. The following advice is issued to all staff:

- No person should work on electrical systems unless appointed or appropriately skilled.
- Check for defective cables, plugs or sockets before using equipment. Defective equipment must be taken out of service – do not carry out temporary repairs.
- Do not overload electrical equipment.
- Switch off or disconnect any equipment that sparks or stalls.
- Wherever possible, avoid letting cables trail across floors. Cables can become damaged or create a trip hazard. Keep use of cables to a minimum and use cable mats or tape them to the floor with hazard tape (black/yellow stripe).
- Disconnect equipment when not in use but do not pull the cable to disconnect. Pull at the plug.
- Avoid kinking, twisting, binding or crushing cables.
- Keep all electrical equipment clean and dry.
- Never touch plugs or sockets with wet hands.

Secure storage of materials and equipment

Kitchen knives and sharp kitchen instruments are stored safely in a locked storage/space unit when not in use. Knives are not accessible to students unless under supervision from a staff member.

Science materials are stored safely in a fit for purpose COSHH storage unit. Any chemicals are stored alongside the relevant COSHH sheet. Access to the cupboard is overseen by the science teacher and an inventory is kept.

Medical assessments

RBET Norfolk reserves the right to request staff to attend a medical assessment (sometimes called an Occupational Health referral), at RBET Norfolk's expense in the event of long-term ill health or injury or where issues arise which they consider to be affecting aspects of their work. Any report provided will be made available to the member of staff concerned: their express authorisation will be required before any information can be released to RBET Norfolk. Only information relevant to the specific absence or issue will be requested.

Manual handling and lifting

Incorrect handling of objects is a major cause of injury and can result in muscle strain, muscular-skeletal injuries, and broken or fractured bones. Staff are advised that the likelihood of pain or injury will be reduced if the following advice is adhered to:

- Plan the job. Make sure that your route is clear and that you can rest and unload safely.
- Check the object you are carrying for sharp/uneven edges. Decide how best to hold the object.
- Get a good grip and wear suitable gloves with grip to protect your hands from sharp edges if necessary.
- Wear safety shoes where appropriate.
- Get help if the load is too heavy or awkward for you to lift easily.
- Always lift with your legs NOT your back. Assume a comfortable stance with your feet shoulder width apart and lift smoothly keeping the object close to the body.

- Minimise lifts above the shoulder and below the knee.
- Ensure you have good vision and can see where you are going.
- Don't twist your body. Move your feet to change direction.
- When unloading, bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Keep fingers and feet clear to avoid crushing incidents when putting objects down.

Safe working practices

The following general guidance is provided for staff to minimise the likelihood of injury at work and as good 'safe practice':

- Only use equipment for the purpose for which it was designed or intended.
- Do not use equipment or chemicals unless you have been trained or instructed in how to use them.
- Only use ladders with more than three steps if you have been trained to do so and only with the support of another colleague if your feet are going over one metre from the floor.
- Always follow manufacturer's or supplier's guidelines.
- Never tamper with equipment, especially if it is not working. Refer or report the defect to the appropriate person.
- Do not rough handle equipment.
- Never block fire exits or stairs.
- Do not use fire extinguishers to prop open doors. Ensure that fire doors are closed.
- Keep your workspace tidy and clear and pick up litter.

Records management

The Headteacher is responsible for the safekeeping of this policy and for the recording of any 'incidents'. This policy will be available for all staff on the Centre website.

Related legislation and documents

External Documents

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Internal Documents

- Code of Conduct for all staff
- Fire Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy