

## Health and Safety Policy for Downlands Community School

Adopted date: February 10th 2026

Next review date: February 2027

### Statement of Intent

**Downlands Community School** recognises its legal and moral responsibilities to persons who may be adversely affected by school activities.

#### The Law

Health and safety in schools is governed by legislation and associated regulations, which are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

In **community schools, community special schools and voluntary controlled schools** statutory health and safety responsibilities fall on the LA (as the employer) and on the Headteacher and other school staff (as employees).

As the management body, **the Governing body** must ensure that school staff and premises comply with the LA's health and safety policies and practices (e.g. reporting accidents, first aid provision), and:

- Develop and regularly update a health and safety policy and advise employees of it;
- Have a critical incident/emergency contingency plan;
- Ensure, **so far as reasonably practicable**, the health, safety, and wellbeing of teachers and other education staff; the health and safety of pupils in school and on off-site visits; and the health and safety of visitors to the school including volunteers involved in any school activity and contractors working on the school site;
- Assess the risk of all activities, both in school and off-site; introduce measures to manage the risks, and instruct employees about the risks and the measures to control them;
- Ensure that staff are competent and trained in their responsibilities (including written records of training); and are actively involved in health and safety;
- Take reasonable steps to make sure that the buildings, equipment and materials are safe and do not put the health of users and visitors at risk.

In practice, the governing body may delegate specific health and safety tasks to others at the school.

The Governing body, and the headteacher, must comply with any direction given to them by the LA concerning health and safety of persons on the school's premises or taking part in any school activities elsewhere.

In **Foundation schools and voluntary aided schools** statutory health and safety responsibilities fall on the governing body (as the employer) and on the headteacher and staff (as employees).

The governing body, as the employer, has a duty (as required by The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999) to ensure all the above is in place and adhered to.

In practice, the governing body may delegate specific health and safety tasks to others at the school. **However, the governing body retains the ultimate responsibility no matter who carries out the tasks.**

## **Responsibilities**

It is recognised that individuals and groups of individuals have responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing in the school. The individuals and groups identified below are expected to have read and understood the school's policies and procedures for ensuring health, safety and wellbeing and to conduct their duties in accordance with them.

### **Governors**

The governors are responsible for ensuring that mechanisms and procedures are in place for health, safety and wellbeing. The governors will receive regular reports to enable them, in collaboration with the headteacher, to prioritise resources for health, safety and wellbeing issues.

The governors have appointed a Health and Safety Governor to receive information, monitor the implementation of policies, procedures and decisions and feedback to the governing body on health, safety and wellbeing issues.

### **The governors of Downlands Community School will:**

- Provide as far as reasonably practicable a safe and healthy environment for all persons who work at, attend or visit the school.
- Ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of pupils, staff and volunteers on off-site visits and activities.
- Endorse and support the safety policies of Dorset Council (DC), and to assist the Council to discharge those responsibilities, which it holds as an employer.
- Seek improvement to working conditions according to priorities within existing resources.
- Recognise their responsibilities when they make available premises or equipment for hire, and will ensure that risks to the safety or health of hirers and other persons are adequately controlled as far as possible.
- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out within the school using DC risk assessment policy and forms and to ensure the assessments are reviewed at least annually.
- Encourage informal meetings and ensure time is made available in staff meetings where health and safety issues can be raised.

- Ensure that staff can access training to ensure their competence for their task.
- Accept the duties they may hold as a client when they arrange for work through contractors or volunteers. Follow DC guidance for the selection of competent contractors and **will** seek assistance from the schools Property Surveyor or DC Property Management Division when necessary. Ensure that volunteers receive adequate instruction and supervision to work safely.
- Ensure all staff accidents, significant pupil accidents and third party accidents are reported to the County Health and Safety Team in accordance with the DC accident reporting policy and procedure.
- Review on an annual basis, all accidents and incidents reported to identify trends.
- Consult with the school council and inform pupils of their responsibility for health and safety.
- Recognise the role of safety representatives appointed by recognised trade unions and co-operate with them so they may undertake their health and safety related functions, including reasonable paid time off for consultation, inspections and investigations.

### **Headteacher**

The headteacher has responsibility for:-

- Day to day management of all health and safety matters in the school in accordance with the health and safety policy.
- Ensure regular workplace inspections are carried out.
- {Insert name here of person/job title that will complete the inspection each term}.
- Submitting inspection reports to the governors.
- Ensuring action is taken on health, safety and wellbeing issues.
- Passing on information received on health and safety matters to appropriate people.
- Carrying out accident investigations.
- Working alongside the school's nominated Health and Safety governor
- Identifying and facilitating staff training needs.
- Liaising with governors and/or the LA on policy issues and any problems in implementing the health and safety policy.
- Co-operating with and providing necessary facilities for trade union safety representatives.
- Providing necessary facilities for all employees to be consulted on health and safety matters.
- Where contracts are negotiated directly between the school and the contractor, the headteacher is also expected to monitor purchasing and contracting procedures, to ensure that the employer's health and safety policy is complied with.

The caretaker is responsible for liaising with contractors undertaking major works and for ensuring that the risk due to having contractors on site is monitored and controlled.

The caretaker is appointed with the authority of the headteacher to request action from the contractor where conditions are considered to be unsafe.

Whilst the responsibility for the above cannot be delegated, the function of carrying out these tasks can be delegated to other members of staff

## **Staff with special responsibility**

The following staff have special responsibility:

- Marcelle Hoare – Educational Visits Coordinator
- Cress Cooper – Finance Officer
- L3 first aiders (paediatric) - All EYFS staff and Mel Hampson
- Alice Robinson – L3 First Aid at work

These job holders will be responsible for:

- The local arrangements to ensure the effective control of risks within the specific areas under their control.
- The local arrangements for the purchase, inspection and maintenance of equipment and its specification.
- The coordination of the school's health and safety policy in their own department or area of work, directly responsible to the headteacher for the application of the health and safety procedures and arrangements.
- Establishing and maintaining safe working practices including arrangements for ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, the absence of risks to health and safety in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances, e.g. chemicals, hot water, sharp tools and machinery.
- Resolving health, safety and wellbeing problems referred to them by members of their staff or referring to the headteacher or line manager any problems they are unable to resolve within the resources available to them.
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out when necessary and reviewed, and on a regular basis within the overall programme for the school, on the activities and equipment for which they are responsible.
- Ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, that sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to enable employees and pupils to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their own health and safety.
- Obtain relevant advice and guidance on health and safety matters.

## **Employees**

All DC employees are directly responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care for the health safety of themselves and of other people who may be affected by their acts and / or omissions.
- Co-operating fully with their manager or responsible person on all matters relating to their health and safety at work.
- Not recklessly or intentionally interfering with, or misusing any equipment, safety devices etc. that have been provided in the interest of health and safety.
- Reporting promptly, in the first instance to their manager or responsible person, any accidents, injury, significant near miss, incident of violence and aggression or cases of work-related ill health.
- Report to the relevant manager, any defects, hazard, damage or unsafe practices or other items that could give rise to an unsafe place of work or cause injury or ill-health to others. Any defective equipment should be labelled to ensure other employees cannot use the item.
- Wearing any protective clothing or equipment and using any safety devices that have been provided for their health and safety while at work.
- Observing safety rules, complying with codes of practice and health and safety policy and procedures, and adhering to safe working procedures at all times.

- Acquaint themselves with, and comply with, the procedure to follow in case of a fire or other emergency.
- Attending health and safety training as directed and undertaking their work activities in accordance with any health and safety training provided to them.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers (such as parent helpers etc.) have a responsibility to act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures for health and safety and to report any incident or defective equipment to a member of staff immediately.

Volunteers are also expected to act only under the supervision of a qualified member of staff.

### **School health and safety representatives**

Safety representatives are appointed by recognised Trade Unions.

\*The current safety representatives are:

\*\* At present there are no safety representatives.

\*/\*\* delete as applicable.

Under the requirements of the Safety Committee and Safety Representative Regulations 1977, where safety representatives are appointed they will be given adequate time and facilities to fulfil their functions.

### **Contractors**

All contractors under school control will be appropriately selected and competent in terms of health and safety.

- Contractors must be made aware of and abide by the school's health and safety policy and not endanger pupils, staff or other visitors to the site.
- The Senior Team and Admin Officer will be responsible for the co-ordination of the contractors' activities on site.
- The headteacher must ensure that any temporary rules, such as exclusion from parts of the premises, are known to all staff, pupils and visitors to the premises. This might be achieved by the posting of suitable notices by the headteacher, or by the contractor, in consultation with the headteacher. All contractors must report to the responsible person named above before any work takes place and prior to each working session. The responsible person should then inform the contractor of any conditions which may affect his safety and that of others.

### **Visitors and other users of the premises**

Where the facilities are shared, ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for communicating and co-ordinating health, safety and security policies and procedures with other occupiers, e.g. youth service, leisure centre, catering and cleaning contractors and outside staff based in schools.

- All visitors to the school must comply with the school and DC health and safety policy and procedures.
- Headteachers must ensure that a suitable system is implemented whereby visitors are required to record their visit to the school (visitor's book) and the

time they leave. This should include all visitors to the school including Governors, Property Surveyor, Contractor's etc.

- Where applicable visitors will be required to wear a 'visitors' identification badge which will be supplied by the school.
- Where reasonably practicable, visitors will be accompanied at all times by a responsible employee.
- Should a fire / emergency occur or the fire alarm is activated whilst visitors are on the school's premises, the person who is accompanying the visitor will take him / her to the fire assembly point.
- Should an incident / accident occur involving a visitor it must be reported using DC accident reporting policy and procedure and form and sent to the County Health and Safety Team. An investigation must be undertaken as soon as possible by the relevant responsible person.
- If the incident is of a serious nature or fatal the headteacher should contact the County Health and Safety Team immediately on 01305 221000.
- Persons hosting visitors including meeting arrangers must ensure:
  1. Visitors are alerted to the establishment fire procedures.
  2. Visitors adhere to the 'no smoking' policy.
  3. Visitors park their vehicles in such a way so as not to obstruct fire escape routes, roads, access or other vehicles.
  4. Visitors record time of arrival and departure in the visitors' book.
  5. Where applicable visitors are provided with and wear identification badges.
  6. Visitors are accompanied or authorised to enter the premises.
  7. Visitors remain within authorised areas and do not enter any restricted area unless permission is granted and the person is accompanied.
  8. Visitors do not take anything with them from the premises, or bring anything onto the premises that may create a hazard or risk unless authorised.
  9. Visitors report all accidents, incidents and near misses to the host.
  10. Visitors wear protective clothing that is supplied when necessary.

### **Lettings**

The headteacher will ensure that the hirer of the premises, for any event, is aware of his / her obligations under health and safety legislation and the school and DC health and safety policies where appropriate. [see Downlands Charging and Remissions Policy]

### **Pupils**

Pupils will be reminded that they are expected to:

- Exercise personal responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others.
- Observe standards of dress consistent with safety and / or hygiene, as detailed within the appropriate curriculum safety guidelines.
- Observe all the health and safety rules of the school and, in particular, the instructions of staff given in an emergency.
- Use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for their health and safety.

All pupils and parents will be made aware of this section of the policy through {school to specify for example prospectus}.

## **Arrangements**

### **Monitoring and Inspection**

The school buys in to the Service Level Agreement for Health, Safety and Wellbeing. As part of this service the County Health and Safety Team conduct an audit or review of the schools' health and safety systems. A copy of the latest audit is available {insert location}.

### **First aid**

The school has assessed the need for first aid provision and ensures that the guidelines given within the latest DC First Aid Code of Practice are complied with.

An up to date list of all first aiders is displayed in the foyer and main office.

First aid kits are located at strategic points in the school [all classrooms and learning spaces, Y3/4 link doors, main office] and portable kits are available for lunchtimes, PE lessons and school trips and visits. The contents of the kits will be checked on a weekly basis and the kit will be labelled with the date of checking and signature of the person who has checked the kit.

For further information please see the schools First Aid Policy.

### **Accident recording**

The school will record all accidents in accordance with DC Accident reporting policy and procedure. Any accidents reportable to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) will be completed by Dorset Council's Health and Safety Team on the school's behalf.

### **Administration of medicines**

The school follows DfES guidance on the dispensing of medicines within school.

For further details please see the school's administration of medicines policy.

### **Off site visits**

The school follows DC Children's Services Off Site Events and Adventurous Activities Policy.

Further information can be found within this policy.

### **Fire**

The school will ensure that a fire evacuation drill is completed once per term and record the date in the fire log.

The fire log will be kept up to date with entries for weekly fire alarm checks and fire door checks, monthly emergency lighting checks and fire extinguisher checks and any contractor visits or false alarms.

Arrangements are in place for evacuating disabled people (a personal emergency evacuation plan PEEP).

The headteacher/governing body will ensure a fire risk assessment is completed and updated at least annually or more frequently if there is a significant change to the building.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that pupils and visitors evacuate in an orderly and timely fashion in the event of the alarm sounding.

All staff are responsible for ensuring evacuation routes and doors are kept clear at all times.

For further details please see the school's policy for fire.

### **Electricity**

The school will undertake to inspect and test all portable appliances by a competent person (contractor) on an at least two yearly basis with a written annual visual check in between the years of PAT test.

A competent person will produce an inventory of test.

All staff will visually inspect electrical equipment before use for obvious defects.

Defective equipment will not be used, will be labelled and reported as defective for replacement/repair.

The school will ensure that the fixed wiring inspections are completed on a 5 yearly basis by a competent contractor.

If personal items of electrical equipment are required to be used in school then permission must be sought from {school to complete name} and the equipment must have a current portable appliance test completed on it.

### **Work equipment**

All work equipment will be purchased from a reputable supplier.

Before purchase the following considerations must be given:

- The installation requirements
- The suitability for purpose
- The positioning and or storage of the equipment
- Maintenance requirements (contracts and repairs)
- Training and use of the equipment.

Staff must not use new items of work equipment unless appropriate training has been given. A risk assessment must be completed for the work equipment and staff using the equipment must have assess to and comply with the risk assessment.

All plant and equipment that require statutory inspection, testing and maintenance for example, steam boilers, pressure cookers, lifting equipment, local exhaust ventilation will be completed by a DC approved contractor (if the school does not use an approved contractor they must ensure a competent contractor is used).

Any personal protective equipment (PPE) required for the use of the work equipment will be supplied free of charge by the school. All employees will be expected to wear the PPE when operating the equipment.

### **Access equipment (kick-stools, ladders, tower scaffolds and mewps etc)**

All access equipment must be purchased from a reputable supplier.

Before purchase the following considerations must be given:

- The installation requirements
- The suitability for purpose
- The positioning and or storage of the equipment
- Training and use of the equipment.

Staff must not use access equipment unless appropriate training has been given. A risk assessment must be completed for the access equipment or task and staff using the equipment must have access to and comply with the risk assessment.

The access equipment should be visually checked before each use. An inventory is required for all access equipment with a formal written 6 monthly check.

### **Control of hazardous substances**

All substances that may be considered hazardous to health will be COSHH assessed (except in science – these are covered by CLEAPSS hazcards).

A copy of the health and safety data sheet and COSHH assessment will be available in the location of where the chemicals are used / stored.

Any person using these chemicals must ensure they have seen and follow the information given on the COSHH assessment (including the wearing of any identified PPE).

Staff must not bring any hazardous chemical onto the school site unless prior permission has been sought and a COSHH assessment has been completed.

### **Asbestos**

The school has an asbestos register which is located in the reception hall. All contractors are prompted to check this upon digital sign in.

All contractors must be shown the register before work commences.

Any damaged or suspected damage to asbestos should be reported to the headteacher who will contact the schools Property Surveyor immediately.

### **Legionella**

The school has a legionella survey which is located on the G Drive. The leadership team are responsible for ensuring that any monthly temperature checks are completed and the weekly flushing records are completed. Further information of legionella can be obtained from Jason Greatbanks on 01305 221908.

## **Violence**

The school follows DC policy and guidance for violence at work. For further information please refer to the DC Violence at Work Policy (schools).

All incidents of verbal and physical abuse will be recorded on the accident / incident report form and sent to the County Health and Safety Team.

## **Manual Handling**

The school complies with the DC Manual Handling Policy and Procedure and completes risk assessments on any significant manual handling tasks. Employees who complete manual handling tasks will have suitable and sufficient training. For further information please refer to the DC Manual Handling Policy.

## **Lone working**

The school complies with the DC Lone Working Policy and completes risk assessments for any lone working scenario. For further information please refer to the DC Lone Working Policy.

## **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments are completed for any significant risks in accordance with the DC Risk Assessment policy. These risk assessments are working documents and must be viewed by staff carrying out the activity and updated/reviewed on an at least annual basis or whenever there is a significant change to the activity / task / personnel / or following an accident. For further information please refer to the DC Risk Assessment Policy.

## **Training and records**

The school will ensure that all staff has suitable and sufficient training to complete the tasks required of them. The school will ensure all training is recorded and up-date training is completed where required.



James Rielly  
Headteacher  
January 2026



Jeremy Osborne  
Chair of Governors  
January 2026