The Dales School
North Yorkshire

# Health & Safety
# Use of Chemicals
# Appendix 8

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**Health & Safety Guidance**
**Use of Chemicals**
**Appendix 8**

## 1. General Statement

It is our policy to ensure that the risks associated with the use of chemicals on-site is minimised at all times. This will be achieved by implementing a series of risk control measures.

Our starting point will be to eliminate the use of hazardous chemicals wherever possible. If this can't be done then we will take all reasonable steps to find less hazardous chemicals. In the event that hazardous chemicals will need to be used, control systems such as local exhaust ventilation will be introduced.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) will only be issued where hazards cannot be effectively managed by other means. The use of new chemicals will be assessed prior to use and where this expertise is not available in-house, it will be brought in from suitably qualified third parties.

## 2. The Legal Position

The use of chemicals in the workplace is governed by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). These require us to minimise the risks from using chemicals at work and to introduce control measures to manage those which may remain. COSHH also requires us to train employees in the safe use of chemicals and to monitor the effectiveness of any control measures.

In certain circumstances, we are required to conduct health surveillance. This will occur if any employee is exposed to a hazardous substance which is known or is likely to cause a disease or be detrimental to health. COSHH also requires us to store chemicals safely in order to avoid the risks of fire, explosion or environmental damage.

## 3. Procedures

It is our policy that this procedure will be followed by all staff with responsibilities for the procurement and safe use of chemicals whilst on our premises.

Ordering chemicals

Adequate information on each chemical must be obtained prior to its use. This will take the form of a material safety data sheet (MSDS), which should be provided by the supplier of the chemical. If the intention is to use a chemical for the first time, then the relevant MSDS needs to be obtained before the chemical is ordered.

Where necessary, further information will be obtained from the chemical supplier and other resources, such as the Health and Safety Executive website http://www.hse.gov.uk

Use of chemicals on-site

The use of all chemicals on-site will be assessed. For those which have relatively low-hazard properties, this process will be straightforward. In these cases, it will be assumed that implementation of controls in line with the MSDS will be sufficient. The school uses chemical in it's swimming pool; storage protocols are followed at all time and only staff trained in their use will manage them.

In the event that we have high-hazard substances, such as potential cancer-causing agents are

used, managers are expected to try and source less hazardous substitutes. Where this is not possible the effective controls will be required.

If chemicals will need to be mixed with other materials, each must be assessed in order to ensure that no adverse reaction will occur. The MSDS will provide information on incompatible chemicals. The importance of this procedure must not be overlooked as even everyday cleaning agents can cause a serious reaction if mixed.

Storage

We will provide appropriate storage according to the properties of each chemical. The type of storage necessary will be determined by reference to the MSDS. Special consideration will be given to flammable liquids, environmentally hazardous chemicals and oxidising agents (due to the risks of explosion). The suitability of all chemical storage will be reviewed as necessary.

## 4. Employees' Duties

All employees will be expected to co-operate with us in respect of any controls which have been introduced, to ensure the safe use and storage of chemicals on-site. Where PPE has been deemed to be necessary, employees will be expected to wear and maintain it in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

We also expect all employees to report any concerns to their line manager or supervisor. These will be dealt with promptly. Should any further action be required, then the employee raising the concern will be informed as to what form it will take.

## 5. Employee Training

All employees will receive information, instruction and training on how to use chemicals safely. This will be repeated as necessary, e.g. on the introduction of new chemicals or processes. Training will be provided in a practical form in which the hazards and controls are clearly understood, e.g. training on operating procedures.

## 6. Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by managers through the carrying out of periodic safety audits. These will cover the following:

- use of chemicals
- maintenance of control systems
- adherence to safe working practices
- provision of information to employees
- storage of chemicals.

Where contractors are engaged on site, they will be monitored to ensure that they do not pose a hazard to employees, visitors or themselves.