The Dales School
North Yorkshire

Health & Safety

Display Screen Equipment policy and procedures (including Laptop/tablet procedures)

Appendix 9

Person responsible: Ann Marie Ellis
Adopted and reviewed by the Governing Body: October 26
Review Date: October 27

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Health & Safety Guidance
Display screen
Appendix 9

1. General Statement

It is our policy that all computer (display screen) users will be assessed once they commence employment with us. This will help us determine whether or not they can be classified as "users" for the purposes of current legal requirements.

This assessment will be carried out by completing a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) questionnaire. This will then determine whether or not any further action is required. If so, a further assessment will be carried out by:

Myra Woods

2. The Legal Position

The law relating to the use of DSE equipment, such as computers, is covered by the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (the DSE Regulations). These Regulations set down a series of minimum standards for the workstations used by DSE users. This includes seating, lighting levels and workstation layout. We have also incorporated the amendments made to these Regulations in 2002.

3. Definition of 'User'

The Guidance to the DSE Regulations defines a 'user' as someone who uses a computer for 'continuous spells of an hour or more at a time' on a 'more or less daily' basis.

4. Procedures

In order to comply with the DSE Regulations, we have introduced some procedures which are to be followed by all staff, these are as follows:

- All new employees who are required to use computers as part of their job role will be given a self-assessment DSE questionnaire to complete within 1 month of starting work with us.
- All existing employees who regularly use a computer should have completed a questionnaire. However, should a member of staff change workstations or become a DSE user for the first time, then another one should be completed. This should be done shortly after the change in location or job role. Whilst care has been taken to ensure that the questionnaire is self-explanatory, any queries can be referred to your line manager.
- Where the questionnaire identifies problems, such as glare, it is the responsibility of the individual's line manager to ensure that these are rectified
- Staff are actively encouraged to try and rotate their job tasks in order to spend a few minutes an hour away from the computer screen. This time should be spent engaged in work duties such as telephone calls and general office administration. If any employee feels that their workload does not permit adequate breaks, this should be brought to the attention of the individual's line manager. Where possible, this situation will be rectified.
- Where necessary, staff will be provided with training and information in order to help them set up their workstation correctly.

5. Employees' Duties

Employees are expected to complete the self- assessment DSE questionnaire in a timely manner. They are also required to set up and operate their workstations correctly. In the unlikely event that any difficulties are experienced with workstations, employees should bring this to the attention of their line manager as soon as possible. Each employee is also expected to abide by the procedures laid down in this policy.

6. Eye Tests & Supply of Glasses

Any member of staff requesting an eye test or glasses, should refer to the NYC policy on eye testing

7. Laptops

The smaller size and design of laptop computers/tablet devices mean that, if used wrongly, users can experience discomfort. This is because the smaller screen and keyboard encourages users to bend over, causing shoulder and neck problems. As a result, it is the organisation's procedure that laptops and tablets will be used according to the following guidelines:

- Laptops and tablets are only to be used where no desktop computer or docking station is available;
- Wherever possible, keep the use of laptops and tablets in stationary cars to a minimum. This is to prevent the additional stress on the spine and the increased likelihood of injury that could arise from unsuitable seating and limited space;
- Don't overload your laptop bag. Distribute weight as evenly as possible;
- Wherever possible the laptop/tablet should be positioned on a firm surface, which is the right height for its use;
- You are advised to angle the laptop/tablet screen to minimise reflections;
- Ensure that you have enough space in front of the laptop/tablet device to rest your wrists and forearms whilst working;
- Take regular breaks, at least ten minutes in every hour;
- If any discomfort is experienced whilst using a laptop or tablet device, it must be reported immediately;
- Ensure that the laptop/tablet device is stored out of public gaze at all times.