

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through Faith, Hope, Love

At St Joseph's, we strive for academic excellence through encouraging resilience, empathy, aspiration and challenge. We have high expectations for ALL so that we can be 'The best we can be.' With Faith, Hope and Love at the heart of our school family, our children feel safe, secure and supported.



## COSHH Policy

St Joseph's is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

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<b>Other relevant policies:</b>	Health & Safety, Safeguarding

# **CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH) POLICY**

## **1. PURPOSE**

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 impose specific duties on employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health and safety of employees and others through eliminating hazardous materials from the workplace or substituting them for less hazardous alternatives.

Where this is not reasonably practicable, an assessment will be made to detail the establishment and maintenance of suitable control measures to reduce exposure to hazardous substances to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable.

This document explains the process to be followed at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in identifying, evaluating and preparing for the risks associated with the stocking and use of substances that might be harmful to health at work and the control measures that need to be in place to mitigate those risks.

## **2. PROCEDURE**

### **2.1 Policy**

The first requirement of COSHH is to prevent employees' exposure to substances hazardous to health where it is "reasonably practicable" i.e. the costs of reducing exposure would not be grossly disproportionate to the benefits.

No activities, where hazardous substances are used, produced or encountered, shall be carried out unless a suitable and sufficient COSHH assessment has been undertaken. This shall be done by a competent person and must consider ways of eliminating exposure or substituting a less harmful alternative.

The COSHH assessment for each activity undertaken within St Joseph's Catholic Primary School must be reviewed by a competent COSHH assessor in conjunction with the employee who has day to day, first-hand knowledge of the activity and understands it fully. At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School the COSHH assessor will be the Caretaker under the supervision of the Head teacher.

### **2.2 Hazardous Substances**

A hazardous substance is considered to be:

- Any chemical or product containing chemical which may be designated as toxic, corrosive, harmful or irritant ( these are normally highlighted by the use of these words under a black and orange symbol on the container or packaging);
- Any dust in significant quantities;
- Nanotechnologies
- Any substance allocated a workplace exposure limit (WEL) by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE);
- Any micro-organism involved in a working activity which creates

- a hazard to health;
- Other substances that can cause an ill effect e.g. fumes, gases and asphyxiating vapours.

Lead, Asbestos and Radioactive Substances are also hazardous to health and have specific government regulations which are not covered by this COSHH policy.

### 3 Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 Line Managers, including Teachers, Responsibilities

In controlling the risks from hazardous substances, line managers of staff, and Teachers are regarded as competent persons and have the following responsibilities:

- Identification of substances that may be harmful;
- Elimination or substitution of the substance to reduce the risk;
- Preparation of a suitable and sufficient COSHH assessment in consultation with the Caretaker;
- Implementation of control measures that are proportionate to the risks posed by that substance;

#### 3.2 Caretaker

In addition to the above measures the Caretaker, under the supervision of the Headteacher, will also be responsible for the following measures:

- To act as the competent COSHH assessor.
- Provision of information, instruction, training and supervision for employees in proportion to the risk associated with that substance;
- Arrangements of suitable labelling and storage;
- Monitoring and review of the effectiveness of arrangements in controlling the risk from hazardous substances;
- Keeping records of the above.

### 4. COSHH ASSESSMENTS

The following key principles will be adhered to in order to prevent or reduce exposure to COSHH

- Finding out what the health hazards are (**Identification**);
- Deciding how to prevent harm to health (**Assessment**);
- Providing **Control Measures** to reduce harm to health;
- Planning **Emergency Arrangements** in the event of an exposure;
- Making sure they are used (**Monitoring**);
- Keeping all control measures in good working order;
- Providing information, instruction and **Training** for employees and others;
- Providing monitoring and **Health Surveillance** in appropriate cases.
- Periodic **Review** of arrangements.

#### 4.1

##### Identification

All staff should be aware of how to identify substances that are used or generated on site. Staff should remember that not all substances come

in containers – some are produced naturally or by processes such as bodily fluids, sawing and drilling (dust) or exhaust fumes.

A generic list of materials may include:

- Cleaning materials e.g. bleach, detergents;
- Bodily fluids e.g. blood, vomit;
- Materials associated with conservation e.g. mould spores;
- Samples e.g. of carcasses, food;
- Arts and crafts materials e.g. solvents and dyes;
- Oils and greases e.g. lubricating oils;
- Paints and brush cleaning solutions e.g. thinners, white spirit;
- Design and technology materials e.g. wood dust;

#### 4.2 **Conducting an Assessment**

Where a substance has been identified the Caretaker, in consultation with the substance user, will complete a COSHH Assessment Record Form (Appendix A). Safety data sheets must be used in order to complete the assessment form.

There are a number of considerations which need to be included in the assessment which would be too extensive to detail in this document. Such considerations are detailed in Regulation 6 para 56 of 'The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002'; additional guidance on good practice in conducting the risk assessment can be found in leaflet INDG163 hyperlinked below for ease.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>

Both the assessment form and the safety data sheet, after being reviewed by the substance user, must then be filed by the Caretaker in a central location in the school office.

#### 4.3 **Control Measures**

In general terms, the most effective control measure should be adopted to eliminate or reduce exposure. Ideally this would be the withdrawal of the substance from use. Alternatively, the risk could be reduced by finding an alternative substance that will do the job required but is less hazardous. Other control measures may include:

- Allowing only competent personnel to handle the material;
- Containing the material in a fume cupboard or behind partitions;
- Using adequate ventilation;
- Personal hygiene e.g. not eating, drinking when using the substance;
- Issuing appropriate personal protective equipment. NB. This is regarded as a last resort where adequate control cannot be achieved by other reasonably practicable means.

#### 4.4 **Emergency Arrangements**

If, in spite of the use of control measures, leaks, spills or uncontrolled releases of hazardous substances occur, suitable means should be pre-identified and available to limit the extent of the risk to health or the pollution to the environment. Once adequate control has been regained the event should be reported to and investigated accordingly by the Headteacher in consultation with the substance user.

#### 4.5 **Maintenance, Examination and Testing of Controls**

The Headteacher, Caretaker and Line Managers will ensure that control measures are maintained, examined and tested by the COSHH assessment. Examples include:

- Visual checks of equipment e.g. weekly
- Observations of staff/pupils following procedures or using equipment and PPE to ensure compliance e.g. during audits, lesson observations etc. at various frequencies
- Inspection of PPE e.g. on a risk basis depending on duty/wear rates established from observation and manufacturers information
- Servicing intervals for equipment e.g. generally in line with manufacturer guidelines

The Caretaker will hold central records of examination and tests, which should be kept and available for inspection for at least 5 years.

The Governing Body, supported by the Head teacher are responsible for reviewing the working procedures periodically to confirm that they are still appropriate and workable, and establish whether they can be improved.

#### 4.6 **Health Surveillance**

The use of some substances within St Joseph's Catholic Primary School may require the health of users to be monitored to ensure that no ill-health effects occur. The areas where additional health surveillance may be specified are:

- Respiratory sensitisers (isocyanates);
- Skin sensitisers;
- Carcinogens (cancer causing substances);
- Herbicides (weedkillers).

Where there is a concern that an individual may have come into contact with any of the above then the incident should be referred to the Headteacher in order for the appropriate aid and surveillance to be sought.

#### 4.7 **Review of Assessment**

All COSHH assessments will be reviewed by the Headteacher at or before the planned review dates as specified in the assessment.

A review may also be prompted by circumstance such as:

- part of an accident or ill health investigation where hazardous substances are involved;
- a change to the substance e.g. supplied as powder instead of granules;
- evidence that existing control measures are inadequate.

#### 4.8 **TRAINING**

All individuals who carry out activities at St Joseph's Catholic Primary

School where hazardous substances are used, produced or encountered must be trained/briefed on the principles of COSHH.

The school administrator will record details of all training and briefings that have occurred in respect of COSHH.

All COSHH assessments and safety data sheets will be available for all individuals who require access to the information they contain. These documents will be held in the school office.

The Governors will ensure that adequate COSHH training is provided to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School staff as required.

## **6. CONTRACTORS**

Contractors on site at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School must practice that same standard of care as detailed above. The arrangements for compliance with the obligations imposed by the COSHH Regulations will be determined clearly by the Headteacher at the pre-tendering stage of any contract.

Contractors and others who will use or produce hazardous substances on site at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School must provide information where their activities may affect those located at the school site to the School Business Manager before work commences. The School Business Manager will ensure that the work being undertaken includes arrangements for the adequate control of risk from hazardous substances. All individuals who may be affected by the activity will be advised of the hazard and the precautions required.