

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

My Choice School is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all including school staff, students, visitors, contractors and any other person working in or on the premises. This statement is issued in accordance with:

- Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and associated regulations
- Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for Schools DfE 2022
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>
- HSE school trips and outdoor learning activities: tackling the health and safety myths

The aims of these general policy statements are accepted and the arrangements set out below are designed to implement the aims of My Choice School.

General Guidelines

It is the policy of My Choice School, so far as is reasonably practicable, to:

- Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment throughout the school.
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures among staff and students.
- Make arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risk to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- Ensure the provision of sufficient information, instruction and supervision to enable all employees and students to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety and to ensure that they have access to health and safety training as appropriate or as and when provided.
- Maintain all areas under the control of the Headteacher in a condition that is safe and without risk to health and to provide and maintain means of access to and egress from that place of work that are safe and without risk.
- Formulate effective procedures for use in case of fire and for evacuating the school premises.
- Lay down procedures to be followed in case of accident.

- Teach safety as part of student's duties where appropriate.
- To provide and maintain adequate welfare facilities and to make recommendations to the Head of Education and Directors as appropriate.

Employer
Responsibility of the Head of Education

The Head of Education is responsible for implementing this policy within the school.

The Head of Education delegates Health and Safety responsibility to staff e.g. Headteacher, Fire Warden, Appointed First Aider, TAs carrying out temperature checks of fridges and water and will monitor these responsibilities on a regular basis using the monthly Health and Safety check process.

In particular they will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the safety policy and the safe working practices described within it and shall revise and amend it, as necessary, on a regular basis.
- Prepare an emergency evacuation procedure and arrange for periodic practice evacuation drills (normally at least once a term) to take place and for the results of these to be recorded.
- Make arrangements to draw the attention of all staff employed at the school to the school safety policies and procedures and of any relevant safety guidelines and information issued by My Choice School.
- Make arrangements for the implementation of My Choice School's accident reporting procedure and draw this to the attention of all staff at the school as necessary.
- Make arrangements for informing staff and students, of relevant safety procedures. Other users of the school will be appropriately informed.
- Ensure that regular safety inspections are undertaken.
- Arrange for the withdrawal, repair or replacement of any item of furniture, fitting or equipment identified as being unsafe in the safety inspections.
- Ensure that staff report to the Headteacher, Head of Education and Maintenance Manager any defect in the state of repair of the buildings or their surrounds which is identified as being unsafe and make such interim arrangements as are reasonable to limit the risk entailed.
- Monitor, within the limits of their expertise, the activities of contractors, hirers and other organisations present on site, as far as is reasonably practicable.

- Identify any member of staff having direct responsibility for particular safety matters and any member of staff who is specifically delegated to assist the Headteacher in the management of health and safety at the school. Such delegates of responsibility must be defined as appropriate.

Duties of the Person Delegated to Assist in the Management of Health & Safety

The delegated person, such as the Headteacher, Fire Warden, Appointed First Aider, shall:

- Assist the Head of Education in the implementation, monitoring and development of the safety policy within the school.
- Monitor general safety advice on safety matters given by relevant bodies and advise on its application to the school.
- Co-ordinate arrangements for the design and implementation of safe working practices within the school.
- Investigate any specific health and safety problem identified within the school and take or recommend (as appropriate) remedial action.
- Order that a method of working ceases on health and safety grounds on a temporary basis subject to further consideration by the Headteacher and Head of Education.
- Assist in carrying out regular safety inspections of the school and its activities and make recommendations on methods of resolving any problems identified.
- Ensure staff with control of resources give due regard to safety, co-ordinate arrangements for the dissemination of information and for the instruction of employees, students, students and visitors on safety matters and to make recommendations on the extent to which staff are trained.

Responsibilities of Staff towards Students and Others

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

- Exercise effective supervision over all those for whom they are responsible, including students.
- Be aware of and implement safe working practices and to set a good example personally.
- Identify actual and potential hazards and introduce procedures to minimise the possibility of mishap.

- Ensure that any equipment or tools used are appropriate to that use and meet accepted safety standards.
- Provide written job instructions, warning notices and signs as appropriate
- Provide appropriate effective clothing and safety equipment as necessary and ensure that these are used as required.
- Minimise the occasions when an individual is required to work in isolation, particularly in a hazardous situation or on a hazardous process.
- Evaluate promptly and, where appropriate, take action on criticism of health and safety arrangements.
- Provide the opportunity for the discussion of health and safety arrangements.
- Investigate any accident (or incident where personal injury could have arisen) and take appropriate corrective action.
- Provide for adequate instruction, information and training in safe working methods and recommend suitable 'off the job' training.

N.B. When any member of staff considers that corrective action is necessary but that action lies outside the scope of their authority, they should refer the problem to the Headteacher and the Head of Education.

Responsibilities of All Employees

All employees have responsibility under the Act to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of any person who might be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Co-operate with the Head of Education, Headteacher and others in meeting statutory requirements, not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Make themselves aware of all safety rules, procedures and safe working practices applicable to their posts; where in doubt they must seek immediate clarification from the Headteacher.
- Ensure that tools and equipment are in good condition and report any defects to the Headteacher.
- Use protective clothing and safety equipment provided and ensure that these are kept in good condition.
- Ensure that offices, general accommodation and vehicles are kept tidy
- Ensure that any accidents, whether or not an injury occurs, and potential hazards are reported to the Headteacher.

Whenever an employee is aware of any possible deficiencies in health and safety arrangements they must draw these to the attention of the Headteacher and Head of Education.

Please note the following:

1. It must be realised that newly appointed employees could be particularly vulnerable to any risk and it must be ensured that all relevant health and safety matters are drawn to their attention at an early stage.
2. Whilst it is a management responsibility to instruct all employees in safe working procedures in relation to their posts and work places, employees may from time to time find themselves in unfamiliar environments. In such cases, the employee concerned should be particularly alert for hazards, and whenever possible, ensure they are accompanied by a person familiar with the environment or that they are advised of specific hazards.

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

1. Exercise personal responsibility for the safety of themselves and their fellow students.
2. Observe standards of dress consistent with safety and / or hygiene.
3. Observe all the safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of the school staff in the event of an emergency.
4. Use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with equipment provided for safety purposes.

N.B. The Headteacher, teachers and TAs will make students (and where appropriate the parents, carers or Social Workers) aware of these responsibilities through direct instruction and support.

Visitors

Regular visitors and other users of the premises (e.g. contractors and delivery personnel) are expected, as far as is reasonably possible, to observe the safety rules of the school.

Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedures

- The schools procedures for fire and emergency evacuation are on display within the school
- These procedures will be updated as appropriate
- The school has a **Fire Folder** with sections covering the recording and evaluation of practice and evacuation drills, records of equipment maintenance and checks, policies and procedures.

Fire Prevention Equipment

Arrangements are made to regularly monitor the condition of all fire prevention equipment. This would include the regular visual inspection of the fire extinguishers and the fire alarm system. The school's designated Fire Warden will carry out weekly inspections of the fire alarm, emergency light and fire extinguishers and this will be recorded in the Fire Folder located in the school's office. All fire prevention equipment will be inspected and serviced on an annual basis by an approved contractor.

First Aid and Accident Reporting Procedures

- First aid supplies are available in the school's office, classrooms and educational visit backpacks and cars.
- All staff within the school are trained in First Aid with at least one person trained as the Appointed Person. In addition all staff will undertake basic first aid training online during their induction.
- The person responsible for administering the accident reporting procedure, the notification of serious accidents and dangerous occurrences including those reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) is the Headteacher. The accident book and report forms and the arrangements to be followed if the person injured is unable to complete an accident report form or who is not an employee of My Choice Children's Homes Ltd are to be found in the office.
- The arrangements for first aid for sports, outdoor pursuits and educational visits are the responsibility of the supervising staff and will be planned and risk assessed by the teacher.

Supporting Student's Medical Needs

Details of students' medical needs are recorded on the **School Admissions** form in the **Student File** and recorded on the **Health Care** and **Medication forms** in the Medication File as appropriate.

Procedures for administering medicine to students are located in the Medication File and in the Medication Policy. Record keeping responsibility is that of the Headteacher, teacher and TAs. All staff undertake online Medication training.

Health & Safety Emergencies

Health and safety emergencies must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and, as appropriate, emergency services will be notified.

The school has a Maintenance Team who operate an emergency on call system, this can be used to prioritise emergency works within the school.

Maintenance/Examination/Test of Plant & Electrical Equipment

My Choice Children's Home's Ltd arrange for the **Electrical Mains Installation** to be tested by a suitably qualified contractor every three years.

Portable Appliance Testing will take place annually.

An approved qualified contractor will be appointed to test the equipment and provide a certificate of inspection on completion of works. Any remedial works required will be reported to the Head of Education and Maintenance Manager.

Workplace Safety for Staff, Student & Visitors

The following general safety rules must be observed by all staff and students whilst on the premises of My Choice School. They must also be followed (as appropriate) by all visitors and contractors whilst they are present on the premises:

- All equipment is to be operated in a safe manner.
- All fire doors must be kept closed.
- Work areas are to be kept tidy, gangways, hallways, stairs /steps etc to be kept clear and fire exits unobstructed.
- Safety and first aid equipment must not be abused.
- Materials are to be stored in a safe manner. Paper storage and waste paper must be kept in a manner which prevents a fire hazard being created.
- 'No Smoking' regulations must be maintained in all areas.
- All cabling must be protected and positioned in a safe manner.
- Equipment/hand tools etc are not to be used when unserviceable.
- Equipment is only to be operated by those trained or those under supervision whilst receiving training.
- The use of protective clothing and equipment are to be used when the work task demands it.
- Where the use of portable electrical appliances is necessary they must be switched off when unattended.
- Strict safety precautions must be followed if handling flammable or toxic chemicals in accordance with COSHH regulations.
- Flammable or toxic chemicals must always be stored in a locked and fire retardant cupboard in accordance with COSHH regulations.
- Movement of furniture or equipment must not be undertaken by any employee of My Choice School without the authority of the Headteacher.

ALL ACCIDENTS, NEAR MISSES, HAZARDS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY

The above list is not exhaustive and may be extended from time to time.

Risk Assessments

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

In order to reduce and eliminate risks arising from hazards, the Head of Education and Headteacher will undertake risk assessments to identify suitable control measures. These risk assessments will be updated annually or more frequently as need arises.

Risk assessments will cover the following areas:

Head of Education

- Health and Safety in classrooms and on the school site, including school activities
- Location Risk assessment for the surrounding town and area
- Risks relating to students and staff that impact on Health and Safety

Headteacher and teachers

Educational visits (updated each term and reviewed twice a term at minimum)

The extent of the assessment will depend upon the complexity of the hazards and the degree of risk involved.

Risk assessments will be completed by taking into account the following:

- Location and activities
- Hazards and risks identified
- The people at risk
- The worst outcome of particular hazard
- The likelihood / probability of harm occurring from particular hazard or risk
- Control measures to be put in place to reduce the risk
- Score: level of risk before implementation of risk reduction and level of risk after implementation of risk reduction.
- Date of Review

- Signatures of staff

COSHH

The Headteacher & Head of Education will make an assessment of the risks arising from the use of hazardous substances and control exposure to all, considering what hazardous substances are being used. These may be labelled as toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant. The supplier must, by law, provide a data sheet on the hazardous substances, giving information about how they could cause harm e.g. inhalation or skin contact; they type of ill effect which could result, precautions to be taken in use and storage and disposal.

Hazardous substances at the school will be limited to household cleaning products and kitchen / laundry products for science (eg salt, starch, white vinegar, iodine)

All hazardous items are stored in a secure COSHH cupboard.

A Cleaning Operative is employed by the school to clean the school site.

Violence toward Staff

The Directors / Head of Education / Headteacher of My Choice School have a responsibility towards their school employees, students and other staff to take measures to prevent and minimise the risk of violence or harassment perpetrated by students, parents / carers, and / or members of the public. This policy covers all staff, irrespective of whether they hold permanent or temporary or contractor roles.

Definitions of violence adopted by My Choice School are:

- Physical assault: attempted assault with or without a weapon, resulting in actual physical harm to the employee at a level of bruising; cuts; lacerations; hair pulling or more serious injury.
- Physical abuse: attempted assault with or without a weapon which did not result in actual physical harm to the employee.
- Sexual Assault: sexual assault resulting in actual physical harm or physical contact of the employee.
- Sexual Abuse: sexual harassment or other forms of inappropriate sexual behaviour which did not result in actual physical harm or contact of the employee.
- Threats: written or verbal, or by actions to the person or to the property or both.
- Property damage or thefts: to the property of the employee

- Any form of physical contact (including sexual) assault, or psychological abuse, or threats, not contained in the above, which the employee considers to have been sufficiently serious to warrant concern.

The Head of Education and Headteacher acknowledge that they have a legal duty of care towards those who work at and attend the school, and a responsibility to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that the school is a safe place in which both staff and students may work without fear of being subjected to violence or aggression.

In close consultation with the staff the Head of Education and Headteacher will maintain a continuing programme of risk assessment aimed at identifying risks from violence and controlling these at an acceptable level within available resources.

Staff are expected read and follow all risk assessments and to dynamically risk assess all situations.

All school staff are expected to follow direction during incidents, and before potential incidents, in order to reduce the risk of violence. This direction will include the Help Protocol as identified in the Team Teach training – **More help is available** - which must always be followed.

Staff must ensure that they work to the best of their ability to reduce triggers, provide environmental safety and manage incidents.

All school staff will be advised of this policy by the Head of Education during their induction and annually thereafter following reviews. The school staff will be made aware through the course of their work of systems of monitoring, evaluating and reviewing carried out by the Head of Education within the school.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are made aware of any change in circumstance on a daily basis which may influence the risk of violence or aggressive behaviour.

Incidents of violence towards staff should be reported to the Headteacher immediately and incidents will be recorded on CPOMS. The Headteacher will then report to the Head of Education and discussion will be held regarding review of risk assessments and measures to identify and reduce risk.

Being the subject of violent or aggressive behaviour will not be regarded as indicative of any failure or weakness on the part of the member of staff concerned, who will be supported and encouraged in coming to terms with any such incident. The Directors, Headteacher and Head of Education recognise that perceptions of violence vary as do reactions to it.

Every incident of probable violence or aggression must be reported and considered against the definitions given above. Each will be followed up accordingly. Members of staff will be expected to bring to the attention of the Headteacher, Head of Education or other member of the management team any hazard, risks or problems which they become aware of while undertaking their duties.

All members of staff shall assess the inherent risk to themselves in each situation and to ensure their own safety.

Any member of staff, or student of the school, who perpetrates an act of violence against an employee or a student will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary or behaviour management procedure.

Policy link

Risk Assessment

Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan

Fire Safety

Medication

Educational Visits

Employee Handbook - Positive Work Environment

Reviewed May 2025

Reviewed May 2026

Review due June 2027