



Science Department Health and Safety Policy

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Summary guidelines for staff

All teachers and support staff

1. Teachers have a general duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, of other members of staff and of students. They have specific duties: to be familiar with this health and safety policy, its updates, the texts to which it refers and any Appendices. They must cooperate with the employer's instructions, observe the requirements of this policy and fulfil any special responsibilities it gives them. They must cooperate with colleagues in their specific health & safety duties. They have a duty to report to local management any failure of equipment that has a health & safety function. A teacher must assess risks in before conducting any practical.
2. Staff practice must set a good example to students and be consistent with student's laboratory rules, e.g., over the wearing of eye protection.
3. Staff must be familiar with emergency drills and with the location in each science room of: the escape route; fire-fighting equipment; eye wash station; the main gas cock; the main electricity switch and the nearest spill kit.
4. Laboratories must be left safe. Special arrangements must be made for equipment which has to be left running overnight and hazardous equipment which has to be left out. In general, all gas taps should be completely turned off and all mains-operated apparatus switched off. At the end of the day, if practicable, gas should also be turned off at the laboratory main gas cock and electricity at the laboratory main switch.
5. Eating, drinking and the application of cosmetics should not take place in laboratories, storage areas or preparation rooms unless an area in which it is safe to do so has been created. Students should be allowed to drink from water bottles.
6. When staff are alone in the science department, nothing should be done which could lead to an accident requiring remedial measures. A teacher or technician must assess risks before conducting any practical operation in such circumstances.
7. In general, students must not be left unsupervised in a laboratory.
8. Preparation rooms and stores must be locked by staff where possible, when not in use. Special arrangements must be made if access is required to a fire-escape route. Students must never be allowed into preparation rooms unless 100% supervision can be guaranteed.

Teachers

1. At the beginning of each school year, teachers must make sure that their classes are familiar with the student laboratory rules and they should be displayed in classrooms.
2. Teachers must enforce the student laboratory rules, reminding students of them often enough for them to be familiar. With new students, time should be spent explaining the rules, with appropriate demonstrations.
3. Lesson preparation should be adequate and include checking on risk assessments and, where necessary, the health & safety precautions required.
4. Open-ended investigations must be organised so that the teacher can assess any risks and identify precautions before any hazards are met / practical work begins.
5. If health and safety cannot be maintained during certain practical work, the work should be modified or abandoned.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

September 2021

1. The role of this policy

This *Science Department Health & Safety Policy* should be read in conjunction with the school's general health & safety policy, the school's own health and safety policy. The purpose of this document is to record the arrangements made in the science department to implement the policy.

This document is maintained by the science department. It is made available to all new members of staff working in the department.

2. General aims

Science teaching has an excellent health & safety record in this department. However, it is the duty of all members of the science staff:

- to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions during work;
- to be familiar with this health & safety policy by periodic reference to it
- to look out for any revisions;
- to follow its provisions, and
- to cooperate with the school and any other members of staff in promoting good standards of health and safety performance.

3. Health and safety roles

3.1 Duties, functions and tasks

The employer has the ultimate duty to ensure the health and safety of employees and others on the site (and hence in this department).

3.2 Communications

It is acknowledged that communication of health & safety information is of the greatest importance and is the task of the Heads of department.

3.3 Monitoring and checking

The policy should be reviewed annually or following breaches of health and safety.

All staff must report near misses and incidents that posed/pose hazard/potential hazard to health. This is done via the spreadsheet located in Google drive Science safety/Incident reporting. A near miss is an incident that occurred which *could* have caused injury and did not, or the injury sustained had the potential to be far worse (for example a tray falling grazing and missing you narrowly). An incident is anything that might cause/caused injury and required medical/intervention from a member of staff. You must also report any incident/near miss to head of department directly via email.

4. Training policy

Heads of department are responsible for keeping up to date with Health and safety developments in Science teaching and disseminating relevant information to other staff in the department. Records of the training received by members of the science staff will be kept on the school's PDF spreadsheet.

5. Risk assessments

Schools must undertake risk assessments before any hazardous activity takes place.

Whenever a new course is adopted or developed, all activities (including preparation and clearing-up work) are checked against the model risk assessments and significant findings are incorporated into texts in daily use, i.e., the scheme of work/ worksheets

Other activities such as field trips and science clubs but these should be undertaken only once a specific risk assessment has been produced.

6 Equipment and resources

6.1 Fume cupboards

Fume cupboards that are regularly in use should be serviced

6.2 Electrical testing

This should take place in line with the school health and safety policy

6.3 Radioactive sources

None kept

6.4 Pressure vessels

Autoclaves, pressure cookers and model steam engines need periodic inspection. schools

6.5 Equipment safety

All staff selecting equipment for purchase will check that it is safe and suitable for the intended purpose

Equipment restricted to those users who have received special training is given warnings in texts in daily use.

Any user who discovers a hazardous defect in an item of equipment must report it to the Head of department.

6.6 a Sharps, and dangerous equipment

When using scalpels or other sharp/dangerous implements: Scalpels, kitchen knives, hypodermic needles, hammers.

the teacher will count the equipment out and in. It should be stored securely in the prep room.

This list is not exhaustive and staff are expected to use common sense if the use of a less common item not listed here clearly fall into the same category and should be handled with the same care.

6.7 Personal protective equipment

The school will provide eye protection, gloves and laboratory coats for employees where the risk assessment requires them. The school will also provide eye protection for students and visitors. Suitable eye and face protection will be provided by the school. The condition of the eye protection is checked regularly

6.8 Chemicals

The task of arranging safe storage of chemicals (and, where necessary, disposal), including highly- flammable liquids, is given to the Head of department who will ensure that chemicals are stored securely, the risks of fire, explosion and spillage are minimised, labels are readable and that a spill kit is available, monitored and properly replenished.

6.9 Waste disposal

Waste chemicals and equipment are disposed of in an environmentally-responsible manner in accordance with relevant legislation.

7 Activities and procedures

7.1 Outdoor activities

When planning any field trips etc., staff will produce risk assessments

7.2 Manual handling and working at height

In conjunction with school Health and safety policy

7.3 Security

Access to laboratories and preparation rooms will be appropriately controlled. All laboratories which are left open are cleared of significant hazards, including shutting-off all services when supervision by a qualified science teacher comes to an end.

7.4 Concern for others

All science areas are made safe for cleaners or contractors to work in before these persons are allowed to proceed.

8. Emergency procedures

8.1 Fire

Science staff will follow the normal school procedures in case of major fires. All science staff are trained to deal with minor bench fires, clothing fires and hair fires.

8.2 Spills

Trivial spills are dealt with using damp cloths or paper towels. Spills of any amount which do not give rise to significant quantities of toxic or highly-flammable fumes ('minor spills') are dealt with by teachers.

Major spills are those involving the escape of toxic gases and vapours or of flammable gases and vapours in significant concentrations require the contacting of emergency services by reception.

8.3 Injury

Science staff will follow the normal school procedures in cases that require first aid. Science staff must be trained to carry out immediate remedial measures (e.g. eye rinsing), while waiting for first aiders, after incidents which occur in science.

8.4 Reporting procedures

Injuries or suspected injuries to a student or a member of staff, dangerous occurrences and instances of damage or theft will be reported using the standard school procedures. Following an incident, particularly involving an injury to a student or a member of staff,

Dangerous situations and incidents which might have resulted in injury ('near-misses') should be reported to the Head of department via email and the above procedure section 3.3. These will be analysed and discussed at departmental meetings and, where appropriate, an Incident Report form will be completed and forwarded, through normal school procedures.

9. Laboratory rules for students

The rules for students during science lessons are as follows.

SAFETY CODE - THE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The laboratory is a much safer place to work if you follow this code

Before the lesson starts you must:

1. **Never** go into a laboratory without **permission**.
2. **Always** walk in the laboratory.
3. **Always** remove/secure your coat, watch, jewellery etc. as appropriate.
4. **Always** fasten loose clothing, etc.
5. **Always** tie back long hair or use an appropriate hair clip, etc.
6. **Always** wear sensible shoes.
7. **Always** put your bag under the bench or where your teacher tells you

During the lesson you must:

1. **Always** know exactly what you are doing. If not, ask the teacher.
2. **Always** follow instructions.
3. **Always** work sensibly and quietly to minimise hazards and in order that instructions can be heard.
4. **Always** wear safety goggles/glasses when heating anything, working with chemicals or when told to do so.
5. **Always** wear a lab coat when necessary or when specifically told to do so.
6. **Always** push your chair under the bench if you leave your seat for any reason.
7. **Always** stand when you are doing practical work and put your chair under the bench.
8. **Always** report an accident or breakage immediately. If you spill anything on yourself, immediately wash with water and call for the teacher's help.
9. **Never** put anything in your mouth. Do not eat, drink or chew.
10. **Never** interfere with apparatus.
11. **Never** put glass or solids down the sink.
12. **Never** sit on benches unless instructed to do so for demonstration purposes.
13. **Never** remove a safety screen or safety notices.
14. **Always** wash and thoroughly dry your hands whenever appropriate.

At the end of the lesson:

1. **Always** wipe the benches if they are wet.
2. **Always** wash your hands at the end of the lesson if necessary
3. **Always** leave the laboratory clean and tidy.