

Title	Producing a School Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHAW) Policy	
Date of issue	November 2019 v2.0	Last review: April 2024 - AKHB
Issue number		
Type of document	Guidance	
Author(s)	Version one:	Nick Wilding (previous H&S Advisor)
	Version two:	Nina Bickerton (Suffolk maintained Schools' Health and Safety Advisor)
Contact details	Nina.bickerton@suffolk.gov.uk	
Contents	<p>1.0 The Law – an introduction</p> <p>2.0 Health and Safety Management – an efficient approach</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">2.1 Hazard, risk, and benefits</p> <p>3.0 Structuring the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Statement of Intent ▪ Organisation ▪ Arrangements <p>4.0 A template for Headteacher reports to Governors</p> <p>5.0 The Nine Term Plan and “Plan, Do, Check, Act”</p> <p>6.0 Resources, glossary and contact details</p>	
Intended audience	Any school, PRU or academy in Suffolk	
Date for review	November 2025	
<p>We will on request produce this policy / procedure, or particular parts of it, in other languages and formats, in order that everyone can use and comment upon its content.</p>		

This guidance:

- Sets out the purpose of a school's Safety, Health and Wellbeing policy (SHAW)
- Provides advice on how to structure a policy
- Provides a set of ideas to help fill out the framework with relevant, school specific information.

1.0 The Law – an introduction

In a maintained school in Suffolk, the **employer's** legal duties are placed on Suffolk County Council. In turn, through the formal Scheme of Delegation, certain responsibilities are placed on governing bodies and headteachers. In order for the system to work effectively, a school should set out its arrangements and this is best done in the SHAW policy.

Whilst having a policy is not a strictly a maintained school's *legal* responsibility, the County Council considers it to be an essential element of a school's SHAW management system. It is a document which is always looked for during auditing and inspections.

The County Council is not the 'employer' in respect of voluntary aided schools, academies, free or independent schools. For these establishments the legal duty to write and maintain a SHAW policy lies with either the Governors, the Trust or Sponsor.

Health and Safety law in England is dictated by the **Health and Safety at Work Act (etc) 1974**, and its subsidiary Regulations, such as the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**.

2.0 Health and Safety Management – an efficient approach

Successful management of health and safety is affected by many things, but it does of course require resources. That doesn't necessarily mean cash, and many issues can be resolved by setting up procedures that require no funding at all. Nevertheless, 'resource' does include staff and governors' time, their skills, and their knowledge. Equipment may also be required. These resources, together with the organisation to make use of them, are needed to provide a **system** which gives a reasonable assurance that hazards don't present unacceptable risks.

The County Council believes:

- The **benefit** (not just the risk) of activities in school should be taken into full account during planning;
- Children should not be 'wrapped in cotton wool' by the removal of all the hazards that could affect **beneficial** school activities;
- Children **benefit** from understanding and experiencing risk;
- Children **benefit** by being involved in managing their own risks during in school activities;
- Children **benefit** by learning outside the classroom;
- We should not try to eliminate hazards completely if that prevents **benefits** for children and young people, but to manage the risk so that the benefit of activities can be realised;
- Activities which **benefit** young people can involve an understood level of risk which is managed and acceptable;
- Staff must be **competent**, so they have the confidence to identify and manage risk using **proportionate** controls;
- Headteachers must be **competent** and have the confidence in the **management of risk**, supporting and encouraging staff and being able to balance the expectations and potential concerns of governors and parents.

Definition corner

Hazard and Risk

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm.

Risk is a measure of the likelihood of an injury, together with consideration of the severity.

When a person is undertaking an assessment of risk, they should consider the most likely type of injury that could result from an activity. They would consider a risk to be unacceptable if the injury is too severe and too likely, bearing in mind the benefit that the activity provides. The controls in place to manage the risk should be proportionate and, if they are, the risk would be acceptable.

For example – driving a car. The most likely injury depends on the kind of journey, but for the sake of this example, a motorway journey carries a risk of very serious injury. Thinking about the number of serious injuries per mile travelled on the motorway, the likelihood is very small. Subjectively, the benefit of getting from A to B could be immense. The controls in place are the training of the driver, the use of seat belts, speed limits and the design of the car and the road, together with the 'rules of the road'. Therefore, the reasonable person considers the risk to be acceptable.

Being a passenger in a minibus carries a lower risk of injury than being a passenger in a car, yet some parents refuse to let their children travel in minibuses even though the benefit of the educational visit to the child could be life changing. Additional controls exist for minibuses including the competence and experience of the driver, the lower speed limit (electronically restricted to 62 mph) and the County Council's driver assessment scheme.

2.1 Hazard, risk, and benefits

The process of competently weighing the elements of risk and benefit requires **relevant information** which is why the County Council refers to sources such as [CLEAPSS](#), [AfPE](#), [EVOLVE](#), the [Outdoor Education Advisor's Panel](#), the [Health and Safety Executive](#) and so on. All these references can be accessed through the [Suffolk Learning](#) website. The school's SHAW management system should enable those who undertake risk assessments are able to refer to the right guidance. It should also ensure through monitoring that the guidance is implemented.

By using a clear system, the management of SHAW allows a more efficient, reliable and organised use of resources. The human factor is a frequent and significant component which contributes to incidents and injuries. People forget things, they may be busy or distracted, they react instinctively to circumstances and they consciously or unwittingly break rules. A systematic and efficient approach to managing health and safety can eliminate or reduce the impact of human factors. This has the potential for making a real impact on the frequency and severity of incidents. Writing down the arrangements made to control a risk can make it possible for a new member of staff to maintain the same standard of safety that was achieved by a predecessor. That standard of safety may have been achieved after investigating an incident and learning from an unfortunate experience.

In addition to human factors, maintenance work and routine checks on the correct use of equipment and procedures, etc. should be continually timetabled into a school's calendar. This will reduce the risk that the work is forgotten, or deadlines overlooked.

3.0 Structuring the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

By using a structured approach to your school's policy, your system for health and safety management can be clearly recorded. The Health and Safety Executive promote a model which is well known in the business world – that of '**Plan, Do, Check, Act**' (PDCA). Within that model, a three-tiered policy can be written:

1. **The Statement of Intent** – 'Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing promise'
2. **The Organisation** – 'Who is responsible for it'
3. **The Arrangements** 'What we will do and how we will do it'

The Statement of Intent is a one page, clear and brief document which outlines the duty that the school has in terms of health and safety, alongside the recognition of those duties and a precis of how

it will be done. A snapshot of Suffolk County Council’s Statement is below, and in the pages that follow, an example of a school Statement can be found.

The Organisation part of the Policy will concern itself with (literally) the detail of how the organisation is structured – who the key players are and what they are expected to do.

For simplicity and effectiveness, the SHAW structure should match the general management structure closely. Responsibility for health and safety must be an integral part of everyone’s role, not a ‘bolt-on’ for the unlucky few.

Finally, the HSE recommends the policy contains an **Arrangements** section which contains a record of the specific procedures the school has made to ensure that important items such as monitoring the condition of premises and consultation with staff are formally undertaken. The document below contains a reasonably comprehensive list of paragraphs which a school’s policy should cover.

You are probably wondering what happened to the ‘Plan, Do, Check, Act’ (PDCA) model....well if you’re familiar with the **Nine Term Plan**, you will see within that, the **PDCA** features each school term, and reflects your **Statement of Intent, your Arrangements, and your Organisation** of Health and Safety. The Nine Term Plan is detailed at the end of



Figure 1: The SCC 2019 SHAW Statement of Intent

Definition Corner

The Nine Term Plan:

A Suffolk County Council model which assists schools and academies in planning their health, safety and wellbeing management, based on a three-year cycle. See below and give it a go!

this document.

Some notes on Governors’ Involvement... In a school it is crucial for governors to be involved in the management of health, safety and wellbeing. Individual school governing bodies may make their own specific system (see the **9 Term plan**) which may involve tasks ranging from periodic inspection of premises to the detailed examination of policies, incident investigation and the review of risk assessments. In general terms, the governing body’s role is as a “critical friend” with a strategic eye. **They need to support the school in its management of SHaW.**

Every school will have its own approach and there is no definitive description of the role of governors in health and safety management. Their involvement may range from planning to spend the school’s budget to deal with a major SHAW need such

as the installation of a new fire alarm system, to the checking of individual lesson plans to check that risk assessment information refers to County Council or national advice. The governor’s role can vary over time, but the details of the involvement in health and safety management should be recorded in the school’s policy.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing training for Governors is held every term (one session in each of the County's areas) and you can source this via Governor Services at Endeavour House. Whole Governing Body training for individual schools can be carried out as a bespoke session – contact the Schools' Health and Safety Advisor for this (contact details can be found at the end of this document).

There is a template for the Headteacher's termly SHaW report for Governors at the end of this document.

An outline of a suitable Safety, Health and Wellbeing policy follows – the first page is a **sample School's Statement of Intent (maintained schools) – ensure you tailor it to fit your own setting.**

Where the following example reads 'Governing Body', this should read 'Management Committee' for a PRU.

NB: It is not necessary to provide a copy to each person, but it must be provided if requested. It is generally sufficient to make the document readily available to ALL staff and to therefore notify them where it can be found.

It is best practice to display the Statement of Intent in a prominent position, on the staff SHaW notice board and / or in the school reception.

EXAMPLE Statement of Intent and Commitment – Safety, Health and Wellbeing

(Insert school / PRU name here)

The Governors and Headteacher acknowledge and accept that:

1. Suffolk County Council has the prime responsibility for safety, health and wellbeing, and that the Governing Body (***management committee in the case of a PRU***) and Headteacher have specific responsibilities to manage this at school level. These responsibilities must be laid out in the scheme of delegation for the school, and are covered in general terms in the County Council's scheme of delegation.

They also have responsibilities to fulfill the duties contained in the scheme of delegation and shall

- support the published policies and aims of the County Council, and
- promote continuous improvement in the health and safety performance, and
- learn from the experiences of others with the overall aim of updating procedures and arrangements to meet high standards of health and safety management and risk control.

2. The headteacher, as Local Health and Safety Coordinator, will ensure that guidance, codes of practice and other advice from Suffolk County Council are implemented.

3. The governing body will ensure that the headteacher is supported and assisted in implementing the policy, advice and guidance of Suffolk County Council and will fulfil its own responsibilities for safety, health and wellbeing of all those who may be affected by the way the school is managed.

This duty extends to ensuring that:

- working conditions and environment
- substances used
- equipment provided, and
- working methods adopted

do not impair the well-being of any employee, or any other person including pupils, clients, contractors, visitors, volunteers and any member of the public who may be affected by the conduct of its work.

This document must be made available to all staff in the school.

This policy document has been adopted by the governing body and is signed by the Chair on its behalf.

_____ (Chair of Governors)

The Headteacher, as the Local Health and Safety Coordinator for the workplace, also signs the policy.

_____ (Headteacher)

DATE THAT THIS POLICY WAS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY

...../...../.....

VERSION NUMBER:

.....

Guidance for the Organisation section of the policy:

The Headteacher has **responsibility** for day-to-day management of health and safety issues and can be known as the **Local Health and Safety Coordinator**.

All staff should have regard to their own health and safety and that of others including pupils, clients, visitors and colleagues. They should communicate any concerns to the appropriate person or to the headteacher so that hazards can be dealt with quickly. This is a legal obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (s.7).

Health and safety duties form part of the job of every employee. The level of duty is directly related to the level of the post in the school's organisation and follows the overall management structure of the school. For example, a head of department or subject coordinator therefore has an implied higher level of responsibility than a teaching assistant even if the SHaW policy doesn't provide specific detail. Job descriptions do not have to be altered to reflect the duties for health and safety commensurate with the grade of the post.

The 'Organisation' section of the school SHaW policy needs to detail (on the form below) who is responsible for what SHaW task. Staff can then approach the relevant person if there are queries about that topic and there is an auditable trail in terms of that responsibility.

A note regarding SHaW training:

Overall training responsibility may be allocated to a number of people. Induction training can be a routine line management responsibility, continuous professional development and technical training may be coordinated separately. Arrangements for general training such as fire safety or manual handling training should also be included in the policy. What is important is that an annual training needs analysis is carried out to ensure that requirements are identified and met within a reasonable period of time.

Staff should be trained (informally or formally) to a level in which they understand the role they are to fulfil. Every staff member should have core SHaW training such as fire precaution awareness so that they may be able to keep themselves and others safe. Suffolk Learning outlines the types of training which may be useful for staff within schools, to include Premises Management training for Heads and / or Business Managers, Positive Management of Mental Health in the Workplace for anyone with line management responsibilities, and Risk Assessment for anyone undertaking those duties. The Schools' Health and Safety Advisor will also arrange bespoke sessions for individual schools as required.

EXAMPLE THE ORGANISATION OF SHaW RESPONSIBILITIES' AT XXXXXX SCHOOL

Task	Name of person responsible	Job title of person responsible
SHaW System & Policy review		
Health and safety committee and/or governor committees		
Communication and information management		
Critical Incident Management		
H&S Training, induction and refreshers		
Personal safety – to include challenging behaviour and lone working		
Planned checks / procedures on premises / equipment		
Risk assessments for managed moves, EOTAS and excluded pupils		
Infection Control		
Incident reporting / investigation		
Coordination of risk assessment work		
Fire procedures including personal emergency evacuation plans		
Locally organised premises maintenance, repair and improvement		
First Aid (training organisation and equipment)		
Vehicle control and pedestrian safety on site		
Educational visits coordinator (EVC)		
Stress, Mental Health and Wellbeing		
School Minibus		
Child Protection Co-ordinator		
Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school		
Premises Security		
Contractors on site		
Outside lettings		
Other (specify)		
High Schools Only – Radiation Protection Supervisor		

Definition Corner

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee

This committee could be a premises committee, resources or other committee. It might also be a full health and safety committee; whichever group holds these discussions it is important to ensure that health, safety and welfare management issues considered are not solely to do with the condition of the premises. A full health and safety committee includes members from the staff, the governors, the nominated trade union representatives and any staff with specific health and safety duties.

Guidance for the 'Arrangements' section of the policy

The Arrangements section of a school ShaW policy is basically 'how we do things'. It should explain how the school manages specific areas of health and safety which need to either have a standalone policy for itself or can be detailed within this policy.

For instance, a series of headings follows, each of which is followed by questions or statements which can be used as the prompt for the school's **own** statements. The adoption of the 9 Term Plan (see later) will constitute a solid and clear system for implementing the Arrangements. Critical elements such as the asbestos management procedures will be easily programmed into normal day to day school life.

SHaW Policy Review

Ask yourselves:

- Is the school's SHAW policy reviewed and updated no less than annually? **(At each review the school should formally adopt the new policy and renew the relevant signatures)**
- Does the review process incorporate views from the staff?
- Are targets included in the policy document reflected in the school's development plan and any other prime strategic documents?
- Is the school's policy document displayed openly and discussed with the staff annually, so that all are aware and may comment on the intentions and plans?

- **Relevant mainly to secondary schools** - Are there clear links between the school's general policy and the policies of the individual departments or faculties within the school? The policies should cross-refer where appropriate and the departmental statements should be subsidiary to the school's main document. Heads of department should be explicitly identified as responsible for the subsidiary documents. Science, Design Technology, Art and Sport carry specific risks associated with practical work and are the subject of extensive additional guidance for which heads of department are responsible and **to which they must respond**.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing / Welfare Committee, or Governor Groups / Committees

Ask yourselves:

- Does the school have a termly group or committee meeting including governors that considers health, safety and welfare issues? Does the group monitor progress regarding any targets identified in the current edition of the school's h&s policy and other information?
- Have the Terms of Reference for the committee been reviewed and do they adequately cover the functions that the school needs for the SHAW system to be effective and complete.
- Are the proceedings of the meetings formally recorded and action points brought forward for review?
- Does the Headteacher present a termly report in the recommended format for health and safety to the whole governing body?
- Does the committee review the school's incident records for each term, and for each year, to identify any patterns or other indicators requiring management attention?

- Does the Committee / Group liaise with the Schools' Health and Safety Advisor?

- Do the governors review the content of the Governors' web site provided by Governors' Services?

Communication and Information Management:

Ask yourselves:

- Is there a procedure for the routine checking for updates to the health and safety guidance?
- The school must have a system to ensure relevant **health and safety information is passed to on to the relevant people within the school**. Records about where curriculum subject specific information is kept should be stored for reference. Heads of department or subject co-ordinators must acknowledge their specific responsibility for managing curriculum subject specific information and keeping the school's health and safety committee or local health and safety coordinator informed about new information and guidance received.
- The school health and safety policy can be made available to staff by various means. Placing a copy of the policy on the staff room noticeboard may not enable all staff to access it – not all staff may use the staff room. It is also possible that some staff cannot read or may not have the time to look at larger documents. Cleaners, caretakers and midday supervisors, for example, may need to have a briefing session with access to a printed copy of the policy for later reference.
- What arrangements exist for local consultation with trade union representatives on health and safety matters relating to all staff? Are these arrangements detailed within the school's SHaW policy document?
- Is there a specific notice board, room, file, etc. for general health and safety information that any member of staff may refer to at any time? Items might include:
 - The school's health and safety policy
 - A copy of the "Health and Safety Law – What you should know" leaflet (which may be issued to all staff or, at least, brought to the attention of the staff). Alternatively, the school may opt to display the poster of the same name (**NB – this poster is optional as long as the leaflets are available**)
 - Notes from the school's health and safety committee meetings
 - Poster displays or other awareness raising, etc. campaigns
 - The names of the trade union or association representatives within the school
 - Incident reporting procedure
 - Where the SHaW webpages are on Suffolk Learning
 - A precis of your Organisation section of the policy (see table above)

*The school's health and safety policy and leaflet can be circulated to staff by electronic means (and 'electronic signature' can be used to register that the each individual has seen it). The school must ensure that **all** individuals and groups of staff are properly informed and therefore a variety of means of distribution should be considered. It is neither necessary nor desirable that each employee should have a paper copy of the school's general policy document as these can end up being 'shelved' and out of date.*

Critical Incident Management and temporary staffing absences

Ask yourselves:

- Are the county's guidelines followed and are staff aware of the advice?
- Has the school made reliable arrangements to cover the occasional (but foreseeable) absence of key staff so that first aid provision, medical needs and security are maintained? This may be due to planned absence, industrial action or 'emergencies' of any kind.

Health and Safety Induction Training

Ask yourselves:

Whether all staff have received an appropriate induction training or awareness, including training that is matched to their specific work and responsibilities. Members of staff who are new to the school, particularly those with management responsibilities, will need a comprehensive induction. There is an **Induction Checklist** available on

Suffolk Learning (details at the end of this document) but the Arrangements Section of the policy should detail the following, which includes both basic and more specialised criteria. **Those items in bold are seen as crucial to all staff.**

- **Overview of the school's health and safety policy and organisational structure**
- **Tour of the premises**
- **Current health and safety priorities for the school**
- **Communication and relationships with other departments, schools and Suffolk County Council.**
- **General health and safety advice, including the school's own guidance and that from the LA**
- **The use of the Incident Reporting procedures for incidents, hazards, work-related injuries and illnesses and fires.**
- **Where appropriate, curriculum specific guidance (e.g., PE, Art, D&T, Science etc)**
- **For certain staff (Headteacher, Bursar, Business Manager, Caretaker, etc) the arrangements for ensuring the duties relating to asbestos management are fulfilled and that the local Asbestos Management Plan is available to ALL staff**
- **Initial advice to women of child bearing age about the need for 'expectant and new mothers' risk assessment**
- **Smoking ban on all Council premises**
- **Fire evacuation and emergency procedures**
- **Critical Incident procedures**
- **The arrangements the school has for managing visitors (signing in, accompaniment within the school site, visitor badges, how to react on discovering an unexpected person in school)**
- **Information on hazards that are specific to the school, and established controls or precautions (for example: a narrow drive shared by pedestrians and vehicles)**
- **Trained first aid personnel and first-aid facilities – staff expected to undertake first aid duties must be advised that they are expected to deal with casualties including the staff, pupils, visitors to the site and any member of the public that may need assistance whilst on the school grounds.**
- **The policy around positive behaviour management (challenging behaviours shown from pupils)**
- **What to do in an emergency, including fires which start in class (science, design technology and art teachers must pay particular attention to this risk)**
- **Fire extinguishers and blankets – location and use**
- **Specific issues arising from mobility difficulties or other reasons giving rise to the need for Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.**
- Introduction to recognised unions and the local representatives
- Infection Control arrangements
- Employee problems and concerns – the Employee Assistance Programme which the school buys in to and / or access to wellbeing advice, counselling and other staff support schemes
- Grievance procedures (if they relate to health and safety)
- Use of equipment and/or tools including defect reporting and the correct use of guards (where relevant)
- Materials and substances in use – handling and labelling systems / warning signs. COSHH requirements, risk assessments and health and safety data sheets
- Use and care of PPE (personal protective equipment)
- Housekeeping procedures for policy documents and local rules
- Legal responsibilities and rights
- Work permit systems (for example, arrangements for visits and trips)
- Physical examinations relating to statutory maintenance requirements e.g. electrical equipment, fume cupboards and other exhaust ventilation equipment, lifts, hoists and lifting equipment, pressurised systems such as autoclaves and air compressors
- Security

- Restricted areas and equipment

Definition Corner

“Training, induction and competence”

The employer’s legal duty is to provide ‘information, training and supervision’.

This must be proportionate to the job the employee undertakes.

School records which link back to published standards or risk assessments and which show the member of staff has a current and demonstrable competence, are crucial.

- One-on-one instruction and supervision of young and inexperienced workers (and work experience students)
- Manual lifting and handling – general advice and risk assessment
- Safe stacking of materials
- Safety procedures for machines, including design technology equipment
- General housekeeping and maintenance of access and egress

Some notes on further training and competence to consider including in your Arrangements section:

A SHaW system which contains prescribed information about the knowledge and skills required for the job will ensure that the necessary induction and other training is programmed and undertaken. A new member of staff can start with a clear idea about how they can grow into the job and the manager’s task of ensuring that person can undertake the work safely is simplified. Current competence is as important for, say, the operator of a machine as it is for a caretaker undertaking maintenance work around the school and for a senior manager fulfilling their SHAW related role in the system. All training needs and attendance should be recorded.

Training can be discussed and usefully recorded in the minutes of staff briefings and performance review discussions. A standing item on

routine staff briefings to share SHaW training news and/or to discuss SHaW incidents, (and therefore any training needs arising out of ‘lessons learned’ etc. is an effective way of ensuring evidence of best practice. It is useful to note which staff attended such briefings too and to show there is a system for updating absentees. When writing your Arrangements section, and considering your training, make sure that you include workers with particular training needs, for instance:

- new recruits
- people changing jobs or taking on extra responsibilities
- young employees, who are particularly vulnerable to accidents
- health and safety representatives

Routine Updating Training

Ask yourselves:

- Are training plans for each individual member of staff updated annually?
- Do all managers consider refresher training for their staff on health and safety matters, including first aid training which is a special case, at least once every three years?
- Are records maintained for all health and safety training attended by staff. Ideally, such records should be properly validated by being countersigned and dated by the staff themselves.

In essence, make sure everyone has the right level of information and awareness on the following, and detail in this section how you will fulfil this criteria:

- hazards (things that could cause them harm)
- risks (the chances of that harm occurring)
- measures in place to deal with those hazards and risks
- how to follow any emergency procedures

Personal Safety procedures, to include assault, abuse, threats, and harm caused through involuntary behaviours

Ask yourselves:

- Have all school staff, who may deal with anyone presenting challenging or threatening behaviour, been trained to an appropriate standard? Advice can be sought from the Schools' Health and Safety Advisor on the current standards.
- Does the school have a written procedure advising how staff should deal with any incident where a person has displayed aggressive behaviour or any kind of assault (including verbal abuse)?
- Is there a clear policy on reporting and investigating such incidents?
- Are staff kept informed about current national guidelines and standards, to include Safeguarding requirements?
- How does the school monitor visitors and people entering the building? The minimum standard is that they should sign in at reception and be issued with a badge or label, so are suitable procedures in place?
- As visitors should be clearly directed to use the main entrance to the school, are signs clear and visible from the outside of the building and from the car park?
- Who are the key holders and are the relevant authorities promptly advised of changes to the list?
- Has the school considered particular arrangements that may be needed to ensure the safety of lone workers and outreach staff? Such staff may include the caretaker, cleaning and catering staff, PE teachers and staff who come into school during holiday periods. **Specific risk assessments** are needed for these potentially higher risk activities.

Definition Corner

Personal Safety refers to:

...the freedom from physical harm, and threat of physical harm, and freedom from hostility, aggression, harassment, and devaluation by others. Safety includes the worry about being victimised as well as actual incidents.

Thompson Rivers University, CA

- Have procedures been put into place to assist the wellbeing of staff after any threat to their personal safety?
- Is the school – its buildings and its perimeter secure? Have they taken advice from the Schools' Advisor and their Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO)?
- How are lockdown procedures, or evacuation procedures due to threat practised, and when? How do you judge the effectiveness of those?

Planned Safety Checks

You must detail how safety checks within your school will be undertaken. These can be broken down into 3 separate groups as follows:

- **Procedures**
- **Equipment**
- **Premises**

Procedures

Ask yourselves:

- What arrangements have been made within the school for monitoring health and safety issues? For example, the progress towards completion of the school's objectives for the year, safety inspections, review of incident report forms?
- What procedures have been established to ensure that a named person undertakes required, specific checks prior to certain activities? For example, outdoor play equipment should be subject to a visual check before use

each day. The playing field (particularly if the public have shown a tendency to leave litter overnight, or if rabbits may cause damage to the surface) should be checked before first use on any day.

Equipment

Ask yourselves:

- Is **all** equipment (not otherwise covered under other headings) subjected to a **formal, appropriate, programmed and recorded** maintenance check? For example:
 - All indoor and outdoor sports / PE and play equipment. Make sure new equipment is added to the schedule for any contractor or inspector. Make sure any equipment likely to be used is suitably sited even if only temporarily, with a safety surface, if required.
 - Are the annual checks carried out by registered Inspectors?
 - How is the school's water system(s) - hygiene, temperature and legionnaires disease checks carried out – and who by, and when?
- Are all the following specifics checked or inspected – when, how, and by whom?
 - Mechanical equipment used in design technology
 - Fume cupboards and other exhaust ventilation equipment (e.g. ventilation for kilns, design and technology machines, toilets, and reprographics areas.
 - Catering equipment, including ventilators
 - Ladders, stepladders and mobile scaffold/access equipment
 - Door closers, running gear and catches
 - Lifting gear, winches and hoists, lifts and stays (to include person lifting equipment)
 - Printing and reprographics machines
 - Kilns, autoclaves, compressors
- What are the arrangements for routine inspection and maintenance of electrical equipment?
- Are staff aware (and reminded periodically) to undertake a simple and informal visual inspection of any electrical equipment they (or their class) are about to use? Technicians or other support staff may perform this task in advance of lessons for the relevant subjects, provided they have been advised of the need.
- What routine, locally recorded checks are made of the condition of plugs, sockets and mains leads?
- Have you considered that it is more convenient to group electrical equipment on the basis of the risk, which then can lead to the development of a system in which the more vulnerable equipment is checked more often and more thoroughly? Low risk equipment, such as that which is not often moved and safer by design (e.g. double insulated) may not need to be tested more than once every few years.

Further questions to ask yourselves:

If the county contracts or recommended providers are not used, what arrangements have been made to ensure the same standard of safety, competence, record keeping, quality assurance and insurance cover? The use of 'non-approved' contractors may place considerable and onerous responsibilities on the school to monitor and quality assure processes and outcomes.

Premises

Ask yourselves:

- Is the whole school site inspected once a term by a person or team that reports to the school's leadership team, health and safety committee or the relevant sub-group of the governing body?
- Do you include inspections involving Property Advisors? Condition survey reviews and other 'walk-round' visits may form **part** of the school's arrangements for checking the school, but inspections should take activities into account as well the structure of the buildings.
- Have you designed a comprehensive checklist and action plan detailing the actual items checked and the findings and responses are essential to show due diligence? Check with your Data Controller / Processor about retention periods of these documents.

- Are visual checks on certain items carried out daily? For instance, fencing, perimeters, fire exits and routes, fire and /or security alarm systems. **Such checks are essential to ensure that safety critical facilities operate as planned every day.**

Infection Control Arrangements, and Supporting Children with Medical Needs in school

Ask yourselves:

- Does the school ensure advice is available for staff on infection control, intimate care arrangements, managing medicines and students with medical needs?
- Does the school have an area where both health and dignity can be preserved for intimate care?
- Does the school ensure that training is available where required?
- Does the school follow Department for Education and Health and Safety Executive guidance on infection control?
- Does the school have clear procedures for handling and administering medication, whether this is routine or emergency?
- If required, has the headteacher delegated to a specific person the tasks of monitoring and reviewing the school's policy and practice relating to the supporting of student with medical needs?

Incident Reporting/Investigation

Ask yourselves:

- Does your school follow the County guidance for reporting incidents?
- Have all staff been briefed on when and how to use the school's incident reporting system? Is the procedure documented and available to all?
- Does the Headteacher, or a designated and competent member of staff check every incident record before it is submitted to the authority?
- Is every incident subject to investigation as appropriate with a view to preventing recurrence?
- Are the findings of the investigation shared with the staff, the authority and other people with a relevant interest ?
- Does the school review relevant risk assessments after any incident or near miss?
- Does the school's health and safety committee periodically review the incident history for the school and plan actions to reduce the likelihood of future incidents?

First Aid – Training and equipment

Ask yourselves:

- Is the first aid equipment appropriately located? Are kits located close to sites likely to need it most frequently (e.g. design technology, sports, play and science areas)?
- Are lone workers trained to enable them to deal with their own minor first aid needs and do they have ready access to a first aid kit? Caretakers and cleaners exposed to particular health risks may need special consideration.
- Who monitors stock levels in first aid kits?
- Who ensures maintenance and replenishment is managed?
- Is the procedure for disposal of clinical waste, including incontinence and sanitary waste, satisfactory?
- Are records kept of who is trained, and when their certificates expire?
- Is the whole school staff adequately briefed about the school's first aid provisions? Who maintains the list of trained staff – is the list displayed?
- What are the injury reporting procedures and how are they monitored?
- For schools where ambulance arrival times are likely to be extended, do relevant staff have access to health centre / GP telephone numbers for emergency use? Has the school developed a procedure for calling a local GP surgery, where this may be needed?

Definition Corner

What is a risk assessment?

Risk assessment is a term used to describe the overall process or method where you identify hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm (hazard identification). You then determine appropriate ways to eliminate the hazard or control the risk when the hazard cannot be eliminated (risk control).

- Have first aid arrangements for visits and trips been thought through and procedures documented?

Coordination of Risk Assessment Work

The HSE are explicit in terms of managing the health and safety of your school. **You must control the risks in your workplace.** To do this you need to think about what might cause harm to people and decide whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm. This is known as risk assessment and it is something you are required by law to carry out. Risk assessments should be recorded and communicated clearly.

An overview of the school premises and activities will help decide what is needed to be assessed. For some hazards, (including those which require major expenditure) long term planning may be necessary for adequate risk control measures to be implemented. Some examples of long term planning could be:

- the school may have limited space for pedestrian and vehicle access, creating a serious incident risk
- the school grounds are used without permission outside normal school hours – they may leave litter, bottles, or more dangerous

articles such as needles

- the school field may be partly bounded by a natural hazard such as a thorny hedge or water filled ditch
- the playground may be used as a car park or waiting area by parents and/or buses. Damage caused by the heavy usage may make the surface unsuitable for sports and play.

Ask yourselves:

- Does the school have staff who are competent in writing risk assessments – and are those people knowledgeable about the topic or activity?
- Does the school follow the recommended guidance for risk assessment topics, review and communication?
- Does the school communicate those risk assessments clearly to all staff, and those visitors (to include contractors) who may be affected by the school's acts or omissions?
- Does the school communicate the essence of their risk assessments to the children and young people as appropriate?
- Can the school justify itself where risk assessments are NOT undertaken?
- Do the staff understand the need for dynamic risk assessments?
- Are the risk assessments reviewed as required?

Fire Procedures

Ask yourselves:

- Has a fire risk assessment been completed?
- Has it been undertaken by a competent person?
- Do all your staff know where it is held, and how to refer to it?
- Is the fire risk assessment reviewed whenever there is a related incident, significant changes to the premises made or the change of use of the premises are planned and, in any event, at least annually?
- Is a new fire risk assessment written every three years?

- Are notices detailing the evacuation procedure and assembly points placed around the school, with one in every classroom ?
- What arrangements have been made for people who may need assistance to evacuate the building(s) in an emergency? *A personal evacuation plan will be required for any person requiring assistance to evacuate the building. This has training implications for any support staff or carers and arrangements. Training in the use of an EVAC chair (where provided) and practice must be provided so that all are confident and competent in its use. Information about the EVAC Chair can be obtained from <http://www.evac-chair.co.uk/> but contact Schools' Choice / Procurement at Endeavour House for contract details.*
- Is an evacuation practice (fire drill) carried out once per term?
- Is there a check to ensure all fire extinguishers have been examined during annual maintenance checks?
- Are all staff trained in the use of firefighting equipment and other techniques to enable them to deal with a situation where a person's clothing is on fire, if appropriate?
- Are all staff adequately trained in fire extinguisher use to enable them to escape in an emergency?
- Whose responsibility is it to conduct the weekly alarm test or other tests (such as the emergency lighting checks and any automated fire brigade notification systems)?
- Are the details of the alarm and other tests, evacuation drills and fire precautions training recorded in a suitable logbook?
- Are routine checks undertaken of all fire exits and doors? *The frequency of checks depends on circumstances but should not be less than twice a term and generally need not be more than weekly. However, if public events are being held (plays, parents' evenings etc) fire exit route doors should be checked specifically for such events. Records **must** be kept in a fire precaution log book.*
- Are wheelie bins **anchored and locked** so that they cannot be used to set fires close to the school building(s)? *Recommended minimum distance is about 7 metres if possible.*
- Are arrangements in place to ensure no 'hot work' is undertaken in the school without a permit?
- Have the fire safety arrangements been comprehensively checked with a competent advisor within the last 3 years?

Locally Organised Premises Maintenance, Repair and Improvement

Ask yourselves:

- Are procedures in place to ensure the Landlord's Permission procedure is followed?
- Are all staff aware of the local **Asbestos Management Plan**, and do they understand the limitations and restrictions on undertaking any repairs or improvements to the fabric of the building?
- Have you considered that when procuring services (such as cleaning, catering and grounds maintenance) you must ensure that service specifications are adequate and that contractors (or the school's own employees) work to appropriate standards?
- Have you considered the writing of additional risk assessments and safe systems of work, which must be comprehensive and subject to periodic specialist audit?

Premises Security and visitor safety

Ask yourselves:

- Is current guidance followed? Check DfE guides, your Schools' Health and Safety Advisor's documents, and Police and National Security advice.
- Are suitable arrangements in place to ensure adequate supervision exists when visitors (including parents and children who are not pupils of the school) are present on site?
- Are risk assessments written for those young people who may attempt absconding?
- Are perimeter checks made as required, and who by, to determine the security of the site?

Contractors on Site

Ask yourselves:

- What is the arrival procedure for contractors when they arrive on site? Is an instruction that they should always report to reception clearly displayed or otherwise given to contractors?
- Has the school determined a process to ensure contractors are briefed about the school's asbestos management, fire procedures, smoking restrictions, local management arrangements, vehicle movement restrictions etc?
- What restrictions on access to the site are imposed on contractors who make deliveries to the school?
- How are **all** school staff (including cleaners who may be on site earlier or later than teaching staff) informed of areas to avoid for the duration of the work?
- Do you have formal records of information given and when?
- Has a member of the school staff been given responsibility for monitoring the contractor's safety performance in order to prevent danger to people other than the contractor's staff? *This includes checking the contractor's site is adequately fenced, materials are stored reasonably safely, etc. This person needs to be aware of the need to ensure the contractor is behaving reasonably safely in respect of his/her own staff, i.e., following common sense safety precautions and avoiding reckless behaviour.*

Lettings

Ask yourselves:

- Is a list kept of rooms made available for lettings?
- Is a list kept of clubs, bodies, personnel who have been approved to lease the rooms or buildings, and is it updated or reviewed at appropriate time scales?
- Are your rooms checked periodically (not less than once per term) to ensure that they are in a suitable condition for the specific activity that any lettings will involve? *Hirers may legitimately request to see the fire risk assessment. They may ask for risk assessments for school use of equipment etc. There is no particular reason why this should not be provided, but the hirer must be aware that they cannot rely on the school's risk assessments for the activities carried out during the letting.*
- Are different fire procedures needed for evenings or other times when lettings take place?
- What additional security may be needed when letting the premises?
- Have you provided Information to inform people who are booking the premises about any necessary health, safety or security information relating to the premises and any equipment that may be used. *It would be advisable to ask the hirer to sign to acknowledge receipt of the information – Also see following bullet point.*
- Does the school enter into a written agreement with the lessee? *Coordination is needed in respect of first aid kits and equipment, fire procedure, telephone access and, in the case of swimming pool use – pool water testing and maintenance, lifeguard provision and emergency procedures.*

Vehicle Control, Pedestrian Safety and Driving for Work

Ask yourselves:

- What vehicles are permitted to enter and/or park on site – are routine deliveries properly programmed and controlled?
- What are the parking arrangements for staff and visitors?
- Are there any times when vehicle movements are restricted?
- Is supervision adequate for busy, high risk times such as beginning and end of the school day?
- What arrangements are made to ensure refuse collection vehicles do not present risks to any pedestrians (staff, pupils, parents etc.) on site? Has the district/borough council been approached to arrange the safest collection time?
- Have specific risk assessments been undertaken as required?
- Have employees licences, MOTs and insurance documents been checked if driving for work purposes?

- Do those staff who drive for work purposes have 'Business Use' as part of their personal car policies?

Educational Visits

Ask yourselves:

- Is the current County Council advice being followed ?
- Does the school adopt the EVOLVE service to aid its management of risk when planning, and undertaking educational visits?
- Has the school nominated an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and ensured that the relevant training has been completed ?
- Has the school adopted a policy for educational visits and have associated risk assessments?
- Does the school manage the risks associated with children with medical needs on trips?

Mental Health, Stress at Work and Well-Being

Ask yourselves:

- Has the school taken positive action to manage mental ill-health, stress at work and well-being issues?
- Has the school undertaken suitable and sufficient risk assessments (personal and organisational risk assessments are required)?
- If the school has bought into a well-being scheme how effectively is it working?
- Are stress at work and workload management issues discussed and recorded during routine performance review / appraisal discussions?
- What arrangements have been made to provide staff with a free and confidential counselling service?

School Minibus

Ask yourselves:

- Are the County Council guidelines followed in relation to a school's ownership and use of a minibus?
- Has the school identified an individual person to ensure the legal requirements relating to the minibus are fulfilled (road tax, MoT test, records of routine checks done by the school/driver(s) and so on)?
- Are the school's and individual driver's insurance policies meticulously and routinely checked?
- Are all potential minibus drivers assessed through the relevant scheme **before** being allowed to drive?

Child Protection Procedures including Safeguarding in general

Ask yourselves:

- Is the current County Council guidance followed and supported by a specific school policy?
- Are children and young people's risk assessments adequately reviewed and updated as required?

Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, it is intended to be reasonably comprehensive. It will subject to revision as new topics arise. Please include any other procedures that you currently have or develop those which are needed in order to assist in the process of managing health and safety for staff, contractors and other visitors to your particular premises.

4.0 Template for a Headteacher's Termly Report to Governors - Recommended minimum content

	TOPIC	SUBJECT	NUMBER	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1.	Incident reporting to the Schools' Health and Safety Advisor	Number of incident report forms completed when a member of staff was the subject		Details of any incidents that have resulted in need for significant follow up, such as incidents which resulted in major injury, Health and Safety Executive or LA investigation, civil claim against school/LA for negligence, revision or writing for the first time of a risk assessment.
		Number of incident report forms completed when student was the subject		
	Local recording system for minor incidents relating to students	Number of incidents recorded		
2.	Numbers of Inspections and types	Carried out by / for management (the headteacher, and senior manager with delegated responsibility and/or governing body, health and safety committee, etc)		Bring urgent or serious items to attention of the governing body, particularly where significant financial implications exist, or school policy needs to be amended or extended
		Carried out by/for trade union health and safety representatives		
3.	Health and Safety Committee	Report on proceedings with update on items/actions outstanding		Append minutes of any meetings since headteacher's previous report to the governing body
4.	Health and safety training	Any induction and other health and safety related training undertaken by staff (including, personal safety training / positive behaviour management, first aid, manual handling, subject specific training which included a health and safety element)		This report should include contributions from heads of department or subject coordinators when appropriate. Funding issues can be considered here.
5.	Information received from the Local Authority with SHaW relevance.	Codes of practice, LA policy matters, recommended good practice and commendation of national body advice (such as British Standards, Health and Safety Executive guidance, etc), new preferred suppliers and recommendations about health and safety management.		Outline the arrangements the school has made/is making to implement the advice, particularly where significant expenditure may result.
6.	Updates from external consultants and advisors	Reports on audits, inspections, fire risk assessments, etc		Ensure that outcomes of discussions result in records being created containing detail of actions planned in response to the consultant's report(s).

5.0 The Nine Term Plan

The Nine Term Plan is a concept devised by the previous Suffolk County Council's Health and Safety Advisor for CYP, Nick Wilding. This highly useful and very practical document was designed to help schools plan and practice their health and safety management throughout a three-year period, based on best practice and legislation.

Schools have found this document valuable, and over the years it has been reviewed and amended after helpful feedback from school staff. This is a further updated version, and it is hoped that it will be as useful as the previous ones. It now incorporates new pointers and advice in line with current SCC practice.

How to use The Nine Term Plan:

Each column in the grid represents a term within the school year: terms one, four and seven are the autumn term, two, five and eight the spring term, and therefore three, six and nine the summer term. Within each column are a number of health and safety topics and duties which need to be fulfilled within that term.

The rows denote the **PLAN, DO, CHECK, ACT** management system. Each one follows on from the previous - for instance, looking at the template below, Term One suggests that the school **PLANS** a full health and safety audit, which can be carried out by the Schools' Health and Safety Advisor or via an external provider. You will see that in row two, term two, the school actually **DOES** that audit. Term three, row three, asks that the school **CHECKS** that all the items from the audit have been done, with row four being the same for every term, **ACTING** on the recommendations (especially if they haven't already been done). Therefore, the PLAN, DO, CHECK, ACT model is a constantly moving, and dynamic management system, which encourages monitoring and record keeping to show due diligence.

Schools may of course amend it themselves in terms of timescales and items placed in date columns. What matters is that it is all covered, checks are recorded, and staff involved in the whole process.

6.0 Resources, glossary and contact details

Resources:

In the 21st Century, information is usually more quickly and easily found by Googling the appropriate search term. However, with ‘fake news’ and websites which request payment for data, it can sometimes be difficult to trust any of the thousands of results which appear. It can be daunting to just be told: ‘Google ‘power tools’, you’ll get all the information you need on safe working’, when in fact you may well end up with Australian, or American legal requirements – and who’s to tell? So if you are going to trawl the web for help with your SHaW management (and good for you for giving it a go!) then here are some trusted websites to help you out – clearly there are many others which can’t all be listed here, but do contact your Schools’ Advisor if you need more information.

Company / organisation name	Web address as of November 2019
The Health and Safety Executive	www.hse.gov.uk
Suffolk Learning (health and safety)	https://www.suffolklearning.co.uk/leadership-staff-development/health-safety-wellbeing
British Safety Council	www.britsafe.org
MIND (mental wellbeing)	www.mind.org.uk
Department for Education (health and safety)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools
EVOLVE (educational visits service)	https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/
Association for Physical Education	http://www.afpe.org.uk/
CLEAPSS (art, design and science in schools)	http://www.cleapss.org.uk/
National Union of Teachers (health and safety)	https://www.teachers.org.uk/help-and-advice/health-and-safety
Unison (health and safety)	https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/health-and-safety/

Glossary: There are some terms within every occupation or topic which baffle those who don't deal with it every day. To make things easier, please find below some acronyms or terms which you might hear an Advisor using (and perhaps they shouldn't be!). Hopefully it'll demystify the topic a little.

Term or acronym	Definition
HaSWA	(The) Health and Safety at Work Act
CoSHH	(The) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations
PUWER	(The) Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
DSE	Display Screen Equipment (also relates to the Regulations)
Manual handling	Used in schools' H&S when talking about lifting or moving inanimate objects
Moving and handling	Used in schools' H&S when talking about assisting or aiding people – either in intimate care or general medical needs
SHaW	Safety, Health and Wellbeing – the way we at Suffolk County Council term 'health and safety'
PDCA	Plan, Do, Check, Act – a way of mapping out your health and safety management to make it easier to carry out
CLEAPSS	Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services (and DT and Art) – a service for schools which aids practical and safe experiences in the lab and classroom
OH / Occy Health	A company who provides services related to employees' health in the workplace
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet – a document which provides information on a substance (or material) in terms of safe storage, use, and disposal
EAP	Employee Assistance Provider – a company who provides counselling and wellbeing services to employees, free of charge (the school or LA buys into the service)
BCP / EP	Business Continuity Plan / Emergency Plan – documents which set out what the school will do in the event of 'business as usual' being hindered or stopped by an incident (either external or internal), pre-warned or not
RIDDOR	(The) Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations – the requirement for an employer to report certain incidents to the HSE. Your Schools' Advisor will do this, and will notify you should it be necessary.

Contact details:

Person / job / organisation	Contact details
Nina Bickerton – Suffolk (maintained) Schools’ Health and Safety Advisor	01473 260 399 Nina.bickerton@suffolk.gov.uk
Paul Butcher – Suffolk County Council Head of Health and Safety	Paul.butcher@suffolk.gov.uk
EVOLVE support (SCC based)	Ed.visits@suffolk.gov.uk
Mailbox for Suffolk Maintained Schools’ incident forms	schools.incidents@suffolk.gov.uk
CLEAPPS Science helpline	https://science.cleapss.org.uk/helpline/
Corporate Health and Safety (<i>when your Advisor is unavailable</i>)	01473 260 208 healthandsafety@suffolk.gov.uk
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service	https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/ (information and contact details for non-emergencies)
Suffolk Constabulary	https://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us