

# COGNITA



**DOWNSEND**  
PRE-PREP SCHOOL  
Ashtead

## **Health and Safety Policy (Guidance only)**

### **September 2018**

### **UK**

### UK COGNITA SCHOOLS LTD HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

#### GENERAL GUIDANCE NOTES

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 All schools in Great Britain are required to produce a health and safety policy in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (the Act) and pursuant to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2015, the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/3234) in Wales and relevant Regulations in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Schools must also have arrangements to implement that policy and to monitor and review practice. Schools must also adhere to the health and safety regulations made under the Act including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (SI 1999/3242) which impose a duty on employers to conduct suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to employees and others.
- 1.2 This guidance and the enclosed draft policies apply to all schools within the Cognita Schools Limited group (Cognita) which operate in the UK.
- 1.3 In furtherance of the plan to foster best practice initiatives between Cognita and its schools and departments, Cognita requires:
  - Operation in accordance with the law in their jurisdiction as a minimum;
  - Compliance with relevant guidance applicable at the time (to include appropriate guidance issued by the Department for Education Regulations and specific advice).
  - Compliance with guidance provided by Cognita (including this note) on Spark.
  - Ensuring that an effective management structure and arrangements are in place for delivering and monitoring their health and safety policy.
  - Drawing up and implementation an effective written policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws. Where there are several sites or phasing of schools the policy must be applicable to all children, including EYFS as appropriate.
- 1.4 Cognita requires all their UK schools to develop, implement and review their own local Health and Safety Policy ("the Policy"), which complies with local legislation and guidance. Schools are required to publish this on their website. The policy should be specific to each school and each policy should contain information on who will do things and how they will be done. The wording in Part 1 (Statement of Intent) and Part 2 (Organisation) is not to be altered, however Part 3 (Arrangements) requires the school to insert the details of who is responsible person for the linked policies and risk assessments, along with current and review dates.
- 1.5 Cognita has produced a model policy ("the Model") that each school can customise to fit their own situation. This sets out a consistent intention regarding health and safety, requires the classification of roles and responsibilities for health and safety within the school and sets out the arrangements made to meet the policy aims.

- 1.6 Through the adoption of the Model, Cognita aims:
- To ensure compliance with legal obligations regarding the health and safety of all staff, pupils and visitors to Cognita schools
  - To provide a healthy and safe environment at Cognita schools and on off-site visits
  - To minimise the potential for injuries and damage to property
  - To develop consistent safety rules
  - To implement the general educational aims of Cognita schools
  - To maintain and drive a positive safety culture among all staff, contractors and pupils throughout Cognita schools
  - To help pupils develop increasing responsibility for their own and other's safety
  - To encourage the reporting and sharing of information about health and safety concerns.
- 1.7 All references to staff and/or employees in the Policy should include references to teaching and non-teaching staff whether technically employed or otherwise working on site, peripatetic members of staff, supply teachers and those undertaking work experience.
- 1.8 This guidance note and the Model will be available on Spark and staff at Central Office will be available to discuss any issues which may arise.
- 1.9 While the overall strategic responsibility for health and safety rests with the Board of Directors of Cognita Schools Ltd. the duties are delegated to schools through the Head for the day to day operation of the policy; including monitoring, reporting and accountability. This includes the responsibility to review the policy annually (by signing and dating this to demonstrate commitment) and to make it available to parents and other stakeholders upon request.
- 1.10 Each school must have an Assistant Director of Education who will submit Termly progress reports and a full annual report to their Governance Panel on the performance of the school including accident, incident and absence reporting as well as child protection and the other areas of compliance included in the Cognita UK Compliance Line Management structure. This School H&S Committee must also report any serious accidents, injuries or other matters requiring escalation as defined in the Serious Incident Reporting Form [SIRF - Appendix A] immediately to the appropriate senior management as defined in the SIRF along with a copy sent to the Assistant Director of Education.
- 1.11 The Chief Executive Europe has specific responsibility for overseeing the implementation of group policy across all the UK Cognita Schools. The Assistant Director of Education by line management through the Director of Education Europe to the Chief Executive Europe as Chair of the UK Executive will put in place all the necessary reporting structures to the Schools Heads to ensure the group-wide health and safety management is carried out at each school.
- 1.12 In addition, Cognita will provide support for schools. The Cognita UK Compliance Line Management structure included in this document clarifies which of the Cognita Central Departments are the primary contact for compliance support in each area. Where appropriate Cognita will also support training on health and safety issues. Please note that the training provided is designed to help schools meet their health and safety responsibilities but is not always prescriptive nor should it be deemed sufficient in itself to discharge the school's health and safety training responsibilities.

### 2 THE MODEL POLICY – SPECIFIC GUIDANCE NOTES

The Model Policy addresses three main areas:

**Part One** Statement of Intent

**Part Two** Organisation

**Part Three** Arrangements (Planning and implementation)

### 3 Part One - Statement of Intent

3.1 Cognita requires all its schools to operate in accordance with the Statement of Intent as a minimum standard, as set out in Part One of the Model.

3.2 *Actions required to adopt the Model policy:*

The Head and UK Operations Director should accept the statement by signing it where indicated.

3.3 Schools are recommended to include this Statement in their prospectus, on their website and in their handbook(s).

- Health and safety measures should help children to experience a wide range of activities safely.
- It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life.
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity.

Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity. Staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and children safe and manage risks effectively

### 4 Part Two - Organisation

4.1 Part Two of the Model should set out the management structure and arrangements for delivering health and safety at each school.

4.2 This should provide a framework for:-

- The promotion of a positive health and safety culture;
- Management control of health and safety issues including risk assessment;
- The communication of necessary information;
- The promotion of co-operation within the school;
- Securing the competence of staff, including the duty of each employee to look after their own and others health and safety.

4.3 Key individuals for specialist Health & Safety roles at the schools should be identified on the Cognita UK School Facilities Compliance Contacts schedule [Appendix B].

4.4 The Model provides a framework to be adapted and this may need to be modified as appropriate to clarify specific compliance responsibilities within the School.

4.5 *Actions required to adopt the model policy:*

The Head will need to review the model policy and adapt it to suit the school annually and in the light of any significant change.

### 5 Part Three – Arrangements (Planning and implementation)

- 5.1 This part of the document should state how the school will meet the standards set in Parts One and Two.
- 5.2 This will require a systematic approach to implementing the school health and safety policy through an effective health and safety management system.
- 5.3 The aim is to minimise risks involved in the range of hazards or hazardous activities in the school, by eliminating hazards and reducing risks. The first step is to identify hazards at the school and then identify groups of people who are at particular risk of being harmed (which include staff, pupils, volunteers, visitors and contractors). The UK Schools should then evaluate the risks and decide on appropriate precautions or control measures by carrying out a risk assessment.
- 5.4 Wherever possible, risks should be eliminated through the selection and design of facilities, equipment and processes. Where this is not possible they should be minimised through the use of physical controls, safe systems of work and/or personal protective equipment. Performance standards should be established and used to measure achievement, specific actions to promote a positive health and safety culture should be identified.
- 5.5 Identification of hazards will need to be conducted by each school with reference to their premises and the activities which take place at the school. It is crucial that issues which affect health and safety at each school are considered and that arrangements for these are clear. For example does the school hire out premises, have external members of the public use its gym facilities or outside groups use the facilities for summer camps etc?
- 5.6 Each school should draw up a procedure for the identification of hazards that cannot be eliminated and complete risk assessments with respect to those remaining, which details who will do them, when, and how they will be recorded and processed.
- 5.7 Once they have been completed, decisions must be made by the Head regarding whether the residual risk is acceptable, taking into account the objectives, appropriate risk control mechanisms and priorities). Suitable management arrangements should then be implemented which are proportionate to the needs, hazards and risks of the school. These should be considered with reference to term-time, holidays and in the event of possible emergencies. Employees should be informed about the control measures taken to manage the rules and advantages should be given to employees.
- 5.8 Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated (where necessary) by the school on a regular ongoing basis as required by health and safety law and changes to the rules of health and safety of staff and others affected by their activities. Sensible management of rules does not mean that a separate written risk assessment is required for every day activity. Risk management and assessment are tools to enable children and staff to undertake activities safely and not prevent them taking place.
- 5.9 Where there are annual or infrequent low risk activities, a review of an existing assessment may be all that is needed. If it is a new activity, a specific assessment of significant rules must be carried out. The Head should ensure that the person assigned with the assessment, understands the rules, is familiar with the activity that is planned and has the ability to produce the necessary control measure/s. The significant findings of the assessment must be recorded and communicated to all those likely to be affected.

- 5.10 However, the schools need not carry out a risk assessment every time they undertake an activity that usually forms part of the school day. For example, taking pupils to a local venue which is frequently visited such as a park; if it has already been considered when agreeing the general health and safety policy and procedure. A regular check to make sure the precautions remain suitable is all that is required.
- 5.11 Part Three of the model contains a list of potentially hazardous activities which should each be considered as the subject of a separate risk assessment. However, it may be that not all will apply to each part of the school and it may be that other risk assessments are required which are not listed. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that adequate risk assessments are undertaken, where these are in relation to hazards arising from school activities.
- 5.12 If, following risk assessment, policies and/or safe systems of work are introduced, these should be documented, communicated and stored.
- 5.13 Cognita Schools Ltd have developed a suite of Model Linked Policies which are available for adaptation and implementation at each school as appropriate to include:
- Accident and Incident Reporting Policy
  - Adverse Weather Policy
  - Asbestos Management Plan
  - Caretaking and Site Staff Policy
  - Catering Policy
  - Control of Contractors Policy
  - (COSHH) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy
  - Critical Incident Management Plan
  - Data Protection Policy
  - Display Screen Equipment Policy
  - Electrical Safety Policy
  - Fire Safety Management Policy
  - Fire Safety Strategy
  - First Aid Policy
  - Group Transport Policy and Guidelines
  - Legionella Policy
  - Lone Working Policy
  - Machinery, Plant and Equipment Policy
  - Manual Handling and Lifting Policy
  - Premises Management Policy
  - Prevention and Control of Infection and Communicable Diseases Procedures
  - Risk Assessment Policy
  - Security, Workplace Safety and Protection from Violence
  - Sun Protection Policy
  - TOR Compliance Committee
  - Welfare Provisions Policy
  - Working at Height Policy
- 5.14 **Measuring Health & Safety Performance**  
Once the school has undertaken risk assessments and identified measures to reduce those risks to a minimum, systems will need to be introduced to ensure that the school's health and safety performance is measured. This should consist of both active self-monitoring (audits and supervision) and reactive monitoring (by investigating accidents, absences due to ill-health and incidents causing harm and/or loss (where required)).

- 5.15 Each school should set health and safety standards/targets and the governance arrangements for the school and should include monitoring their health and safety performance against these.
- 5.16 The UK Schools will also be able to monitor and measure their own health and safety performance and compliance through the Assistant Director of Education and Cognita UK Executive supported by the Group and Regional Compliance Committees.
- 5.17 Each school should report:
- their health and safety performance as against the standards/targets set Governance Panel/Cognita UK Executive.
  - details of reports made to the HSE regarding accidents or near misses, under the RIDDOR procedure or other authorities such as Ofsted.
  - any investigation or any enforcement or prohibition action threatened or taken against the school, by the HSE, local authority, fire authority or any other regulator.
  - details of any compensation claims made for review at their School Governance Panel or Cognita UK Executive. The Compliance H&S Committee of the school shall ensure that sufficient time and focus is given to the continuous improvement of health and safety performance across the group.
- 5.18 **Communication of the Policy**  
Once completed the Policy should be published and communicated as appropriate. The Policy Statement of Intent [Part 1] of this Policy needs to be communicated not only to all staff, but also to pupils, parents and visitors (including contractors and hirers) to the school as appropriate. Consideration should be given to providing a complete copy of the Policy, or appropriate extracts from it in the staff, pupils and parents handbooks.
- 5.19 Induction for new staff must include the opportunity to read, understand and by signature acknowledge the schools health and safety policy.
- 5.20 This policy and associated documentation can be made available in large print or other accessible format upon request.
- 5.21 *Actions required to adopt the Model policy:*  
The Head will need to document the Health and Safety Arrangements at the School, with reference to the Model Policy.