



Policy Title:	Safety and Health Policy	
Policy Code:	SHEP01	
Applies to:	Group wide	
Date Reviewed:	September 2025	
Next Update Due:	September 2026	
Policy Lead:	Head of Group Health and Safety	
Policy Sponsor:	Chief Executive Officer	
Cross Reference:	SHEP02	Food Allergen Policy
	SHEP03	Fire Policy
	SHEP04	Risk Assessment Policy
	SHEP05	Safe Driving at Work Policy
	SHEP06	First Aid Policy
	SHEP07	Smoke Free Policy
	SHEP08	Animal Policy
	SHEP09	Environmental Policy
	OPSP18	Medication Policy
	OPSP28	Futures Work Experience External Placements Policy
	CLP03	Self-Harm and Suicidal Intent Policy and Guidance
	HRP10	Workplace Concern Resolution Policy
	HRP11	Harassment and Bullying Policy
	HRP21	Employee Induction and Learning Policy
	HRP22	Your Wellbeing Policy
	OPP02	Restraint Reduction Policy
		Procurement Policy
Outcome:	<p>This policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safety and health• Inform of the Witherslack Group’s approach to the management of safety and health including our commitment to ongoing improvement through the setting of health and safety objectives.• Provide details on the framework and systems we have in place to manage safety and health and where to access further information• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation including the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999.	
<p>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT</p> <p>Witherslack Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.</p>		
<p>ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE (ESG) STATEMENT</p> <p>Witherslack Group is committed to responsible business practices in the areas of: Environmental Stewardship, Social Responsibility, Governance, Ethics & Compliance. An ESG impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure it can be implemented successfully without adverse implications on our Group goals.</p>		

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To ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please email the named policy lead.

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1. STATEMENT AND VISION

- 1.1** The Witherslack Group recognise and accept our responsibility to provide safe and healthy working environments to all our employees, young people, and any other persons affected by our operations. We have a pragmatic and proportionate approach, recognising we cannot eliminate all risk but reduce and manage exposure as far as reasonably practicable to minimise the number and impact of accidents and incidents that occur.

We have a comprehensive and accredited occupational safety and health management system in place, and we are committed to continual improvement. Health, safety, and risk management is a core consideration during decision-making processes, and we promote a positive and proactive health and safety culture within the organisation.

We ensure that employees are mindful of our collective duty of care to our young people, colleagues and other interested parties and are committed to ensuring active consultation and participation with all key stakeholders. We are aware that we can have a positive impact on our young people and integrate and promote health and safety as part of their learning and development.

- 1.2** The Chief Executive Officer, Executive Directors, and Senior Managers, as far as reasonably practicable will ensure we:

- Comply with all relevant legal requirements
- Ensure all employees are aware of this policy
- Communicate and consult with employees on matters that affect their health and safety
- Encourage employees to identify, report, and manage hazards so that everyone contributes towards improving safety and healthy environments
- Ensure adequate resources are provided for the provision of health and safety controls
- Eliminate risks through the selection and design of buildings, facilities, equipment, and processes
- Provide and maintain premises, plant, and equipment in a safe condition
- Provide adequate welfare facilities and arrangements for employees, young people, and visitors including safe access and egress provisions
- Have suitable emergency procedures in place in all buildings
- Adequately train, instruct, inform, and guide employees to be competent and confident in their role and any tasks they are expected to undertake, and they are aware of their legal duties
- Ensure all contractors have demonstrated competency in health and safety matters
- Continually undertake and review assessments to identify proportionate, workable, and effective ways of reducing and managing risk
- Safeguard the safety, health, and welfare of young people and employees on visits away from the setting
- Monitor and review performance regularly and update policies, procedures, training, and guidance to pursue continual improvement
- Provide health surveillance for employees where appropriate

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1** All employees have general duties under health and safety law and must take the time to read and understand the principals and expectations of this policy. All employees must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety, and the safety of any other persons who may be affected by what they do or fail to do when at work.
- Be aware of, and comply with, all safety and health policies, procedures, safety rules and any written or verbal instructions given to ensure their personal safety, health or that of others.
- Co-operate with colleagues so we can meet our legal duties and our policy and procedural requirements.

- 2.2** The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the ultimate duty holder for all matters relating to safety and health in the organisation and is responsible for ensuring:

- A competent person is appointed to ensure compliance with safety and health legislation.

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- Appropriate resources (financial, people, materials, and equipment) are made available for the effective management of safety, health, and welfare.
- Board Members and the Senior Management Team are aware of the importance of safety and health and that it is considered as part of any business decision making process.
- A safety and health policy and management system are implemented and communicated effectively to all relevant people in the organisation.
- An effective training program is in place to ensure employees are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner.
- A plan of continuous safety and health improvement is in place and regularly reviewed.
- Suitable and sufficient insurance cover is in place.

2.3 Head Teachers and Registered Managers are the responsible persons for all matters related to safety and health in their setting and are responsible for ensuring:

- All Witherslack safety and health policies, procedures, and risk assessments are in place and being followed.
- A positive safety culture is nurtured where employees can report hazards, discuss concerns, and safety and health is part of regular discussions in team meetings.
- The Health and Safety Compliance Lead is informed of any hazards not covered in our management system or any difficulties in implementing any of our controls.
- Premises and equipment are in a safe and healthy condition to use and where they are not, this is reported, the item taken out of use, or the risk managed.
- An effective system of reactive maintenance is in place.
- Appropriate welfare facilities are provided and maintained for employees and young people to use.
- Risk assessments are in place for all significant hazards within the setting, and controls and safety instructions are followed.
- Employees receive appropriate and effective training, instruction, and supervision to undertake their role safely and all have access to safety policies, procedures, guidance, and information.
- Appropriate resources are made available for the effective management of safety, health, and wellbeing.
- At least one Health and Safety Representative is designated in their setting, and they are involved in management discussions and decisions about health and safety.
- Any contractors working at the setting are adequately managed and supervised.
- Safety concerns, accidents, incidents, injuries and near misses are recorded, reported, and investigated.
- All regulatory visits and any correspondence relating to these visits are notified to the Health and Safety Team.

2.4 The Head of Group Health and Safety (HGHS) is the competent person appointed to oversee the management of safety and health across the Group and ensure that:

- The CEO is informed of any significant risks or safety concerns present in the organisation.
- We have a clear policy and an effective management system on safety and health with relevant information, guidance, and advice available to employees.
- Risk assessment templates are in place to cover all the hazards identified in the business.
- There is regular communication, consultation, and engagement with all employees in safety and health issues.
- Regular audits, monitoring, and reviews take place to identify any areas of concern, to develop safe systems of working and to minimise the risk of ill health and harm being caused.
- Our policies, procedures, and systems of work are adapted as necessary in the event of changes of legislation or additional risks being identified.
- Training needs are regularly reviewed, and employees are supported in becoming competent in their role.
- Critical or serious incidents are fully investigated.
- The work of the Health and Safety Compliance Leads is planned and effective

2.5 Health and Safety Compliance Leads provide safety and health information, advice, and guidance to support

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everyone in working safely and minimising harm and ensure that:

- The Head of Group Health and Safety is informed of any hazards not covered in our management system or any difficulties in implementing any of our controls.
- Employees have an awareness of our safety and health policies, procedures, and guidance documents and check these are being implemented.
- Risk assessments are in place and effective for all hazards in the business.
- We are communicating effectively, and employees are receiving the training, instruction, and information they need to understand the risks and work safely.
- Safety training is effective and being given to those who need it.
- Visits are undertaken so that we can monitor compliance with legislative and procedural requirements.
- Accidents, dangerous occurrences, diseases, or other incidents that are notifiable are reported to the enforcing authority.
- Assistance is provided to employees to investigate accidents or incidents.

2.6 The Head of Quality Assurance (QA) is responsible for overseeing the work of the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Team and ensures that:

- Quality standards in the organisation are monitored and reported on.
- The work of the Health and Safety Team meets the objectives of the organisation.
- We have clear policies and procedures in place for protecting staff health, safety and welfare and these are reviewed and communicated effectively.

2.7 Line Managers oversee the management of safety and health within their area of control. They provide leadership and guidance to their teams to support everyone in working safely and minimising harm and ensure that:

- They have a good knowledge of and actively lead in the implementation of our safety and health policies and procedures.
- All staff under their management have an awareness of the safety and health policies, procedures, and relevant risk assessments and these are being followed and integrated into operation practices
- Suitable arrangements are in place for emergency situations and all employees are aware of the procedures to be followed.
- We encourage a positive safety culture at all levels of the organisation where employees feel safe to raise and discuss concerns.
- Their Line Manager or the HGSH is informed of any hazards not covered in our management system, safety concerns that cannot be effectively managed or any difficulties in implementing any of our controls.
- Where premises and equipment are not in a safe and healthy condition, this is reported, and the risk managed effectively.
- Suitable and sufficient training plans are in place for relevant to the work of the role being undertaken, and employees are supervised and working practices monitored to develop safe systems of work.
- Risk assessments are in place, effectively communicated to their team, and reviewed regularly.
- Risk assessment controls and any safety related instructions are followed.
- Accidents and incidents are recorded, reported, and investigated in line with WG guidance.
- Health and Safety is an agenda topic in management meetings and regular meetings are held to discuss safety and health matters with employees.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided when required for employees.
- Hazardous substances are stored and handled in a safe manner.
- Appropriate resources are made available for the effective management of safety, health, and wellbeing.
- Health and safety conditions are monitored in the area over which they have control and monthly health and safety checks are completed and reports returned as required.

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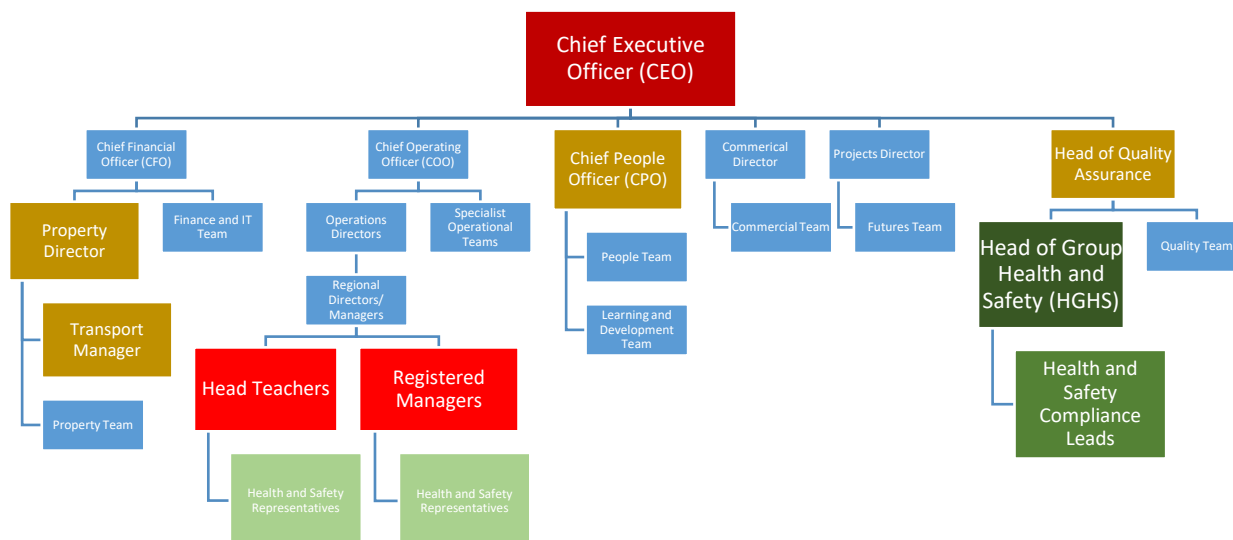
Members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of a setting will be expected to coordinate a response to safety and health events and manage risks in the absence of the Registered Manager or Head Teacher.

- 2.8** The Property Director is responsible for overseeing the buildings and spaces we use, and ensures that:
- Buildings are designed to be fit for purpose and consider future safety and health risks associated with their use and maintenance.
 - Statutory examinations are planned, completed, and recorded with any remedial actions addressed.
 - An effective system of planned preventative maintenance is in place to ensure property, plant, and work equipment is in a safe condition.
 - Resources are available for maintenance and reactive works to be undertaken.
 - We have a clear policy and an effective management system for contractors who undertake work on our behalf.
- 2.9** The Transport Manager is responsible for sourcing and overseeing company vehicles, and ensures that:
- Vehicles are sourced from reputable suppliers and fit for the purpose in which they will be used.
 - We have a clear policy and an effective management system for drivers and all vehicles used for work purposes.
 - We collate information on drivers to ensure they are legally able to drive.
 - Vehicles used for business activities meet the legal statutory requirements.
 - An effective system of maintenance is in place to vehicles are kept in a safe condition.
 - All vehicle collisions and incidents are recorded and investigated.
 - Risk assessments are in place to cover all hazards associated with driving and vehicle usage.
- 2.10** The Chief People Officer is responsible for ensuring we are protecting and supporting our employees whilst at work and encouraging their personal development, they ensure that:
- We have clear policies and procedures in place for protecting staff health and welfare.
 - Staff have access to relevant information, guidance, and advice to support their health and wellbeing
 - Effective systems of recruitment and training are in place for staff to ensure they are competent for the role they undertake.
- 2.11** Health and Safety Representatives provide additional support to Head Teachers and Registered Managers and complete tasks, to ensure that:
- Their line manager, the Health and Safety Compliance Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team is informed of any safety concerns that have been reported but are not being effectively managed.
 - We encourage a positive safety culture where employees are happy to report hazards and raise and discuss safety or health concerns.
 - Premises and equipment are in a safe and healthy condition to use and where they are not, this is reported and taken out of use, or the risk managed.
 - Employees within their setting have access to safety policies, procedures, guidance, and information.
 - We have effective records of safety and health checks and controls in place.
 - Safety and health is part of a regular discussion in team meetings.
 - We have 'champions' of health and safety who represent and provide a voice for frontline staff

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3 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Group organisational overview highlighting key roles for health and safety.



Key Roles:

Legal Duty Holder for H&S:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Persons for H&S across organisation:	Executive Directors & Senior Managers
Responsible Persons for H&S in each setting:	Head Teachers and Registered Managers
Competent Persons for H&S:	Head of Group Health and Safety Health and Safety Compliance Leads
Supporting task completion for H&S:	Health and Safety Representatives

4 SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

4.1 Our Safety and Health Policy forms part of the Witherslack Occupational Safety and Health Management System, which meets the ISO 45001 standard. The aim of the management system is:

- To provide a framework to meet the legal requirements, organisational vision, mission, and values of the Witherslack Group
- Provide a safe and healthy environment for our staff that makes them want to come to work
- Give comfort and confidence to parents, visitors, and business partners that we work to achieve the highest levels of safety, health protection, and wellbeing for everyone
- Teach young people the importance of safety and effective risk management
- To set, monitor and maintain the highest standards in relation to safety, health, welfare, wellbeing and environments for young people, staff, and visitors

The management system incorporates all our activities in our settings and office locations, and we are regularly externally audited to ensure we are meeting the ISO 45001 standard.

4.2 We have developed specific policies to support this general policy and these along with accompanying procedures, forms, and guidance documents form part of our safety and health management system. Policies can be accessed in the Witherslack Way, via ME@WG.

We use a paper folder system, electronic online folders, and software systems to record health and safety records in settings. All forms, guidance, and accompanying information can be accessed from the Health and Safety folder in WG_Shared on the Network Drive.

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- 4.3** Measuring and monitoring performance is essential to continually improve our safety performance and to continually develop a positive and proactive safety and health culture. We complete both active and reactive monitoring and it is everyone's responsibility to help support this process.

We have a schedule of audits (SHE Reviews) that are completed by the Health and Safety Team to ensure that we monitor and review our policies, procedures, processes, and controls to ensure they are fit for purpose. We undertake these using document review, data analysis, employee feedback and physical observations. This continual audit and review process allows us to adapt and change to keep us compliant and ensure our working environments are safe and healthy.

- 4.4** It is important that effective communication and consultation with employees is in place, and we have several ways we do this at the Witherslack Group. We know employees must be kept informed and we value their feedback and views when putting together or reviewing policies, procedures, and ways of working. We do this via:

- Regular Health and Safety Bulletin sent via email to setting leaders
- Health and Safety Forums
- Safety and Health Representatives in each setting
- Health and Safety Compliance Lead being a point of contact for each setting
- Safety and health being an agenda point in staff meetings
- Displaying the 'Health and Safety Law – What you need to know' poster
- The Witherslack Group policy ratification process

- 4.5** We have a [Safety, Health and Environment \(SHE\) Regulatory Visits Procedure](#) in place to ensure that we can swiftly respond and react to any risks that have been identified by a regulatory body. All settings must:

- Ensure all key staff are aware of and follow the requirements of the procedure
- Ensure that visits are discussed with the Health and Safety Compliance Lead
- Any documentation left or sent by the regulatory body is saved down in the health and safety folder/ file

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1** Risk assessment is a step-by-step process for identifying hazards and determining whether we are doing enough to reduce the likelihood of injury or ill health. A risk assessment is not the document itself but an active process of evaluation that is carried out.

The risk assessment process allows us to identify the hazards in place and put in place suitable controls for their use. Not all hazards identified in the organisation are listed in this policy and employees must refer to the risk assessments for their setting for more information. Whilst the risk assessment process considers all known hazards, the risk assessment document includes only significant hazards, so minor and inconsequential hazards may not be recorded.

All hazards have some degree of risk attached, the aim of safety and health management is to reduce the risk to the lowest practical level by implementing effective control measures. There is always a balance between the benefit of hazard exposure and the risk of it causing harm.

- 5.2** The following types of risk assessment are in place in the organisation:

- **General risk assessments**
These are used for our known and reasonably foreseeable hazards and cover our premises, equipment, and regular activities. There is a set of these for each setting or office and all employees must be familiar with the controls in place for the areas they work or activities they are involved in.
- **Person specific risk assessments**
Person specific risk assessments consider the risks to individual people and any additional controls needed to protect them from harm. Our young people all have a person specific risk assessment, but some of our employees will need them too. Including anyone with a significant medical condition, new and expectant mothers and those who use computers on a regular basis (Display Screen Equipment assessments).

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- **Event specific risk assessments**

Where we are undertaking unusual or higher risk activities that do not form part of a routine day, an event specific risk assessment must be completed. This includes residential school trips, maintenance activities with specialist equipment such as a mobile platform, and public events like open days. We recommend that all event specific risk assessments are discussed with the Health and Safety Team to ensure we are considering all the risks. For school visits, this is built into our recording and review process using the Evolve software.

- **Dynamic risk assessments**

Dynamic risk assessments must be undertaken by all employees continuously throughout their working day. The purpose is to enable us to work safely by understanding the potential risks of what we are doing and continually planning, assessing and reacting to situations to keep everybody safe. Dynamic risk assessments do not need writing down however, you must report to SLT any concerns you have where we may not be effectively managing a risk.

The Witherslack Group Risk Assessment Policy provides more detail on risk assessments. Template risk assessments are available for common hazards, activities, or areas, the [Risk Assessment List \(SHEG41\)](#) details these. The list and risk assessments can be accessed in the Health and Safety folder in WG_Shared on the Network Drive.

Steps of dynamic risk assessment:

- 1. Identifying hazards and continually assessing any risks**

Undertake regular daily checks on the environment to ensure it is safe and secure

Check equipment for damage or wear before we use it

Think about the outcomes of our next actions or activities before we begin

- 2. Thinking about who may be affected and how**

Who may be in my area of work?

Is there a risk to colleagues?

Do we need to manage situation by putting in additional controls or supervision?

Do any children have additional needs for this activity we have not considered?

- 3. Taking actions needed to control the risk**

Take damaged equipment/ areas out of use

Reducing the number of children who undertake activities that are harder to manage or risky

Ensuring close supervision during higher risk activities

- 4. Communicating risks and actions to colleagues and recording them**

Ensure anyone at risk is aware of the hazard or risk present by telling them

Update general or person specific risk assessments where appropriate

Report defects, issues, or concerns to H&S Representative or SLT to ensure these can be addressed.

6 COMPETENCE OF EMPLOYEES

Having competent, skilled, and knowledgeable employees is essential to create safe environments and manage risk effectively. Our training enables employees to be confident in their work and have a positive contribution to our safety and health culture.

The Witherslack Group provide training, instruction, and information to help work and tasks to be undertaken safely. Training can be completed through observation, shadowing, reading, watching videos, online tutorials, roleplay, discussions and through formal courses and qualifications.

Training will be undertaken at the beginning of employment as an induction and additional training will be provided depending on the role. Training will be reviewed and refreshed as necessary considering amendments to policies or procedures, changes in role, introduction of new technology or equipment and

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following an incident or performance appraisal. Records of training will be kept for all employees.

Employees must:

- Follow instructions or information provided for safety or health reasons
- Participate in training as required for the role or the tasks they need to undertake
- Work according to the content of training received or policies and procedures in place
- Ask for clarification of any points not fully understood
- Not operate or use equipment, plant, or substances unless they have been appropriately trained and instructed to use
- Co-operate with colleagues and inform their Line Manager/ Health and Safety Team about anything that present a serious or imminent risk to safety or health or is a failure in our safety arrangements
- Take care of their own health and safety and that of others

Line managers must ensure that staff have completed the training required for their role and this is recorded.

7 ACCIDENTS, NEAR MISSES, AND FIRST AID

7.1 All accidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences, and acts of violence to staff resulting in injury and all cases of ill health that are attributed to our activities, are recorded. Any injury to a person who is not at work (young people, contractors, and visitors) must also be reported if they occurred on our premises. The Head Teacher or Registered Manager (or the most senior person in the building in their absence) must be made aware of the event as soon as practicable.

The [Employee/ Visitor Accident Record \(SHEF61\)](#), [Young Person/ Pupil Accident Record \(SHEF62\)](#) or accident record on our software system must be completed the same day as the accident occurs. All information should be completed as detailed in the [Accident Record Guidelines for Completion \(SHEG65\)](#) or as is mandatory on the software record.

For Employee/ Visitor injuries, a review of all the relevant information should be completed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team to identify any learning points. Section 2 of the [Employee Accident Record \(SHEF61\)](#) or the software form should be completed following the review. Section 3 of the [Employee Accident Record \(SHEF61\)](#) or the software system form should be completed with the staff member on their return to work following the injury or within one week if they had no time off work. Where they are suffering from any long-term effects relating to the accident or adjustments are required, a personal specific risk assessment must be completed.

7.2 Witherslack have three categories for accidents where injuries have been caused.

Minor = injury does not require treatment, or first aid can be administered on site

Serious = injury requires treatment by a medical professional offsite, head injury, time off work or child to adult assault

Major = injury could be life threatening and/ or requires significant treatment or rehabilitation

The Health and Safety Compliance Lead and Regional Director must be made aware of any serious and major accidents as well as events that may need reporting to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). They must be contacted within 2 working days of the accident and always prior to the submission of the RIDDOR report. There are several guidance documents available on what requires reporting under RIDDOR and help completing a report.

7.3 An [Accident Investigation Form \(SHEF63\)](#) and the collation of additional information may be completed for serious or major accidents. The investigation process may be followed where an insurance claim has been made or is likely, a RIDDOR is reported, or the accident is significant, and a full investigation would be beneficial for wider learnings. The Health and Safety Compliance Lead will advise when this is required.

If an investigation is required, the following information must be collated and saved in the setting health and safety folder/ file in an electronic format:

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- Accident record
- Accident de-brief and follow-up
- Witness statements from all employees present
- Risk assessment in place at the time of the accident (activity being undertaken/area of accident)
- Risk assessment review following accident

The following information may also be collated where relevant:

- Photographs of area where the accident occurred and/or equipment being used
- RIDDOR report
- Training records
- Checks or maintenance records related to equipment involved in accident

7.4 We promote the recording of near miss events to allow us to look at the likelihood of future injuries through trend analysis. It is also important to create a culture where everyone is involved in identifying areas of concern and contributing to ways to reduce risk going forward. A [Near Miss Investigation Form \(SHEF64\)](#) or software form must be completed for all events where an injury has not occurred but with the potential to have with slightly different circumstances. If any injury or harm has been caused, an accident form is to be completed.

7.5 We are committed to providing sufficient provision for first aid, to achieve this we will:

- Appoint and train a suitable number of employees to be first aid responders
- Display information with details of the trained first aiders available
- Provide suitable and sufficient first aid equipment
- Provide a defibrillator for use in settings

First aid applied incorrectly can cause further injury and delay the healing process and may lead to the person giving treatment putting themselves at risk of injury, contracting illness or disease through exposure to a bodily fluid. We therefore only advise that trained first aiders give treatment.

The [Witherslack Group First Aid Policy](#) provides details on how many first aiders are required to be trained in each setting.

8 PREMISES SAFETY

8.1 We aim to provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone and a key element of this is designing, providing, and managing our buildings, structures, fixed plant, and equipment. Each setting has a schedule of statutory inspections, testing, servicing, checks, and maintenance to ensure we stay legally compliant. Our site maintenance teams and property team are supported by contractors to ensure that we are effectively managing our premises.

We schedule proactive upgrades, refurbishments, and extensions as necessary for organizational need and have a process in place for reactive work and repairs.

8.2 All electrical systems are installed by a competent person and inspected every 5 years. There is a testing regime in place for portable appliances, and we advise that all electrical appliances are visually examined for damage prior to every use.

8.3 The cleanliness and tidiness of our environments are essential in reducing the risk of accidents and all staff have a responsibility in ensuring all workplaces are kept clean and free of rubbish. Welfare facilities are provided, maintained, and kept clean with regular sanitisation of work surfaces and touch points. Waste bins must be emptied at least once per day.

9 WORK EQUIPMENT, CONTRACTORS, AND SUPPLIERS

9.1 Work equipment is any machinery, appliance, tool, or installation provided for your use at work and incorporates all types of items that may be used every day or only from time to time from a pencil through to a minibus. We are aware that it is important to ensure work equipment provided is fit for purpose, safe to use and where necessary serviced and inspected as required.

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Due to the wide range of different work equipment being used, the risk from each varies depending on the equipment and the task being undertaken. It is important that training, instruction and/ or information is given on any equipment that is to be used, especially where it is unfamiliar or there is a risk of injury during its use. The risk assessment for the task being carried out provides information on the type of instruction needed and controls that should be in place.

The [Work Equipment Safe Operating Procedure \(SHESOP01\)](#) provides information on the steps to be followed before acquiring equipment.

- 9.2** Personal protective equipment (PPE) is any equipment or clothing that protects the user against health and safety risk at work. It includes items such as gloves, aprons, hi-visibility clothing, eye protection, hard hats, face masks and safety footwear. Where an activity requires the use of personal protective equipment, this is detailed in the risk assessment, and it is a requirement that it be worn by all employees when undertaking the task. Training in the correct wearing and use of PPE is completed with all employees as necessary as required by their job role.

PPE must be purchased from a reputable supplier and have a UKCA conformity mark and be used for the use intended. PPE should be stored in a suitable location to ensure it is clean, hygienic, and ready to use when needed. Employees must report any issue or fault with PPE to their Line Manager.

- 9.3** Contractors completing work may not be familiar with our practices, young people or specific controls we have in place. It is therefore important that all work undertaken by contractors is properly planned and managed. We have specific controls and procedures to ensure any work being undertaken on our behalf by contractors is carried out safely and a setting specific risk assessment should be in place for the works where young people are on site.

The following factors are considered as part of our procedure for vetting contractors:

- A health and safety policy and management system in place
- Suitable insurance is in place
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments, method statements and safe systems of work are in being followed
- Competent and trained staff are used

- 9.3** All work equipment, goods, and services should be purchased from reputable suppliers in line with the [Witherslack Procurement Policy](#) and considering the health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees, young people, and members of the public who may be affected by our operations.

Suppliers and service providers must adhere to all relevant legislative requirements, and we may undertake checks to ensure they can work safely and healthily in our sites. Where goods are being delivered to settings, suppliers must contact reception in advance of delivery and offload the goods as instructed. No goods should be left external to the building unless there has been prior agreement in writing.

10 CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH)

- 10.1** We consider and manage exposure to any chemical, fume, dust, mist, or biological agent that is present in our organisation and has been identified as being a risk to health. Any individuals who feel that have been or are at risk of exposure should complete an accident or near miss form so this can be investigated.

We control the risk by:

- Ensuring our risk assessment process considers hazardous substances and effective control measures are in place
- Reviewing products in use on a regular basis to check if less hazardous products are available and using non-hazardous products wherever possible
- Having an approved list of cleaning products that must be purchased via our approved suppliers
- Having COSHH risk assessments for all products being used and these being available to access

- 10.2** Prior to undertaking any activities that may lead to exposure to a hazardous substance, a risk assessment must have been completed considering the risks.

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Any products purchased with a hazard pictogram on the label (an example is shown here for one type of hazard – corrosive), **must not be used until a data sheet has been acquired and a COSHH risk assessment completed**. The information on a COSHH risk assessment must be understood by all those using the product and PPE worn where required.

All cleaning products must be purchased through our procurement partner, Lyreco and Biohygiene products should be used where their brand of product is available for the use required.

11 EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

11.1 We are aware that an emergency situation may occur at any time, and we take steps to prepare for these events to ensure all employees and young people are confident in taking the right action. We have procedures in place for the management of fire safety and other emergency situations that may require evacuation or lockdown. In each building we ensure:

- The building has been designed to allow safe egress in an emergency with suitable fire exits, signage, and lighting in place.
- Security systems are in place to ensure unauthorised access is controlled.
- A fire alarm system is in place and regularly maintained to give early warning of fire.
- Procedures are in place for raising the alarm for emergency situations such as fire or lockdown.
- Emergency equipment is in place as required from the risk assessment process.
- All fire and emergency systems and equipment are regularly checked, and records kept.
- All employees are aware of the emergency procedures, and these are regularly practiced ensuring familiarity.

The Head Teacher or Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring all employees and visitors are aware of the action to take in the event of an emergency. All employees have a responsibility to alert their Line Manager of an emergency and follow the procedures in place and the training and information received.

11.2 The Witherslack Group Fire Policy provides the detail on the requirements in place for managing fire safety. Please refer to this document for more information on fire safety management.

11.3 To manage the risk from security incidents when lockdown of the setting is required:

1. A setting specific Lockdown Procedure must be in place detailing what action to take in the event of an evacuation, invacuation (partial lockdown), or full lockdown being required. A [Lockdown Procedure Template \(SHEF32\)](#) and [Lockdown Procedure Guidance \(SHEG32\)](#) are available to ensure the procedures include all the relevant detail.
2. A review of the Lockdown Procedures must be completed at least every 12 months. Schools and Learning Centres must complete this review at the start of the academic year and have trained and communicated information to all staff within the first half term. Children's Homes can choose the most appropriate time to complete this review considering the likely time an incident may occur, staff turnover, and staff knowledge of the procedure. The persons who took part in the review must be recorded (in meeting minutes or on review record) and the procedure documentation updated to show the latest review date.
3. Staff training must be completed following the procedures review and all staff must receive information on the action to be taken in the event of a security incident and understand their role and responsibilities in the event of a security incident. This training must be recorded.
4. A practice/ drill must be completed at least annually and recorded. The minimum requirement for a practice involves the senior leadership team walking through the procedure and validating the plans will be effective. However, to develop staff competencies and give practice in carrying out their roles, where possible this should be a drill and include the whole staff team. Where appropriate young people can be involved in the practice, but it is not recommended for children of primary school age or younger or those who may be overly sensitive to the scenario being practised.

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5. Information on safety and security must be shared with staff on a regular basis, this should be at least half-termly/ every 6 weeks. This information should include:
 - Identifying suspicious behaviour, activities or items
 - Action to take in the event of a suspicious item, bomb threat or terrorist situation
 - Safety and security measures in place at your setting and how to ensure they are effective
 - Refresher of Lockdown Procedures - roles and responsibilities, actions to take and communication methods

It is recommended that in addition to staff knowledge and competency consideration be given to how safety and security can be discussed with young people in an appropriate, safe, and effective way.

More detailed information is included in the [Lockdown Procedure Guidance \(SHEG32\)](#).

- 11.4 A bespoke personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) will be put agreed for individuals who may not be able to reach the assembly point unaided or within a satisfactory time in the event of an emergency. PEEP's may be required for individuals who required permanent support but also for those with a temporary or short-term condition such as a broken leg. A person specific risk assessment must be completed for those individuals which will help consider the support needed for the PEEP.

12 EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 12.1 All employees who work for the organisation complete a health questionnaire. This will identify if any additional considerations are needed and if a person specific risk assessment needs to be completed. We have access to an occupational health team who can offer advice and additional support.

Any health condition that is thought to be caused from work related activities must be reported to the Head Teacher or Registered Manager as well as the Health and Safety Compliance Lead.

- 12.2 We are aware that safeguarding the health of our employees is as important as the management of safety and we are committed to providing a healthy environment for everyone. Risk assessments are in place that include the management of stress, bullying and poor mental health.

The Witherslack Staff Wellbeing Policy provides more information on the resources that are available.

- 12.3 The abuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances can affect health, work performance, and safety. All employees have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by their actions while they are at work. Witherslack Group have a zero tolerance of using drugs or alcohol whilst at work. All premises and company vehicles are a smoking, illegal drug, and alcohol-free zone. Smoking (including vaping/ e-cigarettes) must be carried out off site, away from entrances and out of sight from the view of young people and visitors.

- 12.4 Lone workers are those who work in any situation or area for significant periods of time without colleagues nearby. This includes working alone with a young person in a building or vehicle, meeting someone away from the setting like a parent or someone from another organisation (especially for the first time) or those working as cleaners or maintenance when the setting is shut.

We recognise that employees who lone work are at greater risk than those with the support of colleagues nearby, so all activities where lone working is necessary must be risk assessed to ensure we have suitable controls in place. It is the Line Managers responsibility to ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is in place. The [Lone Working Guidance \(SHEG06\)](#) provides more information and details appropriate control measures that can be implemented.

13 DEFINITIONS

- 13.1 **Accident** – An event that results in injury or ill health.
- 13.2 **As far as reasonably practicable** – To a level where applying further control measures is grossly disproportionate to the benefit that would be gained.
- 13.3 **Competence** – The combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely.
- 13.4 **Dangerous occurrence** – A specific reportable event as defined by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

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- 13.5 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)** – Devices or equipment with an alphanumeric or graphic display screen includes computers, laptops, mobile phones and handheld touch screen devices.
- 13.6 Dynamic Risk Assessment** – Carried out immediately before and during an activity to build on general risk assessments and allows active responses to changing situations and risk.
- 13.7 Hazard** - A hazard is something that has the potential to cause harm or ill health effects on a person or persons.
- 13.8 ISO 45001 standard** – An internationally recognised specification for safety and health management systems.
- 13.9 Major Accident** – An accident leading to a fatality, amputation, over 10% burns, crush injury, loss of consciousness, blindness or any injury that could be life threatening and/ or requires significant treatment or rehabilitation.
- 13.10 Minor Accident** – An accident leading to an injury that does not require treatment, or where first aid can be administered on site.
- 13.11 Near Miss** – An unplanned and unwanted event that did not lead to injury or illness but had the potential to do so.
- 13.12 Occupational safety and health management system** – A framework of interrelated elements to achieve the objectives of an organisation through the alignment of policies, procedures, and processes.
- 13.13 Risk** - Risk is the likelihood combined with the severity of harm being caused when exposed to a hazard.
- 13.14 Risk Assessment** – A systematic process of identifying hazards, evaluating the risks associated with those hazards and determining the control measures needed to reduce the likelihood or consequence of harm.
- 13.15 Serious Accident** – An accident leading to an injury that requires treatment by a medical professional offsite, an NHS 111 call, time off work, an inoculation or follow up GP appointments and any head related injury.

14 REFERENCES

14.1 Health and Safety Legislation:

[The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
[The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
[Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#)
[Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 \(RIDDOR\)](#)
[Health and Safety \(First Aid\) Regulations 1981](#)
[The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
[Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 \(PUWER\)](#)
[Electricity at Work Regulations 1989](#)
[Food Safety Act 1990](#)
[Food Hygiene Regulations 2019](#)
[Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012](#)
[Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2004 \(COSHH\)](#)
[Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005](#)
[Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](#)
[Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations 1992](#)
[Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) at Work Regulations 1992](#)
[The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004](#)
[The Health Act 2006](#)

14.2 Educational Legislation:

[Education \(School Premises\) Regulations 2012](#)
[School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#)
[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
[School Inspections Act 1996](#)
[Education Act 2011](#)
[The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)

14.3 Children's Homes Legislation:

[The Children's Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](#)

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14.4 Significant Guidance:

[Managing for health and safety \(HSG65\)](#)

[Leading health and safety at work \(INDG417\)](#)

[DfE - Protective security and preparedness for educational settings](#)

15 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

SHEOP01 - Work Equipment Safe Operating Procedure

SHEOP02 - SHE Regulatory Visits Procedure

SHEG41 - Risk Assessment List

SHEF41 - General Risk Assessment Template

SHEF61 - Employee/ Visitor Accident Record

SHEF62 - Young Person/ Pupil Accident Record

SHEF63 - Accident Investigation Form

SHEF64 - Near Miss Investigation Form

SHEF65 - Accident Record Serial Number Sequence Sheets

SHEG61 - RIDDOR Decision Flow

SHEG62 - RIDDOR Completion Guidance

SHEG63 - RIDDOR HSE A Brief Guide

SHEG64 - RIDDOR HSE Schools Guidance

SHEG65 - Accident Record Guidelines for Completion – Staff/ Visitors and Young People

SHEG02 - Checks and Control Schedule – Educational and Homes

SHEF04 - COSHH Risk Assessment Template

SHEF05 - COSHH Product Register

SHEG04 - COSHH HSE Guidance

SHEF31 - Fire Emergency Procedure Template

SHEF32 - Lockdown Procedure Template

SHEG32 - Lockdown Procedure Guidance

SHEG06 - Lone Working Guidance

SHEG07 – HSE Lone Working Guidance

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