

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION

Health and Safety Policy

Policy Number *SVF018*
Version Number *05*
Issue Date *October 2025*
Review Date *October 2026*



1 TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	<u>VERSION HISTORY</u>	3
3	<u>GENERAL STATEMENT</u>	4
3.1	SODBURY VALE FEDERATION & THE SCHOOLS	4
3.2	STATEMENT OF POLICY	4
3.3	REVIEW	4
4	<u>ORGANISATION</u>	5
4.1	GOVERNORS	5
4.2	EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER	5
4.3	H&S COORDINATOR	6
4.4	ACCREDITED H&S REPRESENTATIVE	6
4.5	EMPLOYEES (ALL)	6
4.6	PUPILS	7
5	<u>ARRANGEMENTS</u>	7
5.1	STRUCTURE AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION	7
5.2	ACCIDENT RECORDING / REPORTING	8
5.3	ASBESTOS	9
5.4	COMPUTERS	9
5.5	CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES	10
5.6	CONTRACTORS ON SITE	10
5.7	LONE WORKING	12
5.8	ON LINE SAFETY	12
5.9	MEDICAL NEEDS AND FIRST AID	12
5.10	FIRST AID	13
5.11	INFECTIOUS DISEASES	14
5.12	MEDICAL NEEDS	15
5.13	RISK ASSESMENTS	15
5.14	HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES	15
5.15	MANUAL HANDLING	16
5.16	WORKPLACE	16
5.17	TRAINING OF STAFF IN HEALTH AND SAFETY	17
5.18	FIRE PRECAUTIONS	17
5.19	NOISE	18
5.20	SECURITY	18
5.21	WORKING AT HEIGHT	18
5.22	SAFEGUARDING	19
5.23	SLIPS AND TRIPS	19
5.24	WELLBEING	19
5.25	VIOLENCE TO STAFF	19
5.26	EMERGENCY PLAN	19
5.27	TRANSPORT OF PUPILS	20
5.28	VEHICLE MOVEMENT ON-SITE	20

6 SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS 20

6.1 ART 20

6.2 FOOD ACTIVITIES 21

6.3 POTTERY 22

6.4 SCHOOL TRIPS 23

6.5 SCIENCE 24

6.6 SPORT / PE 24

6.7 SWIMMING ARRANGEMENTS 24

6.8 TECHNOLOGY 25

6.9 EQUIPMENT 26

APPENDICES 27

7 APPENDIX 1 - GUIDE TO FOOD ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOL. 1

8 APPENDIX 2 – SJM AND HOP MANUAL HANDLING – LIST OF REGULAR OPERATIONS 2

9 APPENDIX 3 - SAFE MAIL HANDLING 0

2 VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Reason for Issue	Date of Issue
01	Initial Issue for Federation	July 2022
02	Yearly Update	July 2023
03	Overview check by H&S Governor	Nov 2023
04	Yearly Update	Sep 2024
05	Yearly Update	Oct 2025

3 GENERAL STATEMENT

3.1 SODBURY VALE FEDERATION & THE SCHOOLS

This policy is produced for the SODBURY VALE FEDERATION of schools, covering St John's Mead and Horton Primary Schools School and is supplemental to the Local Authority Health and Safety Policy Statement.

Where this document refers to the school or schools this includes all school buildings, including the Nursery at St John's Mead and all grounds enclosed within the outer perimeter fencing and boundary which is all subject to this document.

Where the policy refers to school or schools it is relevant to both St John's Mead and Horton Schools equally unless stated otherwise.

3.2 STATEMENT OF POLICY

Sodbury Vale Federation (SVF), considers the health, safety and welfare of staff and pupils to be of utmost importance, achieving a safe and healthy working environment is essential to the school's goal to promote excellence in teaching and learning.

It is the policy of Sodbury Vale Federation, which comprises St John's Mead and Horton Primary schools to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- The health, safety and welfare of its employees whilst they are at work, as well as others who may be affected by the school's undertakings, including pupils, comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation.
- The school recognises its responsibility to promote a culture where H&S issues are discussed in an open and positive way to achieve improved standards and safe methods of work.
- People with specific responsibilities for H&S are identified in Part 4 of this policy and the arrangements implemented to meet the above requirements are as detailed in Part 5 of this policy.

3.3 REVIEW

This Policy is reviewed and updated annually.

4 ORGANISATION

4.1 GOVERNORS

The Federation Governors will:

- Promote a sensible approach to health and safety and ensure competent health and safety advice is obtained.
- Ensure a health and safety policy is in place and regularly reviewed.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the school is following the employer's policy and procedures e.g. through regular discussions at governance meetings.
- Ensure staff receive adequate training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.
- Work in close partnership with the Executive Headteacher and senior management team to support sensible health and safety management and to challenge as appropriate.
- Ensure risk assessments of work activities are undertaken and recorded.
- Provide sufficient funding for health and safety.
- Ensure regular safety inspections, at least three a year, are undertaken and that findings are recorded and progressed.
- Establish and maintain a positive health and safety culture.

4.2 EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the school is following the employer's health and safety policy and has effective arrangements for managing the real health and safety risks at school.
- Maintain effective communications with employers, governors, and the school workforce, and give clear information to students and visitors, including contractors, regarding the significant risks on site.
- Make sure that staff have the appropriate training and competencies to deal with risks in their areas of responsibility.
- Consult and work with recognised safety representatives and safety committees.
- Make sure that staff understand their responsibilities and know how to access support and advice to help them manage risks responsibly.
- Obtain competent health and safety advice to properly assist the school management to comply with its health and safety obligations.
- Ensure risk assessments of work activities are undertaken, recorded and regularly reviewed.
- Ensure regular safety inspections, at least three per year, are undertaken and that issues identified are actioned or programmed as necessary.
- If he/she delegates H&S duties to an individual, referred to as the H&S Coordinator, he/she ensures that the duties are clearly defined, the person is competent to carry them out and that sufficient resources are allocated to enable them to be carried out.

4.3 H&S COORDINATOR

The Health and Safety Coordinator for the Sodbury Vale Federation is the School Business Manager. With the support and guidance of the designated H&S service provider, which fulfils the required role of 'competent person', they will:

- Be the contact for H&S advice/information provided to the school and will liaise with the Executive Headteacher or relevant employees to ensure advice is acted upon or information disseminated as necessary.
- Lead on all changes of Health and Safety Legislation
- Advise the Executive Headteacher and Governors on action required to comply with relevant H&S Legislation.
- In consultation with Executive Headteacher / Governors, set timescales / ensure work is carried out to meet the requirements of H&S Legislation.
- Carry out the regular safety inspections, at least 3 three annually.
- Receive all accident/incident reports, investigate where necessary and report significant accidents to HSE as required under RIDDOR.

4.4 ACCREDITED H&S REPRESENTATIVE

- Accredited H&S representatives are trade union representatives, appointed by trade union members working for the Local Authority and formally recognised as employee representatives by the employer.
- The Accredited H&S Representatives' rights are covered by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

4.5 EMPLOYEES (ALL)

All employees, contractors and volunteer helpers must:

- Take reasonable care for their health and safety at work and that of other people who might be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Report immediately, or as soon as practicable, any defects noted with plant, equipment, machinery or the workplace generally to their line manager or other designated person.
- Not misuse anything provided for health and safety purposes.
- Report any accident, near miss incident, dangerous occurrence or case of ill health arising out of work and cooperate with management in investigating such accidents or incidents.
- Cooperate with management in respect of complying with H&S requirements.
- Ensure that their own vehicle insurance covers them for any use of the vehicle for work purposes.

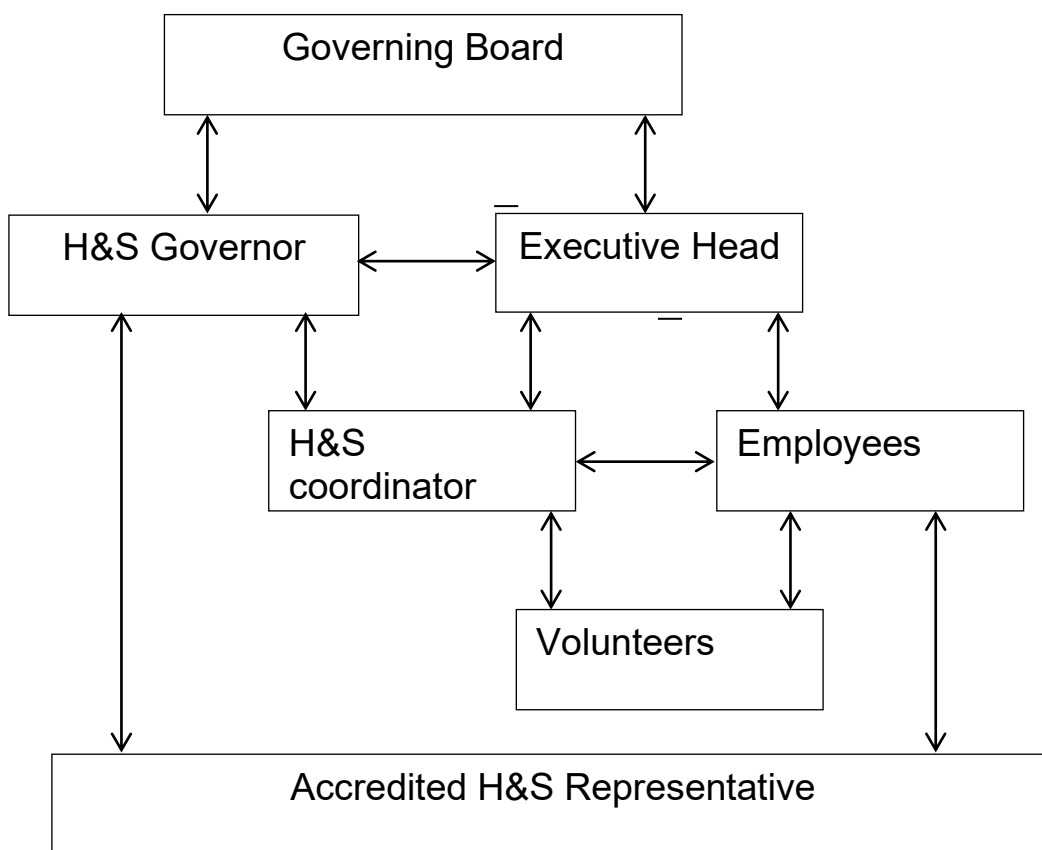
4.6 PUPILS

Pupils are expected to:

- Comply with school rules relating to general behaviour.
- Comply with information and instruction provided for safety reasons.
- In cases of emergency to remain quiet, listen and obey instructions given by teachers / staff.
- Not to misuse anything provided for H&S reasons.

5 ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 STRUCTURE AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION



The following arrangements have been established through risk assessment at school level or are the national standards adopted by SVF. This section of the policy is split into two parts, part one is the school wide procedures, general arrangements, and part two is the more activity-based arrangements, specific arrangements.

5.2 ACCIDENT RECORDING / REPORTING

5.2.1 ACCIDENTS

All accidents in school, or related to school activities, will be recorded, and, where appropriate investigated and, if necessary, reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences, Regulations, see (RIDDOR). The school will follow HSE guidance for incident reporting in schools.

5.2.2 RIDDOR

Certain work-related injuries to a member of staff or a child must, by law, be recorded and reported. The employer is responsible for this, but staff may be asked to prepare the report. Employers must report accidents which result in:

- death
- specified injuries
 - Fractures (other than fingers, thumbs and toes)
 - Amputations
 - Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight
 - Any crash injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs
 - Serious burns
 - Any scalping requiring hospital treatment
 - Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
 - Any injury arising from working in an enclosed space which leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness, or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- Over 7-day injuries (where an employee is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 7 consecutive days).
- Where there is an accident connected to the work activity which causes injury to students, members of the public or other people not at work and they are taken from the scene of an accident to hospital for treatment to that injury (examinations and diagnostic tests do not constitute 'treatment' in such circumstances)
- Specified dangerous occurrences – where something happens that does not result in an injury but could have done.

5.2.3 Near Miss Incidents

For any near miss incident, which is an incident with the potential to have caused injury to a person or damage to property, a record is to be completed and sent to the H&S Coordinator who will then decide if it needs to be forwarded to the School's H&S Committee. This will be the case for any major structural collapse, any explosion, or any fire which causes the closure of a room or more.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

5.2.4 Violent Incidents

For any violent incident involving staff, violence being non-consensual physical violence, i.e. does not include physical interaction during sporting activity, then a school record will be completed and reviewed by the Executive Headteacher. Risk assessments relating to that work activity will be reviewed in the light of the incident to ensure that suitable control measures are in place

5.3 ASBESTOS

Surveys of the Asbestos within both schools have been undertaken by the Local Authority and are updated and managed by the School's Asbestos Management Plan. Where asbestos has been identified / strongly presumed to be present, this information has been summarised in the Asbestos Management Plan (AMP). The AMP is kept in the office of both schools and condition checks as necessary are carried out by the H&S Coordinator.

Any major work planned and/or work involving access to roof voids, demolition, or drilling in ceiling/roof/walls must be approved in advance to ensure asbestos is not likely to be disturbed.

All staff are advised that asbestos containing materials in school are only labelled in places where pupils have access so always check before pinning, drilling or otherwise potentially damaging walls, ceilings, floors etc. Do not assume there is no asbestos present.

Any contractors who might need to access roof voids or drill into ceilings/floors/walls will be notified of where asbestos is identified/strongly presumed and will sign to confirm they have been made aware. A contractor sign in sheet will be used.

5.4 COMPUTERS

5.4.1 General

All computers in use within school, whether PC's or laptops, together with associated equipment such as projectors, are purchased from reputable suppliers and installed in line with relevant guidance.

5.4.2 Computer workstation assessments

To comply with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations, any employee who is a 'regular computer user' will complete a self-assessment for their workstation, the completed self-assessment will be reviewed by the H&S Coordinator. Such employees are also entitled to a free eye test, claim forms available from school offices, and payment for a basic set of glasses where they are required mainly for use with DSE.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

5.4.3 Laptop computers

The school recognises that laptop computers and similar devices such as 'tablets' are not designed to be used for extended periods. If staff are likely to spend extended time working on the laptop, then the school will consider measures to reduce the possibility of 'repetitive strain' type injuries. Specifically, use of a separate keyboard, setting the laptop up on a surface so the top of the screen is at eye level and sitting in a supportive seat are recommended.

5.5 CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES

The school fulfils its legal duty to consult with employees on matters of health and safety by:

- having H&S as a standard item on the agenda of all senior leadership team and staff meetings.
- where appointed, to consult with trade union accredited Safety Representatives in good time on all health and safety issues. Accredited Safety Representatives or recognised employee H&S representatives will be invited to become a member of the school's Safety Committee.

5.6 CONTRACTORS ON SITE

5.6.1 General

The school will ensure that any contractors on site are competent and will be approved to work on site before being allowed to commence work. They will be provided with information relating to hazards that may affect them and the relevant control measures in place within the school. Any contractors working on site will provide copies of their safe practice and will cooperate with the emergency procedures in place for the school.

5.6.2 Service Contractors

Service contractors are contractors who have regular access to site as specified in a contract. Such contractors' visits can vary from an annual visit, e.g. to service boilers, check fire extinguishers etc. to those on site daily, e.g. cleaning or catering staff. The contract specifies what work is expected of them and what they can expect from the school.

Their personnel will follow their own safe systems of work but their working methods do consider how they will impact upon the staff / pupils / other visitors on site. The school will provide details of its safe systems of work to the contractors where relevant and in the case of the cleaning / catering contractors will be consulted with them over emergency arrangements. A copy of this policy will also be provided to them.

5.6.3 Building Contractors

These are those contractors who attend site to undertake any building works. This can vary from simply replacing a broken window to remodelling a building. The following is a general

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

risk assessment on these activities which identifies the potential hazards and how these will be minimised/eliminated.

Hazards associated with building works relate to personal injury or damage to health caused by:

- Slips / trips / falls as a result of contamination of surfaces by spillages, trailing leads or unprotected edges.
- Being hit by falling objects dropped by persons working above head height.
- Inhalation of smoke/fumes through heating substances or use of same, i.e. paint/varnish/tar etc.
- Coming into contact with machinery and vehicles.

The above is only a brief outline of the hazards associated with this activity that are likely to occur in areas where staff and pupils have access. Such hazards are controlled by following the arrangements listed below and through supervision of pupils.

5.6.4 Small Scale Building Works

This will include day-to-day maintenance work and all work undertaken on site where a pre-site meeting has not taken place. All contractors must report to the office on their arrival and under no circumstances are they to commence work until they are given approval to do so by the Executive Headteacher or other appropriate member of school staff.

Before any work is commenced, it is essential that the Executive Headteacher be made aware of:

- what work is to be undertaken
- where the work is to be carried out
- an indication of the likely timescale
- what equipment is to be used
- what services are required

Before work is to commence, the contractors must be advised by the Executive Headteacher of:

- where they can gain access to services,
- what the fire precautions are for the building, i.e. upon hearing the alarm, which is a continuous bell, they must exit the building immediately and report to designated fire assembly point, any particular problems with the work, i.e. access still required to the area.

The contractors must be advised who to contact on site if they have a problem.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

5.6.5 Large Scale Works

This encompasses all work where a pre site meeting is required. In normal circumstances this will involve work where part of the site is completely handed over to the contractors. Such work may come under the requirements of the Construction Design and Management Regulations and in such cases the school will appoint a Planning Supervisor.

For all large scale works a pre meeting will need to take place and the Executive Headteacher, or other designated person from the school, will be involved in the meeting. This meeting will identify timescales for work, methodology (noisy work done when school is unoccupied wherever possible), access requirements, emergency access requirements, etc.

5.7 LONE WORKING

The school will identify lone working activities and lone workers. The risks to lone workers will be assessed and steps taken to avoid or control the risks where necessary. Lone workers will be fully involved in the risk assessment process. The school will take steps to ensure risks are removed where possible or put in place control measures.

5.8 ON LINE SAFETY

The federation has online and E-safety policies; these can be found on the schools' websites. The policies indicate that there is a whole school approach to E-safety.

5.9 MEDICAL NEEDS AND FIRST AID

SVF will aim to exceed the basic recommendations for first aiders made by the Council. The majority of teaching staff and teacher assistants hold the relevant First Aid qualification. Staff are provided with the relevant training every three years. The appointed persons are:

Name	Role	Key stage	Training type	Completed	Expiry
Heidi Britton	Teacher	EYFS (Nursery)	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	22/11/22	22/11/25
Elizabeth Craig	TA	EYFS	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	22/11/22	22/11/25
Elizabeth Carver	Teacher	Rec/KS1	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	22/11/22	22/11/25
Faye Dare	Teacher	EYFS	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Sarah Minett	TA	KS1	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Charlotte Walters	Teacher	EYFS (Nursery)	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	23/03/23	23/03/26
Jayne Gray	TA	EYFS (Nursery)	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	23/03/23	23/03/26

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Hannah Denley	Admin		Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	23/03/23	23/03/26
Sophie Didcott	TA	EYFS (Nursery)	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Rebecca Jones	TA	EYFS (Nursery)	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Jessica Tai	TA	EYFS/KS1	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	19/06/28
Kirsty Flaherty-List	TA	EYFS/KS1	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Debbie Greenslade	TA/LBS	KS1	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Heather Jones	TA	HOP	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Lisa Sullivan	TA	KS2	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Selina Hodey	TA/LBS	KS2	Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Natalie Goddard	Family Liaison/LBS		Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Emma Page	Head of School		Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Sarah Cook	Admin		Emergency First Aid at Work	03/01/23	03/01/26
Jo Heritage	TA/LBS	KS2	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Sara Gray	TA	HOP	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27
Susan Harvey	TA	HOP	Pediatric First Aid (2 day course)	04/06/24	04/06/27

5.10 FIRST AID

Both schools have first aid risk assessments, which are reviewed annually and will implement the identified control measures. The control measures will include first aid equipment, trained first aiders, and information for employees on first-aid arrangements.

5.10.1 Following An Accident

In all cases where an accident involves a serious injury, e.g. broken bone, or where there is any doubt about the injury the injured person is not to be moved, unless in danger, until assessed by the appointed person. The appointed person will decide what action is to be taken but where they are in doubt as to the severity of the injury the advice is to obtain immediate medical attention by dialling 999 and asking for an ambulance. In cases involving pupils, the

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

parent/guardian should be contacted as soon as possible, but this should not result in a delay obtaining medical attention.

For cases involving injuries to pupils that are less serious, e.g. sprains, strains, cuts etc. parents/guardians will be contacted and advised of the situation and asked to take pupil to hospital/GP.

In other cases, e.g. where no injury is visible or a pupil bumps their head, the pupil will be observed. If concerns increase medical attention may be obtained but in all cases the parents will be advised of the injury.

5.10.2 Recording

Any accident where first aid is administered is to be recorded either in the pupil accident book or on an Accident / Incident / Violence form as indicated in 3.1.1 Accident / Incident / recording / reporting.

5.10.3 First Aid Boxes/Materials

These are located in:

St Johns Mead

- Staff Room
- Disabled Toilet
- Green Hall
- Kitchen
- Resource Centre

Horton Primary

- Main office
- By main entrance
- There is also a portable kit which is taken to PE lessons at the Village Hall

All boxes contain only approved materials. The boxes are available for use by all staff/adult visitors on site.

5.10.4 Injuries Involving Bleeding

Staff dealing with injuries involving bleeding must wear appropriate protective clothing. Disposable gloves and disposal aprons are provided for this purpose and kept in the first aid box

5.11 INFECTIOUS DISEASES

SVF follows the national guidance produced by Public Health England (PHE) 'Guidance on infection Control in Schools and other Child Care Settings'.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

This is on full display in both staffrooms, adjacent to the phone for ready referral in cases when it is needed. Supplementary information on local contact is contained in the Handbook for Schools on Infectious Diseases kept in the Headteacher's Office.

The Nursery at SJM School has a Control of Infectious Disease Wall chart for information and reference.

5.12 MEDICAL NEEDS

Pupils with medical conditions will be properly supported so that wherever possible they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.

The governing body will ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents, to make sure that the needs of pupils with medical conditions are effectively supported.

5.13 RISK ASSESSMENTS

SVF recognises the need to complete, record and implement risk assessments for any significant risks arising from school activities. Each school will ensure that the risk assessments are effectively communicated to those undertaking or affected by the activities, and that identified control measures are put in place. The school will ensure employees completing the risk assessments are competent to do so.

Each school has a Yearly Health and Safety Review which identifies compliance issues and priorities for action.

The school risk assessment process is ongoing but comprises the following specific elements. In all case staff, pupils and other visitors may be affected by the activity.

5.13.1 TEACHING ACTIVITIES

The significant outcomes from the risk assessments on teaching activities are either included in the point of use text/scheme of work/job sheet or the standard followed for the individual activity. These assessments form part of, or are referred to in, this safety policy.

Where specific arrangements are included in this policy the risks associated with the specific activity are identified together with the necessary control measures.

5.14 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Each school recognises the requirement to assess hazardous substances, either in use or created by school activities is a requirement of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations. Hazardous substances are those identified as corrosive,

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

irritant, toxic, harmful and any with a Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL), which will include dusts, e.g. pottery, wood etc., and biological hazards.

Each school's COSHH assessment is kept in the relevant school office and summary information is kept where substances are stored/used.

5.15 MANUAL HANDLING

All manual handling activities in the school will be identified and risk assessed in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations. The risk assessment will be recorded and reviewed regularly. Measures will be taken to avoid the need for employees to undertake those manual handling activities which involve a risk of being injured.

Where manual handling cannot be avoided the school will make every effort to provide appropriate mechanical assistance to make handling the load less likely to cause injury, and that where aids are supplied, employees will be trained in their use.

A summary of the regular operations undertaken within the school is attached at Appendix 2. All staff are to familiarise themselves with this.

5.15.1 Equipment/Materials

All staff are advised that before undertaking any manual handling task they ask themselves "CAN I MOVE THE OBJECTS WHERE I NEED TO, SAFELY AND WITHOUT RISKS TO HEALTH"? Where staff feel the answer is no, or they are unsure, they must not attempt the operation until they have obtained assistance. Staff will then ask themselves the above question again considering the assistance obtained i.e. a second person or making use of a trolley.

A list of regular manual handling tasks undertaken, including movement of stationery, raw materials etc. have been listed to indicate what this involves and this information is attached as Appendix 2.

5.15.2 Manual Handling – Pupils

All pupils who may need to have manual handling support are assessed using the manual handling assessment forms included in the H&S Manual. The initial assessment will identify if there is a significant risk of injury and subsequent to this if a significant risk of injury is identified further assessment information will be identified.

Only staff who have received manual handling training or instruction are to participate in tasks involving the lifting of persons. For all such tasks a manual handling assessment must be undertaken.

5.16 WORKPLACE

SVF is committed to achieving and maintaining the highest possible standards of health, safety and welfare for all employees, pupils and young people, their families and other

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

persons affected by our activities. A key part of this is the provision of a safe workplace – the school will ensure that workplace standards are safe and compliant including a workplace inspection program and prompt resolution of reported safety issues and defects.

A water safety monitoring and management program is in place. An assessment has been completed on the hot and cold water systems and measures have been introduced to manage the risk of legionnaire's disease.

The schools fixed electrical installation is inspected and certified by a competent contractor every 5 years in accordance with industry best practice.

Portable electrical equipment is to be visually checked by staff before use, i.e. check equipment and plug undamaged and that wire is not worn or loose entering equipment or plug and if any defects are noted the item is to be put out of use. In addition, portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person periodically as risk assessed in line with HSE guidelines.

5.17 TRAINING OF STAFF IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

5.17.1 Competency

SVF will ensure that all employees are competent to perform their roles. Competence is the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to perform a task safely. If competence falls short of requirements identified in a role profile then the employee will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to achieve the required level of competency.

5.17.2 Induction

All new staff will be provided with information on health and safety and be given health and safety induction training by their line manager including access to this policy. A record of induction training will be kept.

5.17.3 Risk Assessment

All staff with H&S risk assessment responsibilities will obtain support from the designated competent H&S provider to implement and review H&S risk assessments.

5.18 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

Each school will have a fire risk assessment completed to comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order and identifying the physical fire precautions in place, the measures to prevent fires starting, and the measures to ensure everyone can escape from the building in the event of a fire. The fire risk assessment is reviewed annually. Fire plans based on the outcomes have been produced and these are displayed.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

[Fire drills](#) – Fire drills are required to familiarise persons with the systems in place. Fire drills are carried out a minimum of three times a year. An evacuation caused by the accidental or malicious sounding of the fire alarms, can count as one of the required fire drills.

[Fire alarms](#) – Each school has a fire alarm system incorporating detection and break points. The fire alarm is sounded each week to ensure that it is working and can be heard throughout the school. This is recorded within a log held within the school offices.

[Fire extinguishers](#) – Fire extinguishers are subject to an annual check by competent contractors and on a weekly basis the extinguishers are visually checked by the caretaker to ensure that they are in position and that the pins are in place. All staff are aware that in the event of a fire the priority is to raise the alarm and evacuate the building, fire extinguishers are provided to aid escape if required but are not otherwise intended to be used.

5.19 NOISE

The Noise at Work Regulations identify noise levels at which specified action is required and also a general duty to reduce noise levels. Each school has undertaken a noise review and has not identified any areas or activities as likely to exceed the action levels. If employees have any questions on noise levels, they should initially speak to their line manager.

5.20 SECURITY

There are security risk assessment for the school sites which are regularly reviewed and updated, particularly following any security incidents. The control measures identified on the security risk assessment will be implemented and checked for effectiveness. Management of school security is overseen by the Executive Headteacher and School Business Manager.

5.21 WORKING AT HEIGHT

SVF recognizes the hazardous nature of work at height activities and the requirement of the Work at Height Regulations to identify and risk assess school work at height activities. The risk assessment must be recorded and identified control measures put in place. Work at height legislation identifies work at height as any work where someone or something can fall a distance likely to cause injury. This will include putting up displays if not able to stand on the ground to do so, accessing high level storage and any work where access equipment is needed, e.g. step ladder, ladders, scaffolds. Most employees will therefore undertake an element of work at height and any frequent operations and any involving use of equipment must be covered by a written work at height assessment. Within school the following written assessments are in place.

[Regular operations](#) – A summary of the regular operations undertaken has been produced which indicates what the work at height is, the frequency with which it is carried out and whether assessed as a high, medium or low risk. All employees must make themselves aware of this list and follow the procedures indicated.

[Specialist operations](#) – These are where specific high level access equipment is to be used and where additional information will be required. This will include use of access scaffolding and any specialist ladders.

5.22 SAFEGUARDING

SVF has a separate policy dealing with safeguarding and a designated officer has been appointed. A copy of this called 'Child Protection Policy' (SVF017) is kept within the policy folder in the office and on the schools' websites and all staff are made aware of this.

5.23 SLIPS AND TRIPS

SVF recognises that slips, trips and falls are a significant cause of accidents. All school staff have a responsibility to ensure they are vigilant and report or remove possible slip and trip hazards.

Each school will ensure that there is an effective reporting procedure in place so that identified hazards are resolved promptly by a designated individual.

5.24 WELLBEING

The wellbeing of employees is seen as an integral part of the schools' health and safety responsibilities. The governing body and Executive Headteacher have statutory obligations under a duty of care but also wish to promote an ethos of mutual respect and support across the workforce.

All employees have the right to a reasonable work life balance and to expect appropriate support or intervention when they experience health or personal difficulties. Employees are encouraged to raise any concerns with the Executive Headteacher or their line manager but also have access to a confidential counselling service. Sickness absence or health concerns will be dealt with under the schools' absence policy.

Occupational health services are available through the LA. South Gloucestershire Council using Cordell Health.

5.25 VIOLENCE TO STAFF

SVF will ensure there are procedures in place to inform staff on how to minimise risk from assault. It will be clear what line managers must do in instances where they or the staff they manage have been threatened with, or experience, violent assault or intimidating behavior in the course of, or as a consequence of, their duties. The procedures will include:

- How to identify threats to employees at an early stage
- The process for effective risk assessment of violence and aggression
- The implementation of required control measures
- Training and support considerations

5.26 EMERGENCY PLAN

Each school will put in place arrangements for crisis and emergency management to reduce the consequences of major hazards and risks and to action a recovery plan in the event of a serious incident or accident. This is documented within the school emergency plan document.

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

This will detail what is required and the actions to be taken in response to various emergencies, together with the responsibilities of those involved to action and report any such emergency. The emergency plan also contains details of the school services, water, gas electrical etc. This will be reviewed on an annual basis or as required on emerging issues.

5.27 TRANSPORT OF PUPILS

Use of Employees' vehicles – Employees can transport students/equipment in their own cars or drive to other venues during the working day. Employees who use their own cars must confirm that their insurance policy covers them for this purpose and need to hold Business Class insurance for the vehicle they use. The vehicle must also have a valid MOT certificate and road tax.

Use of Professional Transport - The school will check that transport and driver are hired in from a reputable source before employing their services for school trips etc.

Parents' Transport – If needing to use this option the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the students are advised of the venue and time of activity and that their son(s) / daughter(s) / ward(s) are required to be there at that time.

Insurance – The school will ensure that appropriate insurance arrangements are in place for transporting students where that has been organized by the school.

5.28 VEHICLE MOVEMENT ON-SITE

Each school will identify and risk assess on-site vehicle movements and put in place a traffic management plan to manage the risks in line with current workplace transport guidance e.g. segregation, marking and lighting. The plan will consider all aspects of on-site vehicle movements which may affect the safety of staff, pupils and visitors.

Any arrangements in place will be effectively communicated and clear signage put in place where required. The school will consider as part of the risk assessment vehicle movements occurring immediately outside the school premises which may be associated with school activities, such as staff arriving and leaving work, school buses delivering pupils and delivery vehicles. The implementation of identified control measures will be overseen by the School Business Manager.

6 SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 ART

The main hazards for art activities involve the substances used, and the school will include them in the schools' hazardous substances risk assessments where appropriate. Substances selected, particularly solvents and adhesives, will be suitable for intended use and age of pupils, particular attention should be given to the type of adhesives and solvents used. Pupils

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

will be provided with protective aprons etc. to prevent damage to clothing where necessary. The guidance available from CLEAPSS will be followed.

6.1.1 Precautions/Practice

All risks associated with damage to clothing and dust creation are addressed by ensuring:

- a) only small quantities of powder paints are to be mixed at one time
- b) that tables are covered to protect the surfaces and ease cleaning
- c) that cleanable aprons are worn by pupils involved in painting
- d) that paint pallets and brushes are washed up/out after use

6.2 FOOD ACTIVITIES

Each school has risk assessed the hazards associated with food activities including use of hot items, electrical appliances, cleanliness, food contamination / allergies, use of sharp objects, and emergency arrangements for fire and first aid. The schools will ensure that identified control measures are in place, and follow the guidance available from the Association for Science Education (ASE) as described in their 'Be Safe' publications.

The following hazards have been identified with this activity:

- a) burns, scalds etc. from use of hot water/oven/dishes/food
- b) electric shock relating to the use of electric equipment
- c) fire associated with burning food or faulty equipment
- d) cross contamination of food leading to food poisoning
- e) slips trips or falls due to spillages/obstructions on floors/uneven surfaces
- f) cuts through use of knives and other equipment, i.e. graters / peelers

Frying in hot fat or the boiling of sugar for fudge or toffee can be hazardous and is considered inappropriate for young children. **Neither of these activities should be undertaken.**

These hazards are controlled by the following.

6.2.1 Location

The risks associated with slips trips and falls are controlled as follows:

- When possible the oven is to be positioned/used where pupils and staff do not have to pass close by it. (This will either be in a designated work area or by positioning the mobile unit away from walkways.)
- The table on which food is to be prepared is to be positioned to allow easy access around it.
- The floor area where food activities are undertaken is level, easily cleanable and is kept free from obstructions
- Any spillages that occur are to be wiped up immediately. Pupils have been advised accordingly and will/can assist in mopping them up.

6.2.2 Equipment

The risks associated with electric shock, and cuts associated with use of knives and other equipment, are addressed by:

- Carrying out a visual inspection of all electrical equipment by staff prior to use. This includes mixers, kettles, ovens, microwaves etc. All portable electrical equipment is also subject to an annual portable appliance test.
- Ensuring that equipment is used in line with manufacturers' instructions and/or training received.
- Enforcing a prohibition on pupils using metal graters, portable electrical equipment and, dependant on age, sharp knives.
- Ensuring that all equipment provided for food activities is kept in good condition and only used for food activities.

6.2.3 Hygiene

The risks associated with cross contamination are addressed by:

- Ensuring that everyone, the adults in charge, helpers and pupils, wash their hands before and after handling food. Hands must also be washed after going to the toilet and prior to return if anyone leaves the room.
- Ensuring that the table(s) on which food is prepared are washed with cleaned prior to and after use or that the table is covered with a cleanable cover which is cleaned prior to and after use.
- Ensuring staff and pupils wear the protective clothing provided and that the protective clothing is only used for food activities. All staff/pupils will wear aprons and use oven gloves when handling hot dishes.
- Ensuring that raw meat, poultry and fish or products containing raw meat, poultry or fish are not brought into the classroom.
- Ensuring that pupils do not make food products that include raw egg in the final product e.g. peppermint creams, mayonnaise.

6.2.4 Emergency Provision

The following arrangements must be made to deal with emergency situations:

- A suitably stocked first aid box must be available in the room.
- A fire blanket and powder fire extinguisher must be in the room. The fire blanket is used for smothering fires, i.e. burning pans or if clothing is set alight. The carbon dioxide extinguisher is safe for use with electrical equipment.

NB If a carbon dioxide extinguisher is used the room is to be evacuated.

6.3 POTTERY

Each school has risk assessed the hazards associated with pottery activities including creation of dust, surface cross contamination. The school will ensure that identified control measures are in place and follow the guidance available from CLEAPSS

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

These are controlled by the following:-

6.3.1 Clay

The following arrangements will minimise the creation of dust and cross contamination:

- only premixed clay is to be used by pupils and the clay is to be cut into workable sizes
- desks are to be protected from staining by a suitable covering. Covering is to be cleaned or disposed of at the end of the lesson
- spillages of clay are to be cleared up immediately using wet mopping or sponging techniques. NB Brushing of dried clay is prohibited
- only "pre mixed paint on glazes" are to be used and ONLY by pupils in Key Stage 2, following individual risk assessment.

The risk assessment needs to identify if the pupils are capable of understanding the risks associated with the use of the glazes, whether restrictions are required on the numbers using the glazes at one time and what supervision is felt to be appropriate.

6.3.2 Personal Protective Equipment

The following helps to address the risks associated with damage to clothing:

- all staff and pupils working with clay will wear aprons.

6.3.3 HOUSEKEEPING

The following arrangements help to reduce risks relating to dust creation:

- all staff and pupils will wash hands and the equipment used with clay regularly and at the end of the lesson.
- Equipment/hands are to be washed in the *classroom sink only*, which has a sink trap, in order to prevent blockages forming in other sinks.

6.4 SCHOOL TRIPS

Each school undertakes a variety of off-site visits and management arrangements are described in the federation's School Trip Policy. SVF recognises that duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 apply to the risk management of school trips and that the employer has the overall legal responsibility and accountability for the health, safety and welfare for the school staff, and for the health and safety of pupils, visitors and volunteers.

Where the off-site visit involves an 'adventure activity' (climbing, trekking, caving, water sports) in the UK, the school will ensure that the provider is licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). The school will also, where appropriate, use providers

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

with the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LoTC) Quality Badge which recognises providers who offer good quality learning outside the classroom and manage risk effectively.

6.5 SCIENCE

Each school has risk assessed the hazards associated with science activities using the guidance from CLEAPSS and ASE as described in the publication 'Be Safe'. The school will ensure that identified control measures are in place.

6.6 SPORT / PE

Each school has risk assessed the hazards associated with sport and PE activities and follows the guidance contained in 'Safe Practice in Physical Education' produced by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE). Sports equipment is inspected and maintained annually.

The main risks associated with this activity relate to personal injury as a result of falls, collisions and being hit by objects. These risks are controlled by following the practices indicated in the above standard.

The general requirements are as follow:

- Before any lesson pupils will change into appropriate clothing/footwear and remove any jewellery. (See LA Website for further advice.)
- Staff will remove jewellery and change into appropriate footwear. It is acceptable for staff to wear watches where necessary to time lessons.
- Pupils assisting with setting out apparatus will be shown correct methods for lifting/moving equipment.
- The teacher in charge will check equipment prior to its use to ensure correct position/fitment.
- Staff must undertake a manual handling assessment on behalf of the pupils, i.e. ask themselves *CAN THE PUPILS MOVE THE OBJECTS WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SAFELY AND WITHOUT RISKS TO THEIR HEALTH?* before allowing them to undertake any manual handling task. In particular staff will ensure that where two or more pupils assist with a task the pupils are roughly similar in stature so that one individual does not carry a disproportionate part of the load
- Mats are only to be positioned to identify landing areas or routes to be taken. They are not to be used to try and soften impacts from falls.
- Staff are only to use equipment they are familiar with.

For specific activities the safety requirements are as contained in the Book 'Safe Practice in PE', which is kept in the Executive Headteacher's Offices.

6.7 SWIMMING ARRANGEMENTS

Each school has risk assessed the hazards associated with swimming and follows the guidance contained in 'Safe Practice in Physical Education' produced by the Association for

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Physical Education (AfPE). Each school will ensure that identified control measures are in place.

6.8 TECHNOLOGY

Each school follows the guidance for safe practice in technology contained in “Make It Safe” produced by the National Association of Advisers and Inspectors in Design and Technology (NAAIDT), and guidance available via CLEAPSS

The hazards associated with this activity include:

- Exposure to hazardous substances, i.e. glues/dusts,
- Damage to clothing,
- Personal injury, i.e. eye injury due to flying particles when being worked and cuts relating to use of equipment.

These are controlled by:

6.8.1 Location

Risks associated with personal injury are partly addressed by:

- a) ensuring work is only to be undertaken on suitable surfaces.

Suitable surfaces are those that are large enough to accommodate the work, and which are flat and stable.

6.8.2 Personal Protective Equipment

Risks associated with damage to clothes and partly those associated with personal injury are addressed by:

- a) ensuring that, where appropriate, staff/pupils wear personal protective equipment in the form of aprons and goggles/spectacles
- b) the personal protective equipment is to be stored to minimise damage and ensure easy availability.
- c) Aprons are to be hung up and goggles/spectacles stored in cloth pockets.

6.8.3 Equipment

Risks associated with Personal Injury are partly addressed by:

- a) ensuring equipment is kept clean and stored so as to minimise damage / help pupils to find the correct tool.

6.8.4 Hazardous Substances

Risks associated with hazardous substances have been addressed as part of the school COSHH assessment. (See 3.1.6.2)

6.9 EQUIPMENT

All equipment on site will be maintained in efficient working order to ensure that it is safe to use. Without detracting from the generality of the above the following arrangements have been made.

6.9.1 Maintenance Arrangements

a) FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fire extinguishers are subject to an annual check by contractor and are checked on a regular basis by the caretaker to ensure that they are in position and that the pins are in place.

b) PE EQUIPMENT

All PE equipment is subject to regular visual inspection, carried out by staff prior to use. If defects are noted, the PE coordinator will assess whether the equipment can remain in use or whether it needs to be taken out of use pending repair.

On an annual basis an independent service contractor inspects the PE equipment.

c) ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

All electrical equipment is the subject of regular visual inspections, carried out by staff prior to the use of the equipment, to identify any damage to the equipment, plug or cable. If defects are identified then the equipment is to be put out of use until it is checked, to ensure safe operation, or the defect is remedied.

All electrical equipment is the subject of an annual portable appliance test.

d) PLAY EQUIPMENT

All play equipment provided by the school is subject to an ongoing inspection and maintenance programme to ensure that it is fit for purpose. If condition checks indicate defects then the equipment may be taken out of use while repaired or, if beyond economic repair, removed. Accidents and incidents relating to play equipment will be monitored and, if the use of a particular item of play equipment is linked to repeated accidents then its suitability will be reviewed.

6.9.2 General Use Equipment

CRAFT KNIVES –

These are only to be used in the latter stages of Key Stage 2 and only under direct supervision. Craft knives are only to be used in conjunction with a safety ruler.

GLUE GUNS –

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Glue guns are only to be used in the latter stages of Key Stage 2 and only under direct supervision. Glue guns will only be used where the electrical circuit contains a residual current device (rcd), either in the ring main or with a plug in red.

GUILLOTINES –

These are only to be used by staff and must be fitted / used with the safety guard in position.

OTHER HAND HELD ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT –

The use of other hand held electrical equipment, i.e. soldering irons, electric mixers etc., by pupils is prohibited. Exceptions may be made to this rule but only where the item of electrical equipment is felt to be necessary and then only after a risk assessment has been carried out on its proposed use.

PENS/PENCILS –

Only pens with appropriate tops, those with a hole in them, or those with the tops removed are to be used in school. This is essential as there have been incidents where pupils have swallowed solid pen tops and choked. Class teachers will carry out ongoing checks of the pens in use to ensure that this requirement is met.

Pencils are not to be sharpened at both ends and pupils are to be advised of the dangers associated with this practice, i.e. the potential for eye injury.

ROTARY TRIMMERS –

When in use these must be placed on a flat surface that is able to accommodate the whole of the trimmer, without it overhanging the edges of the surface. The trimmer can be used by pupils but is only to be moved by staff.

SCISSORS –

Sharp pointed scissors are not to be used before Key Stage 2. Where used pupils must be made aware of the dangers of pointed scissors near eyes.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Food Activities
Appendix 2	SJM AND HOP MANUAL HANDLING – LIST OF REGULAR OPERATIONS
Appendix 3	Safe Handling of Suspicious Letters and Parcels

7 Appendix 1 - GUIDE TO FOOD ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOL.

Primary schools are not required to meet the stringent requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations in relation to food activities in Design Technology. However, work with food should reflect the very best of domestic practice and hygiene practices should be carried out as appropriate.

Whenever possible children should be encouraged to be involved in creating a safe and hygienic working environment.

An adult should clean all work surfaces with a mild disinfecting solution e.g. Dettol or Milton

8 Appendix 2 – SJM AND HOP MANUAL HANDLING – LIST OF REGULAR OPERATIONS

ACTIVITY	WHAT THIS INVOLVES AND FREQUENCY	HOW TASK IS PERFORMED	COMMENTS	OUTCOME
Receipt and movement of Post (Letters & Packages)	Post is delivered to office reception and may need to be moved to other points around school. This occurs most days	Small items of post are carried where they are required either by staff or pupils. Larger packages, including any that are an awkward size or exceed 10kg, are moved by staff using sack truck or trolley.	Some issues negotiating doors with trolleys but they can be wedged open if no one to assist. Avoid movement with trolleys at peak pedestrian movement times	Low risk
Receipt and Movement of Stationery	Stationery is delivered to entrance hallway by driver and left against the wall. This occurs at irregular intervals during the course of each term.	Most items are moved by staff into store cupboards. Some items are delivered to locations around school and are either carried by staff or pupils If larger packages, including any that are an awkward size or exceed 10kg, are needed to be moved to other locations staff will either use sack truck or trolley.	Although stationery is delivered in bulk, movement into store or around school is done in small amounts. Avoid movement with trolleys at peak pedestrian movement times	Low risk
Movement of pianos	The pianos are sometimes wheeled from side wall into position at front of hall for singing practice or into a classroom. This can occur at any time during the week.	Two staff, one at each end of the piano, push/pull the piano.	No issues identified	Low risk

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

<p>Movement and setting up of Stage Blocks</p>	<p>Are set out in the halls for concerts. This occurs once or twice a year for concerts.</p>	<p>Teacher and other volunteers pick up blocks and place them on a trolley and transport them to the hall. They are then set up to create a stage. Blocks are lightweight, less than 10kg, but awkward so normally two people will carry and position each block. Reverse system when putting away</p>	<p>Generally works well as plenty of volunteers to assist. No issues identified.</p>	<p>Low risk</p>
<p>Gritting of pathways</p>	<p>This occurs during winter months and will involve the spreading of grit/ on pathways which are icy or have been cleared of snow. This is an occasional operation.</p>	<p>Supplies of grit are kept in caretaker's cupboard and the caretaker fills buckets/bins and moves quantities around site, spreading on pathways etc. with shovel.</p>	<p>The task can be undertaken in poor weather conditions and caretaker can be restricted in movement due to clothing. Caretaker will concentrate on access points and pathways as priority.</p>	<p>Medium risk due to conditions. In extreme situations school will be closed.</p>
<p>Setting out and putting away chairs and tables for lunch</p>	<p>Chairs and tables are moved from store opening off of the hall into the hall. This occurs daily.</p>	<p>Tables are slid out of storeroom and slid or carried by staff to their place in the hall. Staff then extend the table legs and then put the table upright. Chairs are moved using chair trolleys and are in stacks of a maximum of 8 chairs. Staff then take a maximum of two chairs off of the pile at a time and position around table. Reverse system when putting away</p>	<p>There is a time pressure for both operations but system generally works well.</p>	<p>Medium risk</p>
<p>Movement and handling of PE equipment</p>	<p>This involves the setting out of a variety of equipment and mats. Activity can be in hall or it may involve movement of</p>	<p>PE Coordinator has identified who is to move equipment, whether staff or pupils, and how the equipment is to be moved.</p>	<p>Staff have received instruction on the procedures to be followed.</p>	<p>Low/Medium risk</p>

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

	equipment into the playground. This occurs daily.	Details of the procedures are kept by the PE Coordinator and also displayed on or near to relevant equipment.		
Setting out and putting away chairs for concerts/meetings.	Chairs moved from store opening off of the hall into the hall. This occurs occasionally.	Chairs are moved using chair trolleys and are in stacks of a maximum of 8 chairs. Staff/pupils then take a maximum of two chairs off of the pile at a time and position Reverse system when putting away	Pupils involved in chair movement must be supervised. System generally works well.	Low /Medium risk

9 Appendix 3 - SAFE MAIL HANDLING

The Council has reviewed its protocols for handing mail, good sense and care should be used in inspecting and opening mail or packages

Good Practice

- Gently examine (feel) unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.
- Do not open letters with your hands; use letter opener
- Open letter and packages with a minimum movement to avoid spilling any contents
- Understand the advice given on the notice "Suspicious Mail Packages"

What you should do with Suspicious Packages

For unopened suspect packages that might contain an explosive device or hazardous substance

- Do not open the envelope or package
- Leave it and evacuate the room if that is practical and keep others from entering.
- Alternatively place the envelope in a plastic bag and place that in another plastic bag and seal, using gloves if available.

Notify your Manager, who should call the police by dialing 999 who will advise on further management.

Do not take the letter/package to the police.

What you should do for packages that are open and which contain suspicious material

Do not panic - Contain the Exposure

- Close off the room (doors and windows), do not allow anyone other than authorized emergency personnel to enter.
- Close the package or envelope to limit additional exposure. Do not clean powder up; keep others away.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or any other part of your body.
- If possible, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- If clothing is heavily contaminated, don't brush vigorously.
- If possible, close down the building's heating/air conditioning/ventilation system.
- Make a list of all people who had actual contact with the powder for investigating authorities.

Notify the Police

- Immediately contact the police who have well-rehearsed procedures for these circumstances by dialing 999. Advise your Manager.
- Do not take the letter/package to the police.

SUSPICIOUS MAIL PACKAGES

May come through the post or they may be delivered by hand. The likelihood of you ever receiving a suspicious package in the mail is remote. Unfortunately, however a small number of explosive devices and other items have been mailed over the years resulting in death, injury and destruction of property. Recently Anthrax organisms have been sent through the mail system in the USA. Information on Anthrax is held on the Council Intranet site.

Keep in Mind that a substance or bomb can be enclosed in either a parcel or an envelope, and its outward appearance is limited only by the imagination of the sender. However, from past experience suspect packages have exhibited some common characteristics, which may assist you in identifying a suspect mailing.

What it might look like

- Suspicious mail packages, letters and parcel bombs are envelopes and packages designed to kill or injure people and may have endorsements such as 'personal' or 'Private' on them. This factor is important when the addressee does not normally receive personal mail at the office.
- The addressee's name and or title may be inaccurate, with possibly incorrect spelling of common names, places or title.
- Packages may reflect distorted handwriting or the name and address may be prepared with homemade labels or cut and paste lettering.
- Packages may have protruding wire, aluminum foil, or stain visible.
- Previous letter bombs have been in plain brown envelopes approx. 5"x7" or 6"x8".
- Packages may have an excessive amount of postage stamps affixed, no postage or non-cancelled postage.
- Packages may be unprofessionally wrapped with several combinations of tape used to secure the package and may be endorsed with "Fragile – Handle With Care" or "Rush – No Delay".
- Packages may have an irregular shape, soft spots, and bulges, be lopsided, rigid, bulky or discolored.
- If there is a small hole in the envelope, treat as suspect. Such holes are usually made by withdrawal of the safety pin after priming the device.
- Any letter or package that has a suspicious or threatening message written on it.

What it might smell or sound like.

- They may permit a peculiar odor.
- Gelignite may be used as the main charge of the explosive and this has a strong smell of almonds or marzipan. If such a smell is present, treat as suspect.
- Parcel bombs may make a buzzing or ticking noise or a sloshing sound.

What it might feel like.

- Weight – If there appears to be excessive weight for the size, treat as suspect.
- Letters usually weigh up to 28 grams. Effective letter bombs will weigh no more than 57 grams and may be 5mm thick or more.
- Packages may feel rigid, uneven or lopsided.
- If there is any springiness in the letter, treat as suspect.
- Pressure or resistance may be noted when removing contents from an envelope.
- Loose Power.

If you are suspicious of a package, please follow the “safe Mail Handling – what you should do with suspicious packages” – guidelines.

If you have any reason to believe a letter or parcel is suspicious, do not take a chance or worry about possible embarrassment if the items turn out to be innocent.