

# 18. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

## General

1.1 Westminster Cathedral Choir School is owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster by whom the Board of Governors is appointed. The current Chair of Governors is Mr John Gibbs. He has appointed under him Mrs Flora Lyon who takes responsibility for raising and monitoring issues of Health and Safety in the School.

1.2 The Governing Body notes the provisions of **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974** (s.3 (1)), which states that it is the duty of every employer to conduct his or her business in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons who are not in his or her employment but who may be affected by it are not exposed to risks to their health and safety, and accepts that it has a responsibility to take all reasonably practicable steps to secure the Health and Safety of pupils, staff and others using the School premises or participating in School sponsored activities. It believes that the prevention of accidents, injury or loss is essential to the efficient operation of the School and is part of the good education of pupils.

1.3 The aim of Westminster Cathedral Choir School is 'To provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, pupils and visitors.'

1.4 The arrangements outlined in this statement and the various other safety provisions made by the Governing Body cannot prevent accidents or ensure safe and healthy working conditions. The Governing Body believes that only the adoption of safe methods of work and good practice by every individual can ensure everyone's personal health and safety. The Governing Body will take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce hazards to a minimum but all staff and pupils must appreciate that their own safety and that of others also depends on their individual conduct and vigilance while on the School premises or while taking part in School-sponsored activities. The Governing Body will also seek to encourage a positive safety culture throughout the School.

## 2. The duties of Westminster Cathedral Choir School

2.1 In the discharge of its duty Westminster Cathedral Choir School, through the Governing Body in consultation with the Head, will

a. make itself familiar with the requirements of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974** and any other Health and Safety legislation and codes of practices which are relevant to the work of the School, in particular the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992** and the simplified advice contained in **The Department for Education's Advice on Health & Safety for Schools 2011** (specifically those sections relevant to the (then DCSF) guidance

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on **Health & Safety Responsibilities & Powers 2001**, and **Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits 1998**).

- b. ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety throughout the School
- c. assess annually the effectiveness of this policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made
- d. identify and evaluate all risks relating to
  - i. accidents
  - ii. health
  - iii. School-sponsored activities (including work experience/shadowing)
- e. identify and evaluate risk control measures in order to select the most appropriate means of minimising risk to staff, pupils and others
- f. create and monitor the structures for managing risks and hazards. This will include liaising with the Westminster Cathedral fire, health and safety committee to deal with any issues arising from areas of the Cathedral complex that have shared usage

2.2 In particular, Westminster Cathedral Choir School undertakes to provide

- a. a safe place for staff and pupils to work including safe means of entry and exit
- b. plant, equipment and systems of work which are safe
- c. safe arrangements for the handling, storage and transport of articles and substances, in accordance with **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002**
- d. safe and healthy working conditions which take account of all appropriate:
  - i. statutory requirements
  - ii. codes of practice whether statutory or advisory
  - iii. guidance whether statutory or advisory
  - iv. supervision, training and instruction so that all staff and pupils can perform their School-related activities in a healthy and safe manner. All staff will be offered the opportunity to receive Health and Safety training which is appropriate to their duties and responsibilities and which will be given before an employee commences any relevant work. Wherever training is required by statute or considered necessary for the safety of staff, pupils and others then the Governing Body will ensure, within the financial resources available, that such training is provided. Pupils will receive such training where appropriate to the School and related activities, which they are carrying out. All training will be regularly updated.
  - v. necessary safety and protective equipment and clothing together with any necessary guidance, instruction and supervision.
  - vi. adequate welfare facilities.

2.3 So far as is reasonably practicable, Westminster Cathedral Choir School, through the Governing Body and the Head, will make arrangements for all staff, including temporary and voluntary and helpers and those on fixed-term contracts to receive comprehensive information on

- a. this policy
- b. all other relevant Health and Safety matters
- c. the instruction and training that will be given to all employees so that they may carry out their duties in a safe manner without placing themselves or others at risk.

### **3 The duties of the Head Master**

3.1 As well as the general duties which all members of staff have (see 3), the Head Master has overall responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and development of safe working practices and conditions for teaching staff, non-teaching staff, ancillary staff, pupils, visitors and any other person using the premises or engaged in activities sponsored by the School. The Head Master will take all reasonably practicable steps to achieve this end through the Head of Activities, the Heads of the appropriate departments, other senior members of Staff, Teachers and others as appropriate.

3.2 The Head Master is required to take all necessary and appropriate action to ensure that the requirements of all relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidelines are met in full at all times.

3.3 In particular, the Head Master will

- a. be aware of the basic requirements of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and any other Health and Safety legislation and codes of practices relevant to the work of the School
- b. ensure at all times, the health, safety and welfare of staff, pupils and others using the School premises or facilities or services or attending or taking part in School-sponsored activities
- c. ensure safe working conditions for the health, safety and welfare of staff, pupils and others using the School premises and facilities
- d. ensure safe working practices and procedures throughout the School including those relating to the provision and use of machinery and other apparatus, so that each task is carried out to the required standards and so that all risks are controlled
- e. consult with members of staff, including the safety representatives, on Health and Safety issues
- f. encourage all employees to suggest ways and means of reducing risks
- g. monitor the standard of Health and Safety throughout the School, including all School-based activities, encourage staff, pupils and others to achieve the highest possible standards and discipline those who consistently fail to consider their own well-being or the health and safety of others.

### **4. Duties of the Head of Activities**

4.1 The Head of Activities is responsible to the Board of Governors, through the Head Master, for

- a. chairing the School's Health & Safety Committees, one academic and one domestic
- b. arranging systems of risk assessment to allow the prompt identification of potential hazards

- c. carrying out periodic reviews and safety audits on the findings of the risk assessment, collating accident and incident information and, when necessary, carry out accident and incident investigations
- d. identifying the training needs of staff and pupils and ensure, within the financial resources available, that all members of staff and pupils who have identified training needs receive adequate and appropriate training in Health and Safety matters encouraging staff, pupils and others to promote Health and Safety
- e. ensuring that any defects in the premises, its plant, equipment or facilities which relate to or may affect the Health and Safety of staff, pupils and others are made safe without delay
- f. monitoring first aid and welfare provision
- g. monitoring the management structure, along with the Head and Governors.
- h. In the absence of the Head of Activities, the Head of Boarding (Robert O'Brien) assumes these responsibilities

## **5. The duties of supervisory staff**

5.1 All supervisory staff (e.g. Head of Subjects or Departments and House Masters) will make themselves familiar with the requirements of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974** and any other Health and Safety legislation and codes of practice that are relevant to the work of their area of responsibility.

5.2 In addition to the general duties which all members of staff have (see 6.0), they will be responsible to the Head Master, through the Head of Activities, for the implementation and operation of the School's Health and Safety policy within their relevant Departments and areas of responsibility. They will also be responsible for identifying potential hazards within their Departments and writing appropriate risk assessments.

5.3 They will take a direct interest in the School's Health and Safety Policy and in helping other members of staff, pupils and others to comply with its requirements.

5.4 As part of their day-to-day responsibilities they will ensure that:

- a. safe methods of working exist and are implemented throughout their department
- b. Health and safety regulations, rules, procedures and codes of practice are being applied effectively
- c. staff, pupils and others under their jurisdiction are instructed in safe working practices
- d. new employees working within their department are given instruction in safe working practices
- e. regular safety inspections are made in their area of responsibility as required by the Head of Activities
- f. positive, corrective action is taken where necessary to ensure the Health and Safety of all staff, pupils and others

- h. all plant, machinery and equipment in the department in which they work is adequately guarded
- i. all plant, machinery and equipment in the department in which they work is in good and safe working order
- j. all reasonably practicable steps are taken to prevent the unauthorised or improper use of all plant, machinery and equipment in the department in which they work
- k. appropriate protective clothing and equipment, first aid and fire appliances are provided and readily available in the department in which they work
- l. toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances in the department in which they work are correctly used, stored and labelled in accordance with **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002** (for more information on COSHH, please refer to the regulations' specific webpage operated by the Health & Safety Executive (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>))
- m. they monitor the standard of Health and Safety throughout the Department in which they work, encourage staff, pupils and others to achieve the highest possible standards of Health and Safety and discipline those who consistently fail to consider their own wellbeing or the health and safety of others
- n. all the signs used meet the statutory requirements
- o. all Health and Safety information and concerns are communicated to the Head of Activities.

## **6. The duties of all members of staff**

6.1 All staff will make themselves familiar with the requirements of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974** and any other Health and Safety legislation and codes of practice that are relevant to the work of the Department in which they work. They should:

- a. take responsible care of their own Health and Safety and any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
- b. as regards any duty or requirements imposed on his or her employer or any other persons by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, co-operate with him or her so far as necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.

6.2 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety aspects of their work and to avoid conduct which would put them or anyone else at risk.

In particular all members of staff will:

- a. be familiar with the safety policy and any and all safety regulations as laid down by the Governing Body
- b. ensure Health and Safety regulations, rules, routines and procedures are being applied effectively by both staff and pupils
- c. see that all plant, machinery and equipment is adequately guarded
- d. see that all plant, machinery and equipment is in good and safe working order
- e. not make unauthorised or improper use of plant, machinery and equipment

- f. use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective equipment or safety devices which may be supplied
- g. ensure that toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled
- h. report any defects in the premises, plant, equipment and facilities which they observe to the Head of Activities
- i. take an active interest in promoting Health and Safety and suggest ways of reducing risks.

## **7. Hirers, contractors and others**

7.1 When the premises are used for purposes not under the direction of the Head Master then the principal person in charge (For example a hirer of a venue within the School or a contractor at work on site) of the activities for which the premises are in use will have responsibility for safe practices as indicated in paragraph 3.0 of this document.

7.2 The Head Master will seek to ensure that hirers, contractors and others who use the School premises conduct themselves and carryout their operations in such a manner that all statutory and advisory safety requirements are met at all times. He will do this through the Head of Activities, whose responsibility it is to brief those hirers, contractors and others who use the School premises on their responsibilities regarding Health & Safety before they commence work on-site.

7.3 When the School premises or facilities are being used out of normal School hours for a School-sponsored activity (such as a Parents' Association event) then, for the purposes of this policy, the organiser of that activity, even if an employee, will be treated as a hirer and will comply with the requirements of this section.

7.4 When the premises are hired to persons outside the employ of the Governing Body, it will be a condition for all hirers, contractors and others using the School premises or facilities that they are familiar with this policy, that they comply with all safety directives of the Governing Body and that they will not without the prior consent of the Governing Body:

- a. introduce equipment for use on the School premises
- b. alter fixed installations
- c. remove fire and safety notices or equipment
- d. take any action that may create hazards for persons using the premises or the staff or pupils of the School.

7.5 All contractors who work on the School premises are required to ensure safe working practices by their own employees under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and must pay due regard to the safety of all persons using the premises in accordance with standards 3-4 of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974**.

7.6 In instances where the contractor creates hazardous conditions and refuses to eliminate them or to take action to make them safe the Head Master will take such actions as are necessary to prevent persons in his or her care from risk of injury.

7.7 The Governing Body draws the attention of all users of the School premises (including hirers and contractors) to section 8 of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974**, which states that no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything which is provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

## **8. Staff consultative arrangements**

8.1 The Governing Body, through the Head Master, will make arrangements for the establishment of a Health and Safety committee by incorporating agenda items on Health and Safety matters into existing consultative groups. Representation on this committee will cover all appropriate areas of work or special hazards. As a group, the nominated safety representatives of each accredited trade union or staff association will be offered a number of places on this committee and should decide amongst themselves which individuals should sit on the committee.

8.2 The composition of the two Health and Safety Committees is included in Appendix I.

## **9. Codes of practice and safety rules**

9.1 In consultation with the Governing Body (where appropriate) and taking into account the requirements of this statement, the Health and Safety committee will approve (where necessary) codes of practice for the observation of safety requirements in School.

9.2 From time to time the Department for Education (DfE), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other regulatory or advisory bodies will issue codes of practice on particular topics for the guidance of Heads and others who are in control of educational premises, which will normally incorporate such codes into their Health and Safety policy and procedures. If the Head Master considers the inclusion of all or any such documents into this policy to be inappropriate, he or she will be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Governing Body that he or she has already introduced codes of practice and methods of working which achieve a similar or higher standard of Health and Safety.

## **10. Risk assessment**

10.1 The Head Master, through the Head of Activities will ensure that a risk assessment survey of the premises, methods of work and all School-sponsored on-site activities is conducted annually, or more frequently, if necessary. This survey will identify all defects and deficiencies, together with the necessary remedial action or

risk control measures. The results of all such surveys will be reported to the Governing Body. Risk assessments for specific School trips published in the School calendar are verified by the Head of Activities and kept on record.

## **11. Emergency plans**

11.1 The Head Master, through the Head of Activities, will ensure that emergency plans are prepared to cover all foreseeable major incidents which could put at risk the occupants or users of the School. These plans will indicate the actions to be taken in the event of a major incident so that everything possible is done to:

- a. save life
- b. prevent injury
- c. minimise loss.

This sequence will determine the priorities of the emergency plan. Details of Fire Evacuation Procedures and Security Procedures are contained in a separate document. A copy of the Security Alert Notice is also separately attached.

11.2 The plans will be agreed by the Governing Body and be regularly rehearsed by staff and pupils. The result of all such rehearsals will form part of the regular risk assessment survey and the outcome will be reported to the Governing Body.

## **12. First aid**

12.1 The arrangements for first aid provision will be adequate to cope with all foreseeable major incidents.

12.2 The number of certified First-Aiders will not, at any time, be less than the number required by law. (1:50)

12.3 At the discretion of the Governing Body other staff will be given such training in first aid techniques as is required to give them a basic, minimum level of competence. The Governing Body will agree this level after seeking appropriate advice. The number of such trained but uncertified First-Aiders will be determined by the Governing Body as that being sufficient to meet the needs of all foreseeable circumstances.

12.4 Supplies of first aid material will be held at various locations throughout the School. The Head of Activities will determine these locations. All staff will be advised of their position. The materials will be checked regularly by Matron and any deficiencies made good without delay.

12.5 Adequate and appropriate first aid provision will form part of the arrangements for all out-of-School activities.

12.6 A record will be made of each occasion any member of staff, pupil or other person receives first aid treatment either on the School premises or as part of a

School-related activity. All first aid treatment is recorded by the Matron and First-Aiders in medical books kept in the School's infirmary. There is also an Accident book (also kept in the School's infirmary) which logs the occurrence of any significant accident that occurs on site.

12.7 When an accident is required to be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), this will be carried out by Matron or Alexander Thomas.

12.8 For further information on RIDDOR and First Aid, please see the First Aid and Role of First Aider Policy in Section 38 of the Staff Handbook.

### **13. Review**

13.1 The Governing Body will review this policy statement annually and update, modify or amend it as it considers necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff and pupils.

## Appendix I: Committee Members

### Academic Health and Safety Committee

Chair: The Head of Activities

Secretary: Lesley Vigurs

Neil McLaughlan

Philip Latham

Mark Kennedy

Jon Jenkins

Claire Roberts

Rob O'Brien

Neil Fairbairn

### Domestic Health and Safety Committee

Chair: The Head of Activities

Secretary: The Head of Activities

Goreti Moniz

Anne Conway (Matron)

Beata Sochon

Kerriane Philips

Emma Foster

Grace Elliot

Person Responsible: The Head of Activities

Review date: February 2013

# FIRE RISK POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

1. Overall responsibility for fire precautions within Westminster Cathedral Choir School is vested in the Head of Activities. This Fire Risk Policy Statement reflects the importance which this School attaches to the safety of its staff, students, visitors and other persons who may be affected by its activities and its property.
2. Westminster Cathedral Choir School takes all reasonable and practicable steps to achieve the objectives and measures outlined below, in the manner that this statement sets out.

## THE POLICY

3. The School will comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2006 and all other applicable fire safety legislation and standards. Where the School could be granted exemptions from specific regulations, it is the School's policy that fire precaution standards and arrangements will be, so far as possible, at least equivalent to those which are set out in the Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guidelines.
4. Overall responsibilities for fire precautions are exercised through the members of the Health & Safety Committee. The Head of Activities delegates to Fire Wardens the proper application of the Fire Action Plan and procedures in their areas of responsibility.
5. All members of staff, students, contractors and visitors are required to follow the standing instructions and fire procedures approved by the Health & Safety Committee and issued to all staff. In particular, in the event of a fire alarm sounding in a School facility, occupants must evacuate the building and only re-enter upon the instruction of the designated Fire Marshall, the Security Officer or the Fire Brigade.

## OBJECTIVES

6. The Objectives of the Fire Risk Policy are to:
  - a. Safeguard all personnel in Westminster Cathedral Choir School occupied property, including visitors, from death or injury in the event of a fire or associated explosion.
  - b. Reduce fire incidences.

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c. Minimise the potential for fire to occur and disrupt the work of the School and cause damage to property and the environment.

7 In respect of all facilities, Westminster Cathedral Choir School will:

- a. Provide appropriate means of escape in case of fire
- b. Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for safe and effective use at all times.
- c. Provide the means of escape with adequate emergency lighting and maintain this in efficient working order.
- d. Provide and maintain in working order the alarm system or the means of giving warning in case of fire.
- e. Provide and maintain in working order all fire fighting appliances and devices.
- f. Provide appropriate instruction and training for all School staff on the actions to be taken and dealing with a fire.
- g. Provide safety plans stating the precautions to be observed and steps to be taken to protect people and property.
- h. Ensure that measures which are commensurate with the risks and the significance of consequential losses are taken to protect buildings, installations and equipment from fire.

## **MANAGEMENT AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

8. Individual responsibilities and legal duties in respect of fire safety for all of School staff and students are contained in the Fire Action Plan. These Instructions also specify the responsibilities of managers, staff and students in respect of fire safety.

9. All staff are to ensure that designated fire doors are not obstructed or held open other than by an authorised device connected to the fire alarm system, or interfered with in any way.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

10. Fire drills will take place twice termly, once when only boarders and supervising staff are present in School and once when the School is open to day boys and visitors. The results of fire drills and any subsequent recommendations will be recorded in the Fire Log Book, which is kept in the reception area of the School. From time to time the responsible person will place obstacles in exits to force evacuation down alternate routes, as may well be the case in a real fire.

## **FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES**

The School makes every effort to ensure that the risks posed by flammable and hazardous substances are reduced so far as reasonably practicable. The use of flammable or hazardous substances at the School is restricted, in so far as is possible, to designated areas of the School such as the Science laboratory and the kitchens. Such substances will be safely stored in metal containers or cupboards when not in use; the cupboards will be clearly marked with the sign "Flammable Liquids". The containers or cupboards will be kept closed and locked at all times when not in use.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

11. The Head of Activities will arrange for regular fire risk assessments to be carried out by a competent external authority. Such assessments will encompass the fabric of the School building. In addition, all members of staff (see 5.2), have responsibility for identifying potential fire hazards within their Departments or areas of responsibility and including those hazards in the appropriate risk assessments.

## **STANDARDS AND MONITORING**

12. The Health & Safety Committee are responsible for the promulgation of the School Fire Policy, Fire Action Plan, standards and procedures. These are designed to reflect the statutory obligations and particular Fire Risk Management needs of Westminster Cathedral Choir School.

13. The Health & Safety Committee is to appoint a Fire Wardens Team who will be required to audit the effectiveness of the Schools Fire Risk Policy's and Fire Action Plan and report annually to the Health & Safety Committee.

14. The Health & Safety Committee will monitor the application of these arrangements within all areas of the School and will notify the Fire Wardens Team if, in its opinion, further measures are required to meet all legislative and other requirements.

15. This policy statement will be reviewed by the Fire Wardens Team annually or at more frequent intervals if there are relevant legislative changes.

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