

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: Education Resources Sub Committee	Subject: Health, Safety and Security
From: Director of Education	
Date: 26 June 1996	

Summary

This report introduces the policies and procedures for managing health and safety in the education department and highlights the current key priorities.

Recommendations

The sub committee is asked to:

1. approve the departmental statement of safety policy (appendix A)
2. note the current key issues in health, safety and security
3. request the director of education to make a progress report on health and safety at the end of session 1996-97.

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Report by the Director

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The education department gives the highest priority to the provision of the safest possible environment for all employees, pupils and other persons affected by the operation of the service. This responsibility derives from legal obligations, the service values of the department and the overriding concern for the care and welfare of young people in schools.
- 1.2 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 includes a legal requirement for "every employer to prepare and as often as may be appropriate revise a written statement of his general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of his employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all his employees".
- 1.3 Subsequently there have been many changes in the health and safety laws applicable to education with the most significant being the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. The following list includes the most important principles underpinning the various health and safety regulations:
- 1.3.1 there are obligations and duties affecting all involved in the work activity, including employers and employees
- 1.3.2 employers must take steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of employees and others affected by the activity. This includes a responsibility to issue policies, to establish procedures and to control identified risks
- 1.3.3 employers must employ competent staff to advise on health and safety measures and must also provide adequate training
- 1.3.4 employers must comply with regulations on specific issues such as display screen equipment
- 1.3.5 employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and co-operate in ensuring legal duties are complied with
- 1.3.6 trade unions may appoint safety representatives and they have the right to be consulted on health and safety issues and to carry out workplace inspections
- 1.3.7 decisions on what action should be taken to reduce or eliminate a risk may take account of the degree of risk and the financial costs involved.

2. POLICY AND PROCEDURES IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

2.1 A health and safety policy which details responsibility at all staff levels has been drafted in consultation with specialist staff in personnel services to ensure consistency with the corporate policy statement. It is attached as appendix A for sub-committee approval.

2.2 To ensure that establishments were kept fully informed about health and safety issues the previous authority issued a collated set of health and safety information circulars, guidelines and instructions which heads are obliged to keep fully updated and available to all staff for easy reference. This safety file is in 4 sections:

Section 1: master safety file of relevance to all establishments

Section 2: subject safety files with advice for particular curricular areas

Section 3: general safety file with advice for particular sectors of the service

Section 4: COSHH safety file with advice on the control of substances hazardous to health.

North Lanarkshire education department intends to maintain this system and an immediate priority is to update the safety file to meet the circumstances of the new authority.

3. KEY ISSUES IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1 The proposed key objectives in health, safety and security together with any recent progress in each under the previous authority are detailed below. It is worth noting that over the last 2 years the implementation of health and safety legislation deriving from EC directives was a particular priority. In addition, attention was given to ensuring that currently health and safety issues were highlighted for the education department in the new councils.

3.2 **Ensuring health and safety has a prominent place in the ethos, policy and procedures of individual establishments.**

Heads were encouraged to promote a positive health and safety culture, including the acceptance by all staff that the control of health and safety risks is an essential part of their daily responsibilities. North Lanarkshire education department will give a similar lead and it is proposed to re-issue an exemplar establishment safety policy (appendix B) for heads to customise to meet their individual circumstances.

3.3 **The continued implementation of the legislation deriving from the EC directives in health and safety.**

Guidelines were prepared for the following regulations and issued to heads of establishments:

- Management of health and safety at work regulations

- Manual handling operations regulations
- Display screen equipment regulations
- Personal protective equipment at work regulations
- Organisation of traffic routes (part of workplace regulations)

Each circular details the approaches to be adopted by the department in implementing the legislation and a key priority for the department is to continue this implementation. In addition, there will be discussions with Planning and Development about the other implications of the workplace regulations.

3.4 The development of risk assessment in the management of health and safety.

A central feature of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations is the use of risk assessment. Briefly, this requires the identification of hazards, the assessment of risk, the selection of priorities for action and the monitoring of progress. Procedures have been piloted in selected secondary schools and a current priority of the department is to extend this approach across all establishments and to other issues.

3.5 Training for staff in the management of health and safety.

Apart from recent appointments, all secondary school heads have attended health and safety management courses. A course has also been developed for primary school heads and a number of North Lanarkshire heads have attended. In addition, training for specialist staff has been given priority. Examples include first aid courses for designated staff in each establishment, programmes for all staff involved in swimming pool supervision and support for practical subject departments affected by new regulations such as COSHH and the EC directives. Such training will continue to have a high priority.

3.6 Review of the safety file, particularly curricular codes of practice.

As already indicated the master safety file is a collection of essential documentation for the management of health and safety. Over the last 2 years the codes of practice for science, technical education and pre-5 education have been revised and issued. These tasks will continue until completed.

In addition, attention will be given to enhancing the accessibility of the guidelines, for example adding the files to the DMR system so that they can be electronically downloaded and more easily updated.

3.7 Action to enhance security in schools.

As a result of existing concerns about school security and especially the implications of the Dunblane incident this issue is a major priority for the education department in North Lanarkshire. Heads have been asked to review their schools from a security perspective, to take any appropriate management

action and to recommend possible security-related adaptations to the department. These have been collated and are being costed in anticipation of a bid to the Scottish Office for additional capital funding to carry out work. In the new session security management advice will be issued to heads and support will be given towards the preparation of identification tags to be worn by staff and visitors. However, it is recognised that a balance must be kept between maximising security and maintaining a welcoming environment for parents and other visitors.

Among the strategies which have been highlighted by schools are the following:

- (i) calling police support in responding to security incidents
- (ii) the provision of office reception windows to improve continuous supervision at main entrances
- (iii) a range of building measures, including door control systems, signposting of entrances and routes, boundary fences, external lighting and closed circuit television. It is worth noting that door control systems have been included in the design specification of some new schools.
- (iv) internal telephone network to classrooms and the use of radio telephones in schools with annex buildings and for supervision of activities remote from the main building.
- (v) ensuring adherence to guidelines by staff from other departments involved in routine school visits. These include reporting to the school office on arrival, the wearing of photographic identification and avoiding informal contact with pupils while on the premises.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The sub committee is asked to:

- 1. approve the departmental statement of safety policy (appendix A)
- 2. note the current key issues in health, safety and security
- 3. request the director of education to make a progress report on health and safety at the end of session 1996-97.

July 1996

NORTH
LANARKSHIRE
COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF SAFETY
POLICY

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION **STATEMENT OF SAFETY POLICY**

This policy statement is relevant to all employees at the department of education.

It is issued by the director of education in support of North Lanarkshire Council's General Statement of Safety Policy.

1. The department of education of North Lanarkshire Council recognises its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act as an employer to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, pupils and other persons who may be affected by the operations of the department of education. Employees must likewise recognise their responsibilities under the act.
2. The director of education and those members of staff to whom he delegates responsibility will be responsible for implementing the departmental safety policy by creating and maintaining a positive ethos towards health and safety which secures the commitment and participation of all employees, and which ensures so far as is reasonably practicable the provision and maintenance of:-
 - A safe place of work and safe access to and egress from it;
 - A healthy working environment;
 - Equipment, machinery and systems of work which are safe and without risk to health;
 - Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage, transportation and disposal of materials;
 - Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their own safety and health at work;
 - Adequate welfare facilities
3. The director of education and those members of staff to whom he delegates responsibility will also take action to:-
 - Ensure the identification and assessment of the risks associated with all activities of the department with the aim of eliminating or controlling those risks, so far as reasonably practicable.
 - Plan for health and safety including the setting of realistic short and long term objectives.
 - Monitor and review performance to ensure that standards are maintained.
4. Although the overall responsibility for the departmental safety policy will rest with the director, the responsibility for the development, implementation and regular review of the policy will be delegated to the head of provisions and contract services. It will then be the duty of the head of service and thereafter senior members of staff, to whom specific areas of responsibility have been delegated, to ensure safe conditions of work for all employees and for such other persons who, although not employees, are engaged in lawful business on the premises of the department, and to obtain competent advice on safety and health matters where this is necessary.

5. Specialised advice to the director, the head of provisions and contract services and other senior staff will be provided by the North Lanarkshire Council health and safety officer and other professional advisors as required.
6. All employees will have a duty to co-operate in the implementation of departmental safety policy by:-
 - Acting in the course of their employment with due care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - Using correctly all such items provide by the department in accordance with the training and instructions they receive to enable them to use the items safely.
 - Co-operating so far as is necessary to enable the department to perform any duty or to comply with any requirements as a result of any health and safety legislation which may be in force.
7. Arrangements will be made by the director to co-operate fully with safety representatives appointed by recognised trade unions. This will include the provision of sufficient facilities, including reasonable time off for training to discharge their duties and for joint consultation on health and safety and welfare at work with employees for example through safety committees.
8. This policy statement will be added to or modified as required and will be reviewed annually. The organisation and arrangements to support this policy will be detailed in other circulars, codes of practice and guidelines which will be under constant review.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

EXEMPLAR SAFETY POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT OF ESTABLISHMENT SAFETY POLICY

Name of Educational Establishment: _____

Statement

It is the policy of this establishment to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all its staff and pupils. The establishment also acknowledges its responsibilities to all other persons who may be affected by its undertakings.

A high standard of health and safety performance is one of the education department's main objectives. In this establishment this standard will be achieved by:

- (a) creating and maintaining a positive health and safety culture which secures commitment and participation of all members of staff and encourages co-operation from the pupils;
- (b) meeting its responsibilities to staff and to other people including pupils in an approach which recognises that legal requirements are the minimum standard which must be achieved;
- (c) adopting a planned and systematic approach to the implementation of the education department's health and safety policy, which will enable the establishment to conform to, and apply, this policy as detailed in MSF/3 (General Statement of Safety Policy) and MSF/4 (Revised Standard Circular 20 - Application of the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 to the Education Service);
- (d) implementing, as appropriate, control measures identified by the education department's risk assessment programmes to comply with documents such as:
 - MSF/34(a) - European Community (EC) Directives;
 - MSF/34(e) - Guidelines for the Implementation of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations 1992; and
 - COSHH/2 - The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1988 - General Background Information.
- (e) planning health and safety including the setting of reasonably practicable short and long term objectives, deciding priorities and identifying appropriate financial resources to achieve those objectives; and
- (f) monitoring and reviewing performance on a regular basis to ensure that high standards are maintained.

Organisation

- (a) The head of this establishment will ensure that:
- (i) each individual is aware of, and undertakes, his/her responsibilities as defined in MSF/5 (Responsibility for Health, Safety and Welfare in the Education Service (Revised));
 - (ii) all concerned are made aware of the name of the senior member of staff responsible for health and safety matters in the establishment, the names and locations of the first aiders and appointed persons, the procedures including staff duties for evacuating the premises in the event of fire and other emergencies, and the names of the safety representatives.

Arrangements

- (a) Details of the education department's health and safety information and policies are contained in the undernoted files:

Master Safety File	-	Ref- MSF/
Subject Safety Files	-	Ref -SSF/A (Art) SSF/H (Home Economics) SSF/P (Physical Education) SSF/S (Science) SSF/T (Technical)
General Safety File	-	Ref- GSF/
COSHH Safety File	-	Ref- COSHH/

A copy of these files is held in and a further copy is held in the which is intended for the use of staff and other appropriate users of the establishment. A copy of the relevant subject safety file will be held in that subject department (in the case of certain establishments such as secondary schools). Where appropriate the guidelines in these files must be followed by the relevant members of staff.

- (b) Health and safety will be an item on the agenda of senior management team meetings.
- (c) Where appropriate health and safety will be an item on the agenda of departmental meetings.
- (d) The management and operation of health and safety arrangements is a day to day function, the effectiveness of which will be reviewed by regular internal inspections using, for example, the checklist provided for the purpose (MSF/10(i)). The outcome of such inspections will be discussed at the meetings referred to above and a record will be kept of any decisions taken. Audits by personnel services health and safety division, and inspections by external agencies such as HSE or HM Inspectors of schools will be dealt with in the same way.

- (e) The head of this establishment will consult with, and facilitate inspections by, safety representatives as detailed in the document - Safety Representatives and Safety Committees - Guidelines and Forms A and B (MSF/10(b)).
- (f) In addition to the above procedures, it should be noted that subsequent to any serious incident relating to health and safety there will be an investigation involving interested parties in order to make recommendations to the head which should seek to prevent a recurrence. This investigation should take place as soon as possible after the incident. Staff must be made aware of the accident reporting procedures and the location of the accident forms. All forms will be countersigned by the head of this establishment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT : IT HAS TO BE MANAGED.

Head of Establishment _____ Date: _____