

Health and Safety Policy



October 2024

To be reviewed 2025 or as required

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1.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 imposes statutory duties on employers and employees to ensure a safe place of work.

It is an important duty of Viridis Schools in the conduct of its operations, to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for its staff and to prevent injury or ill health to anybody that may be affected by the organisation's undertaking.

In order for the policy to be effective, collaboration and co-operation of all staff is required; everybody is asked to read this policy and accept their own personal responsibility for health and safety at work.

It is the intention of Viridis Schools to ensure that:

- The spirit and letter of the principles incorporated in the relevant legislation are maintained to ensure the safest systems of work and a safe, healthy working environment.
- Suitable information, instruction, training and supervision are provided to ensure the health and safety of all.
- The working environment is safe and without unreasonable risks to health and that adequate provision is made for facilities and welfare at work.
- Suitable equipment is provided and that necessary maintenance and checks of equipment is undertaken.
- Systems of work are safe and without unreasonable risks to health and safety.
- Arrangements for use, handling, storage and transport of substances for use at work are safe and without unreasonable risks to health.
- Adequate information is available with respect to articles and substances used at work detailing the conditions and precautions necessary to ensure that when properly used they will be safe and without unreasonable risks to health and safety.
- The Health and Safety Policy is reviewed and updated, as necessary.
- Changes regarding health and safety will only be made after consultation with staff and the joint involvement of management and staff.

Viridis Schools encourages the active interest, participation and support of staff in promoting good health and safety standards.

2.0 ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.1 Introduction

This section details what is in place to ensure that statutory obligations and responsibilities of Viridis Schools are met and health and safety is effectively managed. It sets out the health and safety responsibilities that have been established for the organisation.

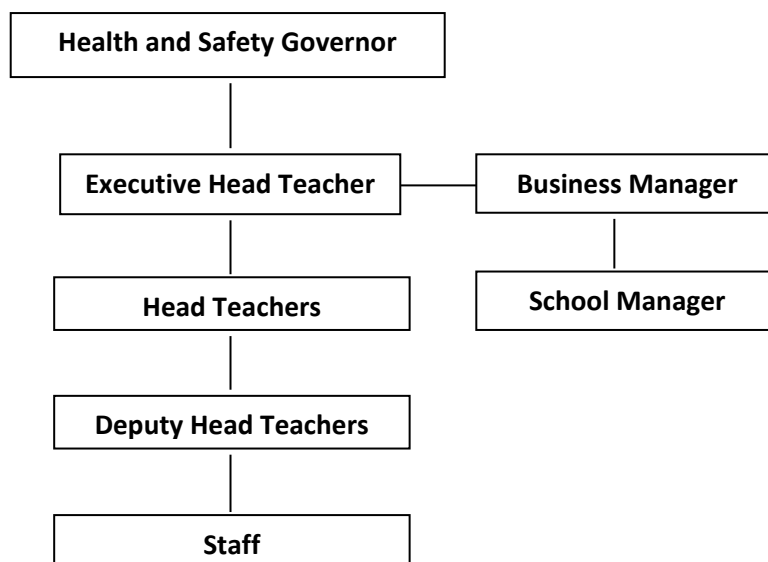
2.2 Legal Responsibilities

There are many different pieces of Legislation which influence the management of health and safety within Viridis Schools. The following list covers the majority but is not exhaustive.

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Health and Safety Information for Staff Regulation 1989 (as amended)
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- The Health and Safety (Consultation with Staff) Regulations 1996
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Work at Height Regulations 2005
- The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007, Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007
- The Control of Asbestos regulations 2012
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

2.3 Organisation Structure



2.4 Health and Safety Responsibilities within the Organisation

The health and safety governor has overall responsibility for health and safety at Viridis Schools and for ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.

The Executive Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the organisation is operated in a safe and healthy manner.
- Ensuring that the resources necessary for health and safety are identified and made available.
- Publication and implementation (including providing resource for implementation) of the Health and Safety Policy and the communication of the policy to all staff.
- Ensuring that before any equipment is purchased that it is suitable and compliant with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring that assessment of all of the organisation's work systems, activities and equipment to comply with statutory requirements are carried out; and that safe systems of work are introduced and adhered to.

- Ensuring all work equipment is in continual safe working order and compliant with statutory requirements; that the required servicing, maintenance, checks, tests and examinations are carried out to the required frequencies.
- Ensuring that appropriate health and safety arrangements and procedures (including any necessary emergency arrangements and procedures) are established and the communication of the arrangements and procedures to all staff.
- Ensuring compliance of the Health and Safety Policy, procedures, and arrangements within the organisation.
- Allocating and delegating health and safety responsibilities and duties within the organisation.
- Ensuring that suitable facilities, equipment and materials are available; with arrangements in place to enable adequate training to be conducted in accordance with statutory and organisation requirements.
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient welfare facilities are provided.
- Ensuring that, on health and safety matters, adequate means and facilities are available for consultation and communication, with all staff or their representatives and such consultation is affected.
- Ensuring that adequate health and safety support and advice are made available to the organisation.
- Promoting effective liaison with external agencies so as to secure expert advice.
- Ensuring that before contractors are employed that they have adequate health and safety arrangements in place and will work to an agreed method of operation and have appropriate assessments in place for the work being undertaken.
- Ensuring that procedures are in place to ensure that external contractors operate within the organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Maintaining a continuous and critical scrutiny of working conditions.
- Evaluating any new systems and techniques to be introduced into the organisation, to ensure that they are as safe as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring that the investigation and recording of any accidents or incidents are carried out and any arising recommendations and follow-ups are actioned.
- Monitoring health, safety and welfare within the organisation.
- Ensuring review of the Health and Safety Policy, assessments, procedures and arrangements as and when any significant change to the organisation or its operation occurs that would make the current policy, procedure and arrangements out of date and periodically, updating as necessary.

The head teachers, business manager and school manager are responsible for:

- Having a thorough knowledge of the organisation's Health and Safety Policy, being aware of statutory requirements and ensuring that infringements do not occur.
- Providing leadership and promoting responsible attitudes and behaviours towards health and safety.
- Investigating any accidents or incidents and making recommendations and follow-ups in order to prevent a reoccurrence.
- Understanding the factors that give rise to accidents and making continuous efforts to eliminate them.
- Ensuring that sufficient health, safety and welfare inspections / audits are carried out and making the executive head teacher aware of the findings.
- Carrying out, in liaison with relevant nominated staff, the assessment of all work systems, activities and materials in compliance of statutory requirements; implementing safe systems of work and ensuring that the safe systems of work are adhered to.
- Ensuring that people in their charge understand safety instructions, paying particular attention to young persons, new members of staff and people with learning difficulties.
- Ensuring that sufficient medical and firefighting equipment are provided.

- Checking that all safety equipment is properly maintained, securely fitted and correctly used.
- Ensuring that the required Personal Protective Equipment (including clothing) is available and when supplied is worn.
- Ensuring that external contractors / consultants operate safely and within the organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Informing the executive head teacher of any part of the Health and Safety Policy where revision is necessary to improve health and safety matters.

Deputy head teachers and site managers are responsible for:

- Having a good knowledge of the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and an awareness of statutory requirements and ensuring that infringements do not occur.
- Understanding the factors that give rise to accidents and make continuous efforts to eliminate them.
- Ensuring that people in their charge understand safety instructions, paying particular attention to young persons, new employees and people with learning difficulties.
- Taking any necessary preventative action; resulting from an accident or incident investigation or to request assistance from a manager in meeting this responsibility.
- Ensuring that any safe system of work introduced is adhered to and that a high standard of housekeeping and cleanliness is maintained.
- Checking that safety equipment is used when required.
- Ensuring any Personal Protective Equipment (including clothing) supplied is worn.
- Carrying out routine health and safety inspections.

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Have a knowledge of the organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Take all reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, of fellow members of staff and of anyone else who may be affected by the organisation's undertaking; and to report any hazard which cannot be controlled personally.
- Fully co-operate with the organisation to enable the latter to comply with any duty or requirement imposed by statutory provision.
- Observe safety rules and comply with any measures designed to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.
- Avoid any interference with or misuse of any provision made for health, safety and welfare.
- Comply with legitimate instructions given to them by a senior person for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and procedures.
- Actively participate in all discussions regarding health and safety raising any observations or concerns in order to continually improve health and safety within the organisation.

The health and safety coordinator is responsible for:

- Conducting periodic health and safety walk-through inspections of all workplaces and workplace facilities.
- Ensuring that health and safety training is provided to all staff and any other specifically required training (i.e. fire warden, first aid, etc.) is provided; and training is periodically refreshed.
- Ensuring that a log of work related injuries and illnesses is maintained.
- Ensuring that accident / injury investigations are carried out.
- Establishing and monitoring a program for reporting and investigating "near-miss" situations.
- Conducting investigations into staff health and safety inquiries, suggestions and complaints. Maintaining required safety and health documents / files.

The school manager has been appointed as the health and safety coordinator.

3.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1 Introduction

This section details the arrangements that the organisation have in place for meeting the commitments it has made to health and safety.

3.2 Accident / Incident: Recording, Reporting and Investigation

Unfortunately, accidents can and do happen. Any accident, however minor, must be recorded in an accident book. Completed accident records shall be torn out of the accident book and kept secure according to Data Protection Act guidelines, for a minimum of 3 years. Following an accident or incident (i.e. near miss, dangerous occurrence, etc.) a line manager and/or the school manager must be notified, immediately.

The cause of any accidents and where necessary incidents will be investigated and recorded; the executive head teacher and the health and safety governor are responsible for taking account of any recommendations that may arise from the investigation.

Where possible the accident area will be kept clear with nothing touched or moved until the investigation has taken place. The only exception would be when this causes a health and safety hazard. Then the minimum disruption to the accident area should be made. Where necessary external advice will be sought to aid with the investigation and provide advice.

Accidents falling under 'The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013' (RIDDOR) will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This reporting will happen within the timescales specified by the regulations.

In the event of a serious accident or health condition the emergency services will be phoned immediately; all staff will assist as necessary at the scene.

It is the policy of Viridis Schools for all staff to be aware and responsible for assisting with accidents, assessing the nature and extent of the emergency and taking the appropriate action.

3.3 Alcohol and Drug Misuse

Viridis Schools realises that alcohol and drug misuse may increase the risk of accidents whilst at work due to impaired judgement.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999'; and also the obligations of the 'Misuse of Drugs Act 1971' Viridis Schools requires all staff to arrive at work free from the effects of alcohol or drugs:

- Staff under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to work. Staff must not consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol while at work.
- No member of staff is to be in possession of illegal drugs or misuse drugs whilst at work.

Viridis Schools understands there is the need for possession and use of medicines. Staff using medicines which may affect behaviour and / or work have a responsibility to inform their head teacher and/or the school manager of such.

3.4 Asbestos

Within this policy “asbestos” refers to any fibrous form of: -

- Crocidolite – blue asbestos
- Amosite – brown asbestos
- Chrysotile – white asbestos
- Anthophyllite
- Tremolite
- Actinolite
- and any mixture which contains one or more of the above.

The presence of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) does not in itself constitute a danger. However, it is hazardous when disturbed or damaged and will be treated accordingly. Activities which give rise to airborne dust, e.g. abrasion, breaking, sawing, cutting, drilling or machining ACMs, are most likely to present risks and will be controlled where necessary.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the ‘Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974’, the ‘Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999’ and the ‘Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012’ Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- The risk from asbestos is adequately controlled.
- An assessment as to whether or not there is or may be any asbestos anywhere in the premises is made; and the condition of any asbestos present is checked.
- The assessment is reviewed if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or if there has been significant change in the workplace.

Where ACMs are or are liable to be present, Viridis Schools will:

- Determine the risk posed by any ACMs present.
- Produce a written plan: identifying parts of the workplace where the ACMs are and how the risks from the ACMs are to be managed; including the measures for ensuring the ACMs are properly maintained or where necessary safely removed.
- Monitor the condition of any ACMs.
- Review the plan at regular intervals and immediately if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or if there has been significant change in the circumstances to which it relates.
- Ensure that information about the location and condition of any ACMs is provided to every person liable to disturb it and made available to the emergency services.

Prior to commencement of work that could lead to exposure to asbestos, Viridis Schools will:

- Carry out a risk assessment.
- Ensure that a plan of work detailing how the work is to be carried out is in place.
- Ensure, where necessary, work involving ACMs is only carried out by licenced contractors.

3.5 Communication, Co-operation and Consultation

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the ‘Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974’ and the ‘Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999’ Viridis Schools will ensure that any applicable health and safety arrangements, information and procedures are effectively communicated to the required parties including, staff and contractors, and also visitors.

The Executive Head Teacher, Business Manager, School Manager and the Head Teachers are responsible for disseminating information on legislative responsibilities and requirements to all staff and any changes that may affect them.

Viridis Schools will share relevant information with others affected by / involved in its work, including agency staff and any contractors and co-operate with these parties to ensure that all health and safety information is available and understood.

Necessary safety information will be communicated verbally, via email and by displayed notices; and any emergency instructions will be posted.

Recognising that all staff can play a key part in preventing accidents, injuries and ill health at work; promoting good standards of health and safety and in order to meet their health and safety obligations specifically, those under 'The Health and Safety (Consultation with Staff) Regulations 1996' Viridis Schools will consult and involve staff in all health and safety matters that affect them.

Meetings will be held where health & safety will be discussed and safety information provided to staff; including:

- Health and safety arrangements and procedures.
- Findings and actions arising from risk assessments.
- Findings and actions arising from accident / incident investigations.
- Results of health and safety inspections.
- Arrangements and procedures designed to promote a safe system of work.
- Changes to legislation.

Staff are encouraged and expected to contribute any opinions concerning health and safety during these meetings.

3.6 Competence and Capabilities and Information, Instruction and Training

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Health and Safety Information for Staff Regulation 1989 (as amended) Viridis Schools will:

- Ensure that levels of competence and capabilities are such that the organisation's health and safety performance is at an acceptable level.
- Ensure that adequate health and safety information is provided; this will be in the forms of verbal and written communication, signs and notices.
- Display the HSE approved and published "Health and Safety Law" poster at a prominent position within all workplaces or provide each member of staff with a copy of the HSE approved and published "Health and Safety Law" leaflet.
- Provide third parties working at the workplaces with relevant health and safety information and instruction.

It is the policy of Viridis Schools to ensure that their staff are provided with adequate information instruction and training in order to do their jobs effectively and safely; they will:

- Identify the skills and knowledge needed for staff to do their job in a sufficient manner.
- Look at any risk assessments to see where information and / or training have been identified as factors in controlling risks.
- Ensure that all staff receive an induction upon employment, covering the contents of the Health and Safety Policy, the health and safety instruction manual and important health and safety information such as fire evacuation procedures, nominated first aiders / fire wardens and significant findings of risk assessments.
- Ensure that relevant staff receive adequate specialised training e.g. DSE, manual handling, fire warden, first aid etc. as required and based on the risks they are exposed to.
- Identify additional training needs for the senior staff.

- Evaluate training and ensure that it is effective.
- Review training to identify any skills and knowledge gaps.
- Where necessary, refresh training at suitable frequencies.

Staff are responsible for:

- Attending any required training sessions.
- Adhering to and acting upon information, instruction and training provided.
- Helping to identify any skills and knowledge gaps.
- Speaking up if they feel there is a requirement for additional training in any aspects of health and safety.

The health and safety competence of any contractors appointed by the organisation is addressed as part of the contractor vetting process described in section 3.7.

3.7 Contractors: Selection and Management

Viridis Schools understands that when using contractors there is a joint responsibility towards health and safety by all parties concerned.

Before being appointed to carry out work for / on behalf of Viridis Schools all contractors are required to undergo vetting to ensure their suitability. They will be asked to provide their Health and Safety Policy, proof of adequate insurance, evidence of 3rd party health & safety accreditation approval (if this is deemed necessary), risk assessments (including where necessary COSHH assessments, work at height assessments and any other relevant assessments) and method statements (if the work is especially hazardous and is not covered by existing procedures) for the work being undertaken.

Copies of the contractor's health and safety documentation will be held on file and as necessary the contractor is contacted to provide updated documentation.

Once a contractor has been selected and appointed Viridis Schools are responsible for:

- Providing all relevant health and safety information e.g. fire safety information, accident reporting procedure and any other information necessary to control health and safety risks during the course of the contracted work.
- Ensuring contractors submit specific suitable and sufficient risk assessments and method statements which address the hazards presented by their works where they deviate from normal generic risk assessments supplied as part of the vetting procedure.
- Ensuring that contractors have read Viridis Schools' "Safety Rules for Contractors" and signed the declaration; a copy of which will be provided to the contractor and a copy will be held by Viridis Schools in the contractors file.
- Identifying any adverse trends/concerns that may become apparent during any works.
- Monitoring contracted work to ensure that it is carried out in a safe and sufficient manner; if necessary ordering works to stop upon discovery of an unacceptable health and safety risk.
- Providing feedback on a contractor's health and safety performance.

3.8 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- The exposure of persons to substances hazardous to health is either prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled so that statutory exposure levels are not exceeded.
- Where possible the use of a harmful products or substances are eliminated; if this is not possible the harmful products or substances are substituted with safer ones; if this is not possible a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk due to the exposure of the harmful products or substances will be carried out with necessary control measures put in place to adequately control the risk. Assessments will be reviewed if it is proven or suspected that they are no longer valid or effective; or if a significant change has taken place and periodically.
- Safety data sheets (SDS) are obtained for any hazardous product labelled with a CHIP (Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2009) or Globally Harmonised System (GHS) hazardous chemical symbol; used during the undertaking of the organisation.
- Any necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided.
- Exposure monitoring and health surveillance is arranged if necessary.
- Appropriate information, instruction and training for hazardous substances is provided.
- Where necessary, emergency arrangements for dealing with spillages of and exposure to hazardous products are put in place.
- Appropriate disposal arrangements are in place for hazardous products and receptacles that have previously contained hazardous products.

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Abide by the requirements of any systems of work designed to protect them and others from exposure to hazardous substances.
- Use any hazardous product in a safe and responsible manner and only if they have received appropriate training to do so safely.
- Wear any necessary PPE provided.
- Comply with any training and instructions given.
- Report any activity involving a hazardous substance which is likely to endanger themselves or others.
- Clear up any spillages in accordance with organisation safe systems and information provided within safety data sheets.
- Dispose of hazardous substances and receptacles that have previously contained hazardous products in accordance with organisation arrangements.
- Report any health problems associated with the exposure to a hazardous substance

Where contractors introduce hazardous substances as defined in the COSHH Regulations 2002, during the course of their work, they are responsible for:

- Ensuring a suitable COSHH assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the regulations and identifying and implementing appropriate control measures.
- Storing any hazardous chemicals appropriately, to prevent exposure to their own staff, Viridis Schools' staff and other persons present within the workplaces.
- Providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision on the use of the chemicals.
- Provision of sufficient exposure monitoring and health surveillance where necessary.

3.9 Disability

Under the 'Equality Act 2010' a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The effect must be:

- Substantial.
- Adverse.
- Long term (lasting or likely to last more than 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person concerned).

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999'; and the obligation of the 'Equality Act 2010' Viridis Schools will make every effort, in so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all staff and not to discriminate against any member of staff, patient or visitor that has a disability.

Viridis Schools understands that additional risks may arise, as a consequence of a disability and will take all the necessary measures to minimise those risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where necessary Viridis Schools will make 'reasonable adjustments' (defined as a reasonable step taken to prevent a disabled person suffering a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled) including:

- Making changes to the workplace.
- Changing the way in which work is done.
- Providing equipment that will help the person do their job.

3.10 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999' and the 'Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)' Viridis Schools will ensure that for those staff classed as DSE users*:

- Workstations are analysed, assessed and that appropriate actions are taken to reduce risks.
- Workstations meet the minimum requirements.
- Work is planned so there are breaks or changes of activity.
- When reasonably requested (i.e. bi-annually or as advised by the optometrist), arrange free eye sight tests for DSE users.
- Spectacles are provided at no cost to the DSE user if special ones (prescribed for the distance at which the screen is viewed) are needed and normal spectacles (prescribed for any other purpose) cannot be used. The organisation's liability for the cost of these is restricted to payment of the cost of a basic appliance (i.e. of a type and quality adequate for the user's work). However if staff wish to choose more costly glasses (for example with designer frames, or lenses with optical treatments not necessary for the work), the organisation will contribute a portion of the total cost of the luxury glasses; equal to the cost of a basic appliance.
- Appropriate DSE information and training is provided.

Staff classed as DSE users under the regulations are required to:

- Contribute and participate during the DSE workstation assessment process.
- Ensure that they take regular and frequent breaks away from screen work performing other non DSE related tasks. HSE guidance suggests that short frequent breaks are more satisfactory than, occasional longer breaks; a break away from the screen carrying out non DSE tasks of approximately of at least 5 minutes, should be taken, after 50 – 60 minutes of screen work.
- Report any aches, pains or eye strain from using DSE to the school manager who will investigate the issue.

**As defined under 'The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)'*

3.11 Electrical Safety

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999', the 'Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998' and the 'Electricity at Work Regulations 1989' the organisation will ensure that any electrical installation (fixed wiring) is routinely checked and fully inspected to the required frequencies (i.e. every 5 years) with any remedial action implemented; as identified during the checks and inspections. Records of all such checks and inspections will be kept.

Portable / moveable electrical appliances provided by Viridis Schools will undergo formal visual inspection and combined inspection and electrical testing (portable appliance testing - PAT) at intervals recommended by HSE guidance. Contractors are responsible for ensuring any portable / moveable electrical appliances that they use undergo the same testing regime.

3.12 Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance)

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance Act 1969' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- There is at least £5 million insurance cover in place to meet the cost of compensation for any injuries or illness sustained by staff whilst at work.
- A copy of the current insurance certificate will be displayed in a suitable convenient location at each workplace.
- Copies of certificates of insurance which are out of date will be retained indefinitely (for at least 40 years); to account for any claims for diseases that are made many years after the disease is caused.

3.13 Fire Safety

In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999' and the 'Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- The risk of fire is sufficiently assessed at their premises; the assessment will consider the:
 - Persons at risk and any especially at risk persons.
 - Fire hazards and their elimination or control.
 - Suitability of fire protection measures:
 - Means of escape.
 - Measures to limit fire spread and development.
 - Emergency escape lighting.
 - Fire safety signs.
 - Means of giving warning in case of fire.
 - Firefighting equipment.
 - Management of fire safety:
 - Procedures and arrangements.
 - Training and drills.
 - Testing and maintenance
 - Record keeping.
- Any additional control measures to reduce any risk posed by fire are put in place.

- The fire risk assessment is reviewed, and revised if necessary, as defined in the risk assessment or if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid:
 - Following an incident.
 - If the premises undergoes significant changes i.e. changes in layout, construction works, alterations etc. (either temporarily or permanently).
 - If new technology or processes are introduced (either temporarily or permanently).
 - If new hazards are identified or existing hazards change.

Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- Any equipment provided for firefighting, fire detection / warning and fire safety are covered by a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained by a competent person in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.
- Means of escape are maintained in a state that allows safe and timely evacuation.
- Only minimum quantities of flammable substances and combustibles are kept and any that are present will be appropriately stored well away from sources of ignition.
- All staff receive adequate fire safety instruction / training.
- Periodic fire drills are conducted.

Staff are responsible for:

- Co-operating with the organisation; allowing them to meet their fire safety responsibilities.
- Knowing what action to take in the event of a fire; both upon discovery of a fire and upon activation of the fire warning system.
- Knowing the location of fire safety equipment.
- Not misusing any fire safety equipment (i.e. not propping open doors with fire extinguishers, not wedging / propping open fire doors, not setting off fire extinguishers during horseplay).
- Adhering to any fire safety instruction / training given.
- Reporting anything which could represent a serious fire safety danger.

3.14 First Aid

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999' and the 'Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981' Viridis Schools will ensure that adequate and appropriate first-aid equipment, facilities and people are provided so that staff and others can be given immediate help if they are injured or taken during the course of the organisation's work.

The first aid provisions required will be determined by risk assessment and persons with first aid responsibilities will be appointed as required; these people are responsible for maintaining adequate levels of first aid consumables (i.e. dressings, plasters, etc.).

Viridis Schools' staff are not permitted to administer or dispense medicines or drugs of any sort; unless they have received specific first aid training to do so.

In the event of a member of staff requiring hospital treatment, they will be accompanied to hospital wherever possible.

All incidents requiring first aid treatment must be reported to a line manager and/or the school manager.

3.15 Gas Installation Safety

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations

1999', the 'Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998' and the 'Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998' the organisation will ensure that any gas installation (boiler, cooking equipment, etc.) at the workplace is serviced and safety checked annually, by a suitable gas safe registered engineer, with any remedial action implemented; as identified during the safety checks. Records of all such servicing and safety checks will be kept.

3.16 Housekeeping and Waste Management

General cleanliness and tidiness within the workplace is the responsibility of all staff.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- Clutter, dust, debris and rubbish are not allowed to accumulate to a level that poses a fire or health and safety hazard.
- The workplace is kept free from spillages and trip hazards, with areas requiring access kept free from obstruction.
- Dangerous items and substances, (e.g. broken glass and spilt chemicals etc.) are cleared away immediately ensuring the safety of all.
- Where necessary waste is segregated and clearly marked; and presented in a manner that ensures the correct / safe disposal.

Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- Staff who are responsible for segregating waste are appropriately trained and have appropriate health and safety guidance and personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves)
- Adequate supplies of containers, appropriate to the nature of the waste (i.e. yellow bags for clinical waste, black bags for domestic waste and containers for sharp items which conform to BS 7320) are available.
- General waste containers are emptied by appropriate refuse collectors at frequent intervals.
- Security precautions to prevent theft, vandalism, arson and scavenging of waste are in place.

3.17 Infection Control

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations' the organisation will ensure that adequate and appropriate measures are in place to control the risk posed by infections such as viruses (i.e. COVID-19).

The organisation will ensure that:

- A suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out.
- Necessary control measures are implemented to control the risk posed.
- A response plan will be drawn up; if necessary.
- Employees are provided with necessary information, instruction, and training.

3.18 Legionella

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002' Viridis Schools will take account of 'The HSE Approved Code of Practice – The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems (ACOP L8)'.

The organisation will ensure that:

- All reasonable steps have been taken to identify potential legionella related hazards and to control all risks associated with it.
- A suitable sufficient assessment of the risk from legionella is carried out by a competent person and pro-active steps to prevent and minimise any legionella related risks are taken. The risk assessments are reviewed as recommended by the risk assessor.
- Any water monitoring regime including inspections, sampling and temperature checks are implemented as recommended by the risk assessments.
- A record of all monitoring undertaken and control measures are kept.

Where necessary, specialist contractors will be employed to implement the water monitoring regime including inspections, sampling and temperature checks as recommended by the risk assessments.

3.19 Lifting Equipment

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992', The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998', the 'Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998', and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' the organisation will ensure that all service / maintenance and inspection of any passenger lift is undertaken in accordance with the relevant regulations and that sufficient records are maintained.

3.20 Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone i.e. away from the workplace, remotely, working alone at home or being the only person present in the workplace.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' Viridis Schools will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of any lone workers:

- Only authorised lone working will take place.
- It will be ensured that the person lone working has suitable experience and knowledge to handle any emergency that may arise whilst working alone.
- Any lone working will be sufficiently assessed with arrangements put in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- No high risk work will be permitted during periods of lone working.

Staff are responsible for:

- Assisting with any assessments.
- To abide by the requirements of any systems of work designed to protect them during periods of lone working.
- Taking reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety and ensuring that they do not undertake any high risk activities whilst working alone.

3.21 Manual Handling

There is the potential for manual handling to be an issue during the course of the work carried out by Viridis Schools' staff.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002)' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- Hazardous manual handling operations are avoided so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Manual handling operations that fall outside of the HSE filters for manual handling are sufficiently assessed. The risk of injury due to manual handling is reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Where necessary suitable manual handling aids are provided.
- Staff receive appropriate manual handling instruction and training.

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Comply with any training and instructions given.
- Use any manual handling equipment / aids provided whenever possible.
- Recognise their capability limitations and not carry out any manual handling operation that falls outside of these.
- Report any manual handling activity or defect which is likely to endanger themselves or others.

3.22 New and Expectant Mothers

For the purpose of this policy a 'new or expectant mother' is defined as ' an employee who is pregnant; who has given birth within the previous six months; or who is breast-feeding'.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' Viridis Schools will; upon being informed that a member of staff is pregnant, has given birth within the last six months or is breast feeding; carry out a specific risk assessment and put in place any necessary measures to reduce the risk of harm to the mother and baby to an acceptable level. Regular monitoring and review of any assessment will be carried out to take into account possible risks that may occur at different stages during the pregnancy.

Where the risk assessment identifies unacceptable risks to the mother and baby, and these risks cannot be avoided or controlled by preventative and protective measures Viridis Schools will:

1. Alter the working conditions or hours of work if it is reasonable to do so and would avoid the risks.
2. Identify and offer alternative work that is available.
3. Suspend from work. (This suspension will be on full pay where applicable.)

3.23 Permit to Work

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' Viridis Schools will implement safe systems of work to ensure that the work undertaken is so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without undue risks to the health and safety to their staff and to any others who may be affected by the work.

Viridis Schools understand that certain types of work carry a particularly high risk of serious personal injury, serious ill health or property loss and require more formal safety planning and control. This will be achieved by the use of and strict adherence to a permit-to-work system; such activities include:

- Working at height or on unprotected roofs.
- Hot works such as welding, soldering etc.
- Work in confined spaces.
- Some maintenance works.
- Work on live electrical installations

Viridis Schools will monitor their safe systems of work including the permit to work system; ensuring that risks introduced by the work undertaken is adequately controlled with those risks that cannot be eliminated, reduced to an acceptable level.

3.24 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992' Viridis Schools will ensure that, where there are risks to health and safety (i.e. exposure to a hazardous substance) that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways or a risk assessment indicates it is necessary, suitable PPE (i.e. protective gloves, aprons and safety glasses) are provided at no cost to staff. The organisation will ensure that any PPE provided:

- Is appropriate for the risks involved.
- Will not increase the overall level of risk.
- Fits the user or can be adjusted to fit the user.
- Is 'CE' marked and complies with the requirements of the 'Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002'.
- Is accompanied with suitable information, instruction and training.
- Has appropriate storage accommodation to prevent deterioration and damage.

Where necessary, Viridis Schools will obtain specialist advice to ensure that suitable PPE is selected and that the PPE is used, stored and maintained correctly.

Staff are responsible for:

- Wearing the appropriate PPE correctly when it has been provided for risk control whilst carrying out a task.
- Ensuring PPE is kept clean and in good repair and adequately stored when not in use to prevent deterioration.
- Reporting any defects with PPE.
- Obtaining replacement PPE when necessary.

3.25 Risk Assessments

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

- A hazard is anything that may cause harm.
- Risk is the likelihood that harm will occur and the severity of the harm.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- All work practices and tasks that introduce a risk to health and safety are identified.
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out - A careful examination of what could cause harm to people will be carried out to determine whether enough precaution has been taken or whether more needs to be done to prevent harm:
 - Identifying hazards.
 - Deciding who might be harmed and how.
 - Evaluation of risk level.
 - Risk control measures (existing and additional).
 - Record risk assessment findings and bring them to the attention of staff.

- Risk assessment are reviewed if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; if a significant change has taken place and periodically.

The Executive Head Teacher and the Health and Safety Governor are responsible for ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient risk assessments for all hazardous work practices / tasks, ensuring that any hazards are adequately controlled and any additional control measures required are actioned.

3.26 Work at Height

For the purpose of this policy the HSE's definition "*A place is 'at height' if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level*" is adopted.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Work at Height Regulations 2005' Viridis Schools will endeavour to provide a safe working environment for all staff who may be required to work at height; by:

- Identifying work at height activities.
- Eliminating the need to work at height whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so.
- Ensuring that, where work at height cannot be eliminated, use the risk assessment process to evaluate and manage risk:
 - Less hazardous work at height activities such as use of stepladders will be covered by general risk assessments.
 - More hazardous work at height activities will have a specific risk assessment carried out and controlled under the organisation's permit to work system.
- Implementing a safe system of work that will prevent falls.
- Providing suitable equipment to allow safe working conditions.
- Ensuring that regular inspections of all equipment required for working at height are undertaken.
- Providing adequate working at height information and training.
- Providing adequate supervision to ensure that any work at height is carried out in a safe manner.

Staff have a responsibility to:

- To abide by the requirements of any systems of work designed to protect them.
- Use any equipment in a safe and responsible manner and only if they have received appropriate training to do so safely.
- Carry out any necessary pre-use checks and inspections.
- Comply with any training and instructions given.
- Report any activity or defect relating to work at height which is likely to endanger themselves or others.

All work at height equipment that is in use will be inspected every month.

3.27 Work Equipment

This Policy considers work equipment to be any machinery, appliance, apparatus, tool or installation for use at work (whether exclusively or not). This includes equipment which employees provide for their own use at work.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998' Viridis Schools will ensure that:

- Equipment is suitable for the intended use and conditions in which it is used.
- Equipment is accompanied by suitable safety measures e.g. protective devices, markings, warnings.
- Equipment and plant is safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and in certain circumstances inspected by a competent person to ensure this remains the case.
- Equipment is used in accordance with any manufacturer's / suppliers instructions, organisation safe systems / procedures.
- Staff are provided with appropriate information, instruction and training.
- Where necessary equipment is only used when:
 - Competence is achieved.
 - Authorised to do so.
 - Adequately supervised.

Where necessary, Viridis Schools will obtain specialist advice to ensure that equipment is suitable, correctly operated and maintained.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They do not use any equipment for which appropriate training has not been provided; or where applicable are not approved to use.
- Equipment is used in accordance with any manufacturer's / suppliers instructions, organisation safe systems / procedures and with instruction and training received.
- Any necessary routine inspections and checks are carried out.
- Equipment is not used if there are any signs of damage or fault.
- Any signs of damage or fault are reported.
- They do not carry out repairs on equipment unless competent and authorised to do so or do not engage in any work on live electrical equipment.
- Personal equipment is not used without prior authorisation from the organisation.

3.28 Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974', the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' and the 'Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002)' the organisation will ensure that the workplace:

- Is kept clean and tidy and maintained in a state that promotes good health, safety and wellbeing.
- Has adequate provision of welfare facilities and arrangements.
- Has accessible drinking water that is free from contamination.
- Has lighting and ventilation of a suitable and sufficient standard, a reasonable temperature is maintained and there are suitable facilities / arrangements for staff to have rest breaks and eat meals.

Smoking is prohibited within premises; with a dedicated no smoking policy in place conforming to the requirements of the Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007, Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007, and other related legislation.

This policy is applicable to all staff at all levels of the organisation, as well as any contractors and visitors. Staff are responsible for informing persons of this policy where necessary.

Smoking is only permitted outside the premises.

If at any time a member of staff feels that any of facilities are not satisfactory they should notify a line manager who will discuss issues with the school manager.

3.29 Work Related Stress

Viridis Schools are committed to ensuring the health safety and wellbeing at work of our staff and understands that workplace stress can be a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' Viridis Schools will:

- Identify all workplace stressors and implement measures to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- Provide support to staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.
- Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Not tolerate bullying and harassment at any level.

Staff are responsible for reporting any stress issues to a line manager and/or the school manager.

3.30 Work Related Violence

For the purpose of this policy the Health and Safety Executive's definition of violence is adopted; violence is defined as:

“Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.”

Viridis Schools accepts that violence can be:

- Be physical, psychological, and/or sexual.
- Be a one-off incident or involve more systematic patterns of behaviour.
- Be among colleagues, between superiors and subordinates, or by third parties such as contractors, visitors, pupils and members of the public.
- Range from minor cases of disrespect to more serious acts, including criminal offences, which require the intervention of public authorities.

Viridis Schools believe that all violence to staff is unacceptable and is committed to providing full support to any member of staff, who suffers violence in the course of, or arising out of, their duties.

Viridis Schools will take legal proceedings if necessary to maintain staff safety and well-being.

All incidents of verbal abuse, threats or physical violence will be treated seriously and responded to appropriately. On no account will such incidents be treated lightly or dismissed as part of everyday life, nor will a violent incident be viewed as a reflection on an individual member of staff's ability.

All incidents of verbal abuse, threats or violence must be reported and will be investigated; with appropriate action taken to minimise the risk of a recurrence.

A member of staff who has been harmed in any way or suffered damage to their property will be actively encouraged to report the matter to the police. Every opportunity will be taken to prosecute offenders either by the police, or in certain circumstances, individuals will be encouraged to initiate legal proceedings themselves. Viridis Schools will ensure that staff are supported through the prosecution process.

Viridis Schools understands that violence and abuse can pose a significant risk to the health and safety of their staff and as such will carry out specific risk assessments where violence poses a significant risk to staff. The assessments will endeavour to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest reasonable practicable level.

Viridis Schools adopts the legal approach to self-defence: Physical restraint used in self-defence is acceptable, but only with the minimum force necessary. This means that it is reasonable for staff to use sufficient force to stop or control violent situations, or prevent themselves or other people from being injured. Whilst the risk of a member of staff being in a situation where the only way to protect themselves is to cause harm to the violent person is remote, it is accepted in law.

(In deciding whether the force used was reasonable, the courts will consider all of the circumstances surrounding the violent situation. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force as this will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired outcome. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour. However, deciding whether misbehaviour is trivial will also depend on circumstances.)

Viridis Schools is committed to providing full support, including aftercare, to staff who have suffered verbal abuse, threats or physical violence in the course of their duties. Support will include:

- Line management support/debrief to ensure the incident is discussed, recorded appropriately and consideration is given to further action.
- Encouragement and support for those staff who feel they may benefit from counselling.
- Accommodate time off work if necessary.
- Help the individual to seek legal help if required.

Staff must ensure that they:

- Act responsibly to avoid putting themselves or others in danger.
- Do not risk personal safety to protect organisation property.
- Report any incidences of abuse and/or violence.
- Comply with any training and instructions given.

3.31 Visitors

In order to meet their health and safety obligations; specifically, those under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999' the organisation will endeavour to ensure that visitors are kept safe whilst at the workplace.

The member of staff responsible for the visitor or patient must ensure that they are advised as appropriate of all relevant safety information such as hazards, rules and emergency procedures.

In the event of an evacuation the member of staff responsible for the visitor or patient shall ensure that they are safely evacuated and accounted for.

3.32 Young Persons

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions are used:

A young person (16 – 18 years of age) is defined as any person who has not attained the age of 18 years (*The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999*).

A child (under 16 years of age) is defined as someone who has not yet attained school leaving age (*The Education Act, 1996 (England and Wales)*).

Viridis Schools understands that additional risks will arise, as a consequence of the employment of young persons due to their lack of knowledge, experience and possible immaturity, and will take all the necessary measures to minimise those risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Upon a child / young person working (whether paid or not) for Viridis Schools the organisation will:

- Review current risk assessments to ensure that they are adequate in the light of the lack of experience of the young person and if necessary carry out a specific risk assessment. Parents or carers of children under minimum school leaving age will be informed of the key findings from the risk assessment.
- Provide Additional training, instruction and supervision until the young person has demonstrated a satisfactory degree of competence.
- Ensure that national laws adhered to in regards to the permitted working arrangements for young persons.
- Ensure that the young person only carries out duties which:
 - Are not beyond their physical or psychological capability.
 - Do not expose them to substances chronically harmful to human health.
 - Do not involve a risk of accidents which they are unlikely to recognise because of their lack of experience, training or attention to safety.

4.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

4.1 Monitoring

Viridis Schools will continually monitor and review the organisation's health and safety performance and endeavour to continually improve.

Health and safety performance will be monitored by:

- Routine inspections of the workplace and plant and equipment.
- Health surveillance (where necessary) to prevent harm to health.
- Planned function check regimes for key pieces of plant and equipment.
- Investigating accident / incidents.
- Monitoring cases of ill health and sickness absence records.

Where necessary action plans will be produced to prevent or control any health and safety issues and improve health and safety performance. The action plans will be continually reviewed to ensure that all actions are completed within the required timescales.

4.2 Review

Viridis Schools will review the validity of the Health and Safety Policy and risk assessments and whether the systems in place for managing health and safety are effective. This will happen if there is reason to believe they are no longer valid (following a change in organisation,

personnel or legislation) or effective (following an accident / incident or enforcement / intervention by the enforcing body); or if a significant change to which they relate has taken place and periodically (annually).

The business manager, school manager and the executive head teacher are responsible for reviewing the health and safety arrangements.

All staff are entitled to and responsible for voicing their own health and safety opinions or concerns for review.