Primary Curriculum Code of Practice G643e

Contents

(If you are viewing this document online, click on the headings below to jump to the relevant section)

1 Introduction

This Code of Practice outlines the safe working practices necessary to ensure the risks associated with primary school curricular activities in the following subject areas across key stages 1 and 2 are suitably controlled: science, design and technology, art and design and physical education

2 Responsibilities

Governing Bodies must ensure that health and safety policies and procedures and Codes of Practice are adopted and monitored.

The headteacher, where appropriate through subject leaders, teachers and other support staff, is responsible for ensuring that this Code of Practice is brought to the attention of all relevant staff.

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Code and for completing the Record of Procedural Arrangements (Primary Curricular Activities) F643g and the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum).

3 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) describes the most significant general hazards in subjects taught in key stages 1 and 2 and identifies the "standard" control measures likely to be required. To complete this checklist, which should be read alongside this document, the headteacher must:

- Consider how effectively they are controlling the risk from the identified common hazards and any other hazards peculiar to the premises

- Evaluate whether typical risk controls are in place for common hazards using the Likelihood (L) x Consequence (C) model to establish an initial risk rating (RR)

- Identify if further risk controls are needed and score the resulting residual risks to give a revised risk rating

- Create an action plan based on the risk rating scores to address the issues identified

Once you have assessed the current controls you can then evaluate the current risk using the tables below. The risk assessment should be reviewed annually or whenever there are developments that suggest it is no longer valid, e.g. following an incident or when guidance is updated. Review does not necessarily mean carrying out a new risk assessment, but checking over the existing assessment to ensure it is still valid and then updating the assessment or making changes as necessary.

Primary Curriculum Code of Practice G643e

Likelihood	Criteria	Rating Value
Almost certain	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances.	5
Likely	The event will probably occur in most circumstances.	4
Possible	The event might occur at some time.	3
Unlikely	The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances.	2
Rare	The event is not expected to occur.	1

TABLE 1: LIKELIHOOD OF INJURY WITH EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE

Consequence	Criteria	Rating Value
Extreme	Fatality or multiple major injuries	5
Major	Significant work/service related injury (incl. as a result of violent behaviour), or ill health to employees, members of the public, contractors, clients or pupils. Examples include:- • fractures (other than fingers or toes) • amputations • loss of sight, burn or penetrating injury to the eye • any injury or acute illness resulting in unconsciousness, requiring resuscitation or requiring admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours • exposure to a hazardous substance due to an uncontrolled release of that substance likely to lead to ill health	4
Moderate	Service related injury to a non employee requiring medical attention not in the 'major' class above Employee work related lost time as a result of an injury, violence or stress not in the 'major' class above	3
Minor	Minor work/service related injury to employees, members of the public, contractors, clients or pupils, e.g. needing on site first aid	2
Insignificant	No injury	1

TABLE 2: CONSEQUENCE OF INJURY WITH EXISTING CONTROLS IN PLACE

Primary Curriculum Code of Practice G643e

To establish a Risk Rating multiply the "Likelihood" (L) rating value by the "Consequence" (C) rating value.

The table below identifies if any further action is required depending on the risk rating allocated for each hazard:

		Consequence				
		Extreme (5)	Major (4)	Moderate (3)	Minor (2)	Insignificant (1)
Likelihood	Almost Certain (5)	25	20	15	10	5
	Likely (4)	20	16	12	8	4
	Possible (3)	15	12	9	6	3
	Unlikely (2)	10	8	6	4	2
	Rare (1)	5	4	3	2	1

Action levels		How the risk should be managed
16-25	Unacceptable	Stop activity and make immediate improvements.
10-15	Significant	Identify controls needed and set timescale for improvement.
05-09	Adequate	Review current controls according to NCC policies and procedures.
01-04	Acceptable	No further action, but ensure controls are maintained and reviewed at next review date.

TABLE 3: RISK RATING AND ACTION REQUIRED

Headteachers must sign off the Record of Procedural Arrangements (Primary Curricular Activities) F643g to show that the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) has been consulted and customised to reflect local circumstances. The form should be reviewed annually for performance monitoring purposes.

4   Primary Curriculum Subjects (Key Stages 1 and 2)

This part of the Code covers the basic work carried out in science, design and technology, art and design, ICT and PE in key stages 1 and 2.

Primary schools should also refer to the Codes of Practice for science, design and technology, art, PE and drama for High schools as appropriate if they undertake anything other than this basic work at key stage 2.

Primary Curriculum Code of Practice G643e

4.1 Science

In addition to the control measures described in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) headteachers and teachers should refer to Primary resources available on the CLEAPSS website. Password details can be found in the current CLEAPSS Primary Science and Technology newsletter that is circulated to all Community, VC, VA and Foundation schools; and to academies, free schools and independent schools purchasing the Primary School Health and Safety advice service through Educator Solutions.

4.1.1 Chemicals

In general there are few risks to using or investigating chemicals in primary science activities. Controls for specific chemicals/curriculum activities are contained in 'Using Chemicals Safely' (CLEAPSS document G5p).

It is unusual for a primary science activity to require eye protection. Consider whether the activity is appropriate for the primary environment. If in doubt, call the CLEAPSS Helpline on 01895 251496.

A new system for labelling chemicals with their hazards has been introduced throughout Europe from December 2010. Schools will already be receiving chemicals labelled with the new diamond-shaped hazard symbols and new hazard information.

In primary schools the comparatively small quantities used alongside appropriate general control measures will ensure that the risk is low. See CLEAPSS document GL101 'GHS (Global Harmonised System)/CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) Chemical Hazard Labelling'.

See also guidance on Hazardous Substances and Chemicals on HR Infospace.

4.1.2 Animals

Primary schools often keep their own animals, but animals are also brought into school for short periods. Some schools also keep chickens.

Animals kept in schools should pose insignificant hazards provided they are well kept in suitable housing, the people in charge of them are familiar with any particular requirements the animals have and if the general precautions listed in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) are followed.

These CLEAPSS documents provide guidance on animals in schools:
- 'Housing and Keeping Animals' (L56)
- 'Bringing Pets and Other Animals into Schools' (PS 55)
- 'Farm animals in school and on visits (Primary)' (PS 86A)
- 'Incubating and Hatching Eggs' (L71)
- 'Aquaria in Primary Schools: Electrical Safety' (L124)
- 'Giant African Land Snails' (L197)
- 'Giant Millipedes' (L201)

- 'Bees and Beekeeping in Schools' (PS 87)

See also guidance on standard infection control procedures in the Infection Control section on HR Infospace.

4.1.3 Plants

Some pupils may be particularly vulnerable to certain plants, e.g. those with allergies or asthma. However, the risks are low if the general precautions outlined in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) are followed. The plants listed below are classed as poisonous. However, instances of serious harm are extremely rare.

Schools should not remove plants listed in the tables below simply because they are classed as poisonous.

Garden and hedgerow plants	
Black bryony	Ivy berries
Black nightshade – especially unripe berries	Larkspur leaves and seeds
Bluebell	Lily of the Valley
Bracken	Lupin
Buttercup	Mistletoe leaves and berries
Christmas rose	Monkshood or aconite
Cuckoo-pint	Potato – except the tubers
Daffodil – all, especially bulbs	Ragwort
Deadly nightshade	Rhubarb – except leaf stalks
Foxglove	Snowdrop – all, especially bulbs
Giant hogweed	Tomato – except fruits
Hemlock	Tulip bulbs
Henbane	White bryony
Iris and 'flags', all but especially rhizomes	Woody nightshade – all, especially berries
House plants	
Castor oil plant seeds	Hyacinth bulbs
Dumb cane	Poinsettia leaves and flowers
Trees and shrubs	
Broom seeds	Privet – all, especially berries
Cherry laurel leaves and fruits	Rhododendron leaves and flowers
Holly berries	Snowberry fruits
Horse chestnut leaves, flowers and 'conkers'	Spindle tree
Laburnum – all, especially seeds	Yew – all, especially seeds
Vegetables and fruit	
Beans – French and red kidney, raw or undercooked	Rhubarb – leaves
Potato – all green parts, including tubers	Tomato – leaves

4.1.4   Ponds and Environmental Areas

The County Council has adopted guidance on pond safety produced by RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) as its standard for safe practice.

See the RoSPA website under 'pond dipping' for guidance on risk assessment of school wildlife ponds and pond dipping. See also RoSPA guidance on 'Pond & Garden Water Safety' for details on pond construction, mesh, grilles and fencing.

4.2   Design and Technology

In addition to the control measures summarised in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) teachers and headteachers should also refer to Primary technology resources available on the CLEAPSS website. The password details can be found in the CLEAPSS Primary Science and Technology newsletter that is circulated to all Community, VC, VA and Foundation schools; and to academies, free schools and independent schools purchasing the Primary School Health and Safety advice service through Educator Solutions.

See also 'Tools and Techniques in Primary D&T' (CLEAPSS document DL111).

4.2.1   Food Preparation

Staff involved in teaching any aspect of food handling must be suitably competent. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 Awards in Food Safety are the recommended qualifications for all food handlers. Go to the CIEH website's course finder database to find a local training provider. See also the Food Safety section of HR Infospace.

4.3   Art and Design

In addition to the control measures summarised in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) teachers and headteachers should refer to the Secondary Model Risk Assessments for Art and Design on the CLEAPSS website if undertaking more complex art and design work at key stage 2.

4.3.1   Kilns

Servicing and testing of kilns is available through the Building Maintenance Partnership (BMP). Schools not in the BMP must ensure that suitable arrangements to maintain kilns have been made with a specialist contractor.

Contractors should service and test kilns that are used at least once a week annually; kilns used at least once a fortnight should be serviced and tested every two years. Infrequently used kilns should be serviced and tested at least every three years.

Maintenance requirements for art equipment are summarised in Work Equipment Inspection Frequencies G653 on HR Infospace.

4.3.2 Plaster of Paris

See 'Using Plaster of Paris in Primary Schools' (CLEAPSS document PS 74).

4.3.3 Glues and Adhesives

See 'Glues and Adhesives' (CLEAPSS document L18).

4.4 Physical Education

In addition to the control measures described in the Risk Assessment Checklist (Primary Curriculum) headteachers and teachers should refer to 'Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport', 2012 edition, published by the Association for Physical Education (afPE) which the County Council has adopted as its standard for safe practice in PE. Schools should be familiar with Part 1 of the afPE guidance and with Part 2 (activity specific) as appropriate. 'Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport' can be ordered via the publisher, Coachwise 1st4Sport.Further support is available from the Education Adviser for PE on 01603 307781 or from the Health Safety and Well-being Team.

4.4.1 Inspection of PE Equipment

PE facilities (gymnasium, halls, sports halls etc) must be inspected regularly. All schools in the Building Maintenance Partnership have PE and gymnasium equipment inspected annually.

Schools that are not in BMP must make arrangements with competent contractors to inspect this equipment at least annually, e.g. through ESPO contract 107 - Gymnasium and Fitness Equipment Maintenance.

4.4.2 Personal Effects (Jewellery etc)

Jewellery, i.e. watches, rings, earrings, bracelets, necklaces etc. (including jewellery worn through the ears, nose, eyebrows, lips and other exposed areas of the body) should not to be worn in PE lessons. Belts with metal buckles should not be worn and long hair should be secured, as appropriate to the activity. Pupils should be consistently reminded of these requirements and a check carried out to ensure compliance before activity begins.

It is important that parents are made aware of the school's policy on the wearing of jewellery or other personal adornments by pupils. Information should be given to parents via the school prospectus, outlining the school policy on wearing jewellery and on the requirements for PE. Regular reminders in school newsletters etc. should help to ensure the success of such a policy.

When ears, etc. are newly pierced studs and rings cannot be removed for around four to six weeks while the piercing heals. In such cases afPE guidance (should be followed:

- All personal effects should be removed
- If they cannot be removed, staff need to take action to try to make the situation safe
- If the situation cannot be made safe, the pupil(s) concerned should not actively participate

Taping over ear studs is sometimes used to make the situation safe. However, the adult in charge should be confident that this strategy will be effective.

Teachers must not remove or replace earrings. They cannot be responsible for the consequences of removing or replacing earrings. Parents cannot transfer this responsibility to teachers.

4.4.3 Trampolining
Because of the highly technical nature of trampolining and the potential risks associated with rebound jumping, trampolining and trampettes are not considered suitable for use in primary schools.

4.4.4 Ball Games
Many ball games have adapted rules to encourage the development of skills in younger players, e.g. High Fives, Netball, Mini Soccer and Tag Rugby. Teachers should make themselves aware of these or seek guidance from the PE Adviser. If necessary, restrictions should be introduced to prevent damage to lights, doors and windows, etc.

4.4.5 Backward and Forward Rolls
Forward and backward rolls should not be taught to pupils under national curriculum year 2. Care is needed where weight is projected either directly forwards (forward roll) or backwards (backward roll) with the body in a tucked position. The risk is of hyper-flexion of the neck due to body weight being exerted against the back of the head.

It is essential to assess young people in relation to any known health issues as well as for the required strength in the arms before the forward roll is attempted, and to break the roll down into component parts. Until the ability to support body weight through the arms is evident, the forward roll should not be attempted unless compensatory safe physical support is provided.

Progressive, developmental practices should be planned before attempting these moves in standard curriculum settings.

4.4.6 Swimming
Safe working practices necessary to manage normal and emergency operation of school pools for curriculum swimming are detailed in Health and Safety in Swimming Pools Part 1 (G643g).

4.4.7 Individual and Special Needs
'Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport' provides detail on safe practice in PE for pupils with speech and language, sensory, physical, behavioural and cognitive or a combination of two or more of these special needs.

4.4.8 Health and Safety in PE Training
Norfolk County Council provides health and safety in PE training on:

- Health and Safety in PE (afPE safe practice 2016 manual)
- Norfolk PR Teaching Competence Standards (NPETCS) – programme for support staff in Primary Schools and cover supervisors in Secondary Schools – Level 3 accredited
- Subject Leadership in Primary PE – level 4 accredited
- Visit leadership of curricular swimming lessons
- Safe supervision of swimming – supporting swimming poolside

Training can be booked through Norfolk S4S.