

St Cleer Parish Council

Health and Safety Policy

It is Council policy that safe equipment shall be used and safe systems of working adopted in all working places.

Responsibility:

All staff are to be aware of the St Cleer Parish Council's Statements on Health and Safety at Work and of their personal responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, their own health and safety at work and the health and safety of others using the premises.

1. CLEANING MATERIALS AND CHEMICALS

- i. All staff are reminded that there are cleaning materials available to them which contain chemicals that may be dangerous. However, when these are used in the correct manner they are no more dangerous than cleaning materials used in the home. If used incorrectly, however, or without taking proper precautions, they can present a risk. All users of these materials must, therefore, take care at all times when handling them and follow strictly the manufacturer's instructions and any other instructions issued by the Council, including COSHH.
- ii. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and any other instructions issued by the Council. The manufacturer's instructions are normally printed on the container. If, by mischance, no instructions appear, advice must be sought from the Parish Clerk before the materials are used.
- iii. Protective clothing that is provided must be worn at all times when handling cleaning materials and chemicals.
- iv. Under no circumstances must cleaning materials and chemicals be mixed as this could result in the generation of poisonous fumes. In the event of such an occurrence, the area is to be vacated, with any victims being removed into the fresh air. The Emergency Services should be called to deal with the incident and the removal of the mixture.
- v. All cleaning materials/chemicals must be securely locked away when not in use.
- vi. Spillages of chemicals should be dealt with as per the manufacturer's instructions. These are normally printed on the container. They can also be found on the product data sheet.
- vii. Before diluting cleaning chemicals always ensure you are wearing the appropriate protective clothing – goggles, overalls, gloves etc. Ensure the area is well ventilated and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Before decanting into a spray bottle always ensure it is appropriately labelled. If it isn't, then label it yourself. For the correct dilution rate refer to the manufacturer's instructions and apply them rigorously.
- viii. When diluting cleaning chemicals, always add the chemical to the water to reduce the risk of splashing.
- ix. The storage of cleaning materials/chemicals should be kept to a minimum in order to reduce wastage, fire and other risks.
- x. Other points to consider when storing cleaning materials/chemicals are:
 - Do not stack containers – they may become damaged. – Use stock in strict rotation – always use the oldest first. – Keep chemicals out of direct sunlight, away from excess heat, and prevent them from freezing.
 - Whenever possible these containers should be recycled - Seek advice on draining containers to reduce waste.

2. CLEANING EQUIPMENT/ELECTRICAL

Electrical cleaning equipment is not dangerous if properly maintained and used. If used improperly, accidents may occur.

All operators of such equipment must be trained in the correct method of use and must give particular attention to the following points:

- i. The appropriate warning signs must be displayed before any cleaning task commences.
- ii. Only electrical cleaning equipment which is used regularly, inspected and maintained and in good order is to be used. Before use check the plug to ensure wires are secure. Check the power cable for breaks, cuts etc. A machine with a cracked or faulty plug or cable must not be used. If there is a fault, isolate the machine, attach a 'DO NOT USE' label and report it to your Supervisor/Manager.
- iii. Equipment must only be used for the purpose for which it is designed and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. If in doubt, contact your Supervisor/Manager.
- iv. A machine must NEVER be left unattended with the power switched on. This is particularly important if there are children on the premises.
- v. Always ensure the power cable is kept clear of the machine when in use. If the cable should become entangled around the moving parts of the machine then the power must be switched off and the plug DISCONNECTED before attempting to unwind the cable.
- vi. Never jam cables under the doors and never allow them to become fully extended or strained.
- vii. Never allow cables to trail in water.
- viii. Ensure cables across walkways do not create slipping or tripping hazards.
- ix. Extension leads may only be used according to manufacturer's instructions, particularly with reference to power rating. If in doubt, contact your Supervisor/Manager.
- x. Never use electrical equipment with wet hands or wet gloves.
- xi. Never use any electrical equipment that has exceeded its PAT date. (Portable Appliance Test).
- xii. If a fuse blows, it must be replaced by a new one at the correct rating, which may be determined by referring to the equipment plate or manual. A 'competent' person must only ever replace fuses. If in doubt, contact your Supervisor/Manager.
- xiii. Suction cleaners must be emptied and filters cleaned regularly.
- xiv. After use, all electrical equipment must be disconnected from the power source, cleaned and stored correctly.
- xv. All electrical equipment should be checked regularly by a competent person. This should be organised by the Supervisor/Manager.

3. MANUAL CLEANING EQUIPMENT (e.g. mops, brushes, cloths, buckets, sprays etc.)

Manual cleaning equipment must be regularly maintained, used correctly or and handled with proper precautions

All users of manual equipment must give particular attention to the following points:

- i. Colour coded cloths / mops / buckets / spray bottles must be used to reduce the risk of cross contamination, thereby reducing the risk of germs being passed from one area to another. It is recommended that establishments use the system outlined in the Chemical Colour Wallchart.
- ii. The appropriate warning signs must be displayed before any cleaning task commences.
- iii. Mop heads must be changed regularly, washed and left to air-dry to minimise unpleasant odours and reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- iv. After use, all manual cleaning equipment must be cleaned and stored safely.
- v. Spray bottles must be rinsed out regularly to prevent blockages.

4. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

The correct protective clothing supplied by your Parish Clerk should be worn when carrying out cleaning duties.

The following items should be provided in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the relevant British Standard where appropriate.

Rubber Gloves – must be worn when carrying out cleaning tasks and/or when handling chemicals.

Goggles – must be worn when using chemicals, particularly where there is a risk of splashing.

Masks – must be worn in dusty conditions, e.g. boiler rooms and workshops, or under conditions where fumes are given off.

Staff are required to provide their own:

Appropriate clothing – must be worn at all times when on duty. Sleeves should be kept rolled down to ensure protection of the lower arms.

Staff should wear appropriate footwear – not flip flops, sandals or open-toed shoes. If moving furniture as part of your risk assessment, you should consider the need for steel toe-capped footwear.

5. PERSONAL HYGIENE

Personal cleanliness should be considered at all times:

- i. Wash hands after using the toilet.
- ii. Wash hands after wearing rubber gloves.
- iii. Cuts and sores should be covered with a suitable dressing.
- iv. Wash hands after cleaning operations.

6. WORKING AT HEIGHTS

Every year many people are injured, some fatally, whilst using ladders, step ladders and working platforms supported by trestles. Most of these injuries occur because ladders are not securely placed and fixed. Other causes include climbing with loads, over-reaching, or the transfer of slippery substances to ladder rungs from the user's footwear. You must plan the work and the way to do it from ground level. The temptation to use a ladder for all sorts of work without assessing the risks and whether the risks warrant an alternative method, sometimes leads to an accident.

Consider:

- i. can the job be done more safely in a different way?
- ii. is the ladder secured to prevent outward or sideways slip?
- iii. what are the conditions at the site of work?
- iv. is there a comfortable work position with safe handholds?
- v. is the ladder long enough?
- vi. is the ladder so flexible that it may cause loss of balance?
- vii. has the user the ability, the training and the experience to use the equipment with safety?
- viii. is the strength, surface conditions and type of structure suitable to rest a ladder against?
- ix. is the equipment suited to the nature of the work, the type of tools to be used and the weight of the article to be fixed?
- x. are there any obvious defects visible on the access equipment?
- xi. are the weather conditions
- xii. wind, wet ground, ice etc. likely to increase risk?
- xiii. is there a need for a harness to fix to the building, strong point or anchor bolt?

LADDERS

- i. Make sure the foot of the ladder is on a firm and level surface. Under no circumstances must it be placed upon loose material or other equipment to gain height. Any attachments used to level the feet on sloping surfaces should be firmly fixed. The rung should never be used to support the ladder and take the weight; the uprights are designed for this purpose.
- ii. For the safety of the user, always ensure the ladder cannot slip and wherever practicable the top should be securely fixed. Whatever form of lashing is used, secure by using both uprights. – On slippery floors, special care must be taken to prevent movement. – Whilst the ladder is being lashed at the top, there should be someone at the bottom rung.
- iii. Always ensure the equipment to be used is in good condition, suited to industrial use, is fitted with nonslip feet and that the inclination of a ladder conforms to the rule of one-in-four inclination, e.g. incline 25 cm to each 1 metre rise (1 foot to each 4 foot rise – 75% to the horizontal).
- iv. Where securing at the top is impractical every effort must be made to prevent the ladder from slipping sideways or outwards, either by sandbags, fixed blocks, or stakes embedded in the ground. – Ladder feet can also be fitted with footpads, caps or sleeves.
- v. If it is impractical to secure a ladder at the top or foot, then a second person must be stationed at the foot to prevent slip. This precaution is considered to be effective only for ladders of not more than 16 feet in overall length. The person 'footing' should face the ladder with a hand on each side and at least one foot on the bottom rung.
- vi. Ladders should be extended at least one metre (3' 6") (a minimum of 3 rungs) above the landing place or above the highest rung on which the user has to stand, unless there is a suitable handhold to provide similar support. This is essential to reduce the risk or overbalancing when stepping off. NEVER stand on the top three rungs.
- vii. The rung of a ladder is designed to support the weight of a person, plus any light tools he/she may be carrying. Scaffold boards should not be laid on rungs. Only one person at a time should climb a ladder.
- viii. Ladders with wire reinforced rungs must have the reinforcement on the underside when in use. (i) If there is any electrical hazard, metal ladders, those with metal stile reinforcement, or wet ladders must not be used.
- ix. Ensure footwear is free from mud, grease, and oil or slip hazards before attempting to climb any ladder.
- x. If a ladder is contaminated in any way, it should be cleaned before further use.
- xi. Safety dictates ladder stiles be gripped during use. Therefore, only tools which can be carried in a belt or holster may be carried during climbing. All other tools and materials should be raised or lowered on a rope.
- xii. Avoid over-reaching, keep thighs between uprights.
- xiii. Do not use painted ladders – the paint may hide defects.

STEP LADDERS

- a. Step ladders or trestles are not designed for any degree of side loading. They should be extended to the full spread and properly level and stable. – Any work should be done at right angles. It should never be carried out from the top platform, neither should overhead work require over-reaching.
- b. The rear parts of the steps should never be used for foot support.

ROOFS/SKYLIGHTS

No work on roofs or skylights is authorised

7. FLOORS, WALKWAYS, STEPS AND PATHS

Slips, trips and falls account for approximately 30 per cent of all accidents in schools. Floors can, for one reason or another, become slippery and every possible precaution must be taken to prevent this. Programme work to coincide with low levels of pedestrian activity when possible. Problems can be created through faulty floor maintenance and lack of due care and attention.

BEFORE WORK COMMENCES, ALWAYS PUT UP WARNING SIGNS. WHEN COMPLETED AND AREA IS DRY, PUT THEM AWAY.

Accidents will be minimised if the following precautions are taken:

- i. Wet or Damp Mopping: Leave only the absolute minimum of water on the floor so that it will dry quickly. If it is at all possible, 'lock-off' the area until the floor is dry.
- ii. Spillage of Food or Water: Clean up every spillage as a matter of urgency, or 'lock-off' the area of the spillage.
- iii. Water brought into the building during Wet Weather: The provision of adequate barrier matting will reduce this problem, but wet patches may occur beyond the mat area. These must be mopped or wiped dry as soon as possible.
- iv. Outside Steps, Paths etc.: Outside steps and paths must be kept free from litter, leaves or other matter likely to create danger, especially during wet weather.
- v. During inclement weather, the Caretaker/Cleaner must make every effort to provide pathways, giving safe access to and egress from the premises. An adequate supply of sand and rock salt should be kept available for this purpose. Check stocks before the onset of winter.

8. TRIP HAZARDS

A number of accidents occur because of tripping and falling. Every effort must be made to eliminate the hazards and reduce the risks, e.g.:

- i. brushes, mops, buckets etc. must not be left in corridors, outside doors or anywhere else where people passing by might trip over them;
- ii. cables of mechanical cleaning equipment must be properly stowed when the equipment is not in use;
- iii. distorted link rubber and other types of doormat must not protrude above mat wells. Loose lying mats should be used only in areas where they will not create a hazard, and all badly worn mats must be removed or replaced.

9. SPECIAL HAZARDS

LEIGONELLA the water has to be checked for temperature on all supplies according to the specific maintenance manual supplied. Yearly water sample to be taken and forwarded to the laboratory for checking

Dead ends and unfrequently used taps flushed by running as required in the Legionella Policy

10. SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

1. In areas where there is a potential risk of cross infection, e.g. toilet areas, shower/washroom facilities and gymnasiums, a germicidal disinfectant should be used.
2. In areas where food may be stored, prepared or consumed – such as home economics, kitchens, staff rooms and kitchenettes – a non-tainting bactericidal disinfectant should be used on all food preparation surfaces and catering equipment.

11. ADEQUATE LIGHTING

Whenever the premises are used, appropriate lighting must be employed

12. MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling is responsible for a quarter of all accidents reported each year, the most common problem being back injury. Staff may from time to time need to lift, carry and move furniture and equipment. This type of manual handling is now covered by the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992). Under these Regulations, manual handling operations must be avoided, wherever possible, if the risk of injury exists. Avoidance is not always possible and therefore an assessment of the operation should take place in order to identify and then reduce the risks associated with it, as far as is reasonably practicable.

Unless you are confident of lifting and handling techniques, you are instructed to not lift and manual handle any item above 1 kg on behalf of the Parish and to immediately request training.

13. MAINTENANCE TASKS

As part of their duties, employees are sometimes expected to carry out holding repairs to premises. These will vary in nature and complexity according to the 'maintenance level' at which each individual is employed. These maintenance tasks should only be attempted where the person concerned has undergone the necessary training and possesses the appropriate qualifications or asserts their personal competence to do so.

It is the Council's policy that the installation, test and inspection of fixed electrical installations should only be undertaken by electricians who are on the roll of the National Inspection Council for Electrical Contracting (NICEIC). Similarly, that work on gas systems or appliances is carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety Commission's Approved Code of Practice and Guidance (L56) by CORGI registered installers.

Regardless of this, alterations to fixed wiring system or gas system/appliances should only be undertaken by approved contractors after consultation.

14. REPORTING OF INJURIES, DISEASES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES

At the Pavilion resides an Accident Book, which must be completed in all cases of personal injury (however slight) as a result of an accident arising out of, or in connection with, work.

There is a statutory requirement to report serious accidents and accidents which cause absence for more than three consecutive days to the Health and Safety Executive.

All accidents reported in the accident book must be notified by phone to the Clerk or in their absence the Chair

15. EMERGENCY PLANNING

Ensure that you know and understand the procedures to be followed in emergencies, e.g. fire, gas leaks, bomb alerts, etc.

16. SECURITY AND LONE WORKING

Ensure you know and understand your important role in managing your personal security as well as that for making our assets safe and protected.