



**BEDFORD  
GIRLS  
SCHOOL**

# Health & Safety Policy

Approved By:	Director of Finance & Operations
Date:	September 2024
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# Statement of Intent

## Health and Safety Policy Statement

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of Bedford Girls' School ("BGS" or the "school") and is made on behalf of the Governors of the school.

Protecting the health and safety of staff, students and visiting members of the public is a matter of utmost importance and will be driven by the Governors of BGS.

Bedford Girls' School is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment for all staff and students;
- Providing and maintaining safe work equipment and systems of work;
- Ensuring the safe handling and use of substances;
- Providing safe access to and from school premises;
- Providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- Identifying hazards, assessing risks and implementing appropriate control measures;
- Preventing accidents and work-related ill health;
- Ensuring there are adequate welfare facilities;
- Consulting with staff and their representatives on health and safety matters, as well as holding regular Health and Safety Committee meetings;
- Ensuring that emergency evacuation plans are in place and understood; and
- Reviewing the effectiveness of its health and safety arrangements, policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of all BGS staff to help the school achieve and maintain the high standards of health and safety it has set.

This Health and Safety Statement, along with the Health and Safety Policy, will be reviewed annually, or sooner should circumstances require.



Neil Harris

Chairman of School Committee



Martin Scoble

Director of Finance & Operations  
Clerk to the School Governors  
Chairman of Health & Safety Committee

1st September 2024

## 1. Introduction

Bedford Girls' School ("the School") is committed to providing a safe environment for its staff, students and visitors. This Policy outlines our dedication to promoting and maintaining high standards of health and safety within the School premises and during School activities.

The School is committed to complying with all applicable health and safety laws, regulations and best practices. To achieve this, it requires the full cooperation of all staff in promoting a safe and healthy environment in which to work.

As employer, the Harpur Trust has ultimate responsibility for health and safety at the School. This responsibility is delegated to the School Committee, who have further delegated responsibility to the Headmistress and then to the Director of Finance and Operations.

The Director of Finance and Operations delegates further in accordance with the arrangements detailed in this Health & Safety Policy.

The School's Health & Safety Committee will review this policy annually or more frequently if required.

## 2. Health & Safety Management Structure

### 2.1 Senior Leadership Team

The Headmistress and Director of Finance and Operations sit on the Senior Leadership Team ("SLT"). Collectively the SLT fully support the School's Health & Safety Policy and will:

- ensure appropriate and adequate resources are made available for the provision and maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and pupils with adequate facilities and arrangements for their welfare;
- promote and support a strong health and safety culture within the School and the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.
- ensure clear lines of communication and reporting are established to address health and safety concerns, incidents and near misses promptly;
- be directly responsible for implementing the School's Health and Safety Policy in their areas of control.
- ensure that effective health and safety training is provided throughout the School.

### 2.2 Heads of Departments / Line Managers

All those with responsibility for the management or supervision of staff will promote positive attitudes towards health and safety and will, within their department or area of responsibility:

- ensure that all new staff receive an induction in health and safety matters appropriate to their duties including accident reporting, emergency procedures, risk assessment, fire safety and the location of the Medical Centre and first aid kits;
- ensure that all staff are familiar with the School's Health and Safety Policy, Fire Safety Policy, Fire Evacuation Procedures and other policies and procedures relevant to their role;
- co-operate with and participate in the investigation of all accidents and conduct assessments and inspections as necessary;

- ensure the maintenance of good housekeeping standards;
- review the suitability and safe operation of work equipment;
- ensure that a regular maintenance schedule of all work equipment is organised and all employees provided with adequate information, instruction and training as may be required;
- check work methods and practices to ensure safe systems of work;
- ensure that risk assessments are carried out within their departments as required in accordance with the Risk Assessment Policy.

### **2.3 Estates Manager**

The Estates Manager is responsible for:

- compliance with health and safety regulations regarding the condition of buildings and equipment, including boiler rooms, plant rooms and mechanical, electrical, water and other services;
- arranging maintenance checks of buildings, services and equipment, premises risk assessments, statutory and non-statutory inspections, and other health and safety checks and assessments;
- ensuring compliance with fire safety regulations, including regular review and ongoing implementation of the fire risk assessment;
- management and training of the Premises Team; and
- management and oversight of all contractors on site.

### **2.4 Head of Health & Safety**

The Head of Health & Safety will work closely with the Estates Manager and Director of Finance and Operations to ensure the fulfilment of their responsibilities noted above.

The Head of Health & Safety will also:

- advise on and monitor the implementation of health and safety related procedures;
- maintain appropriate records of health and safety related checks, inspections and services;
- maintain records of risk assessments as required; and
- provide and/or facilitate relevant health and safety training to staff.

### **2.5 Health and Safety Committee**

The Health and Safety Committee meets on a termly basis and is comprised of staff from within the School as well as the Health and Safety Governor. Membership of the Committee is designed to provide as much breadth as possible as well as focusing on the higher risk areas of the School.

The meetings are minuted and available to all staff.

Members of the Health & Safety Committee are listed in Appendix A.

The Health & Safety Committee will:

- review this Policy on an annual basis;
- promote a strong health and safety culture within the School;
- monitor the effectiveness of procedures, systems of work, training and communication;
- consider aspects of the School's operations which could have health and safety implications for

- staff, students and/or visitors;
- consider recommendations arising from health and safety audits, inspections and assessments;
  - inform the SLT of any impending changes or additions to health and safety related legislation that may affect the School's operations;
  - consider relevant health and safety statistics and reports, including accidents, near misses, training completed, etc; and
  - ensure that health and safety training is provided throughout the School.

## 2.6 All Staff

All staff have individual obligations to act responsibly and observe health and safety rules wherever applicable to them or to matters within their control.

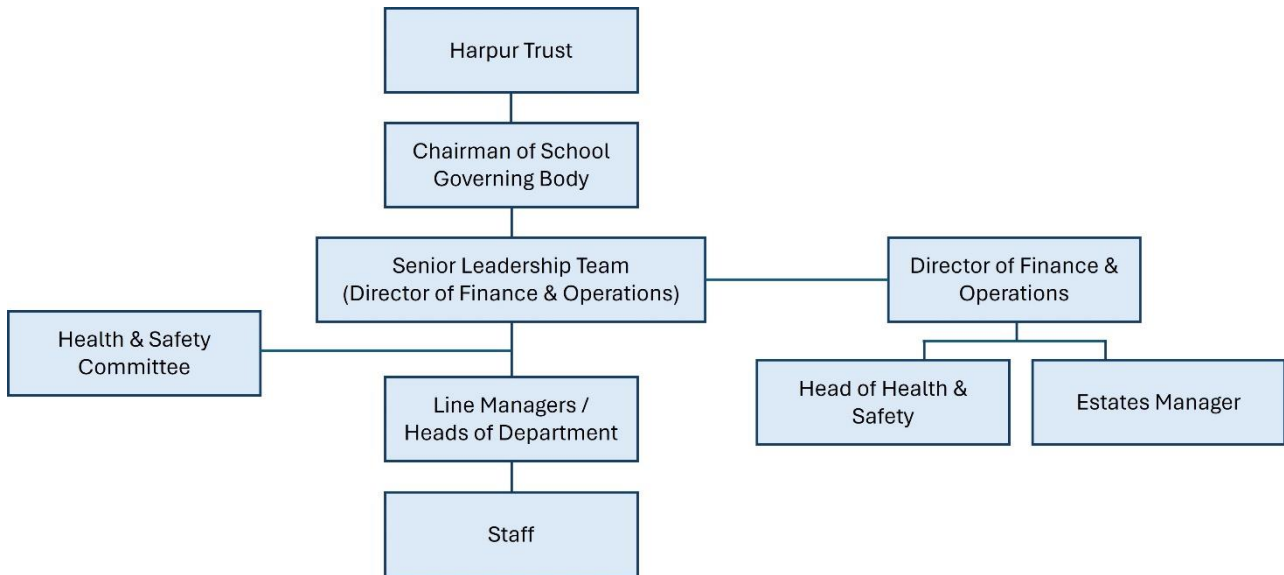
Staff must:

- Comply with the School's Health and Safety Policy;
- Co-operate with management to enable the School to comply with any legal duties or requirements;
- Report any safety hazard or concern immediately to either their line manager, Estates Manager or Head of Health & Safety;
- Fully conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others;
- Dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation;
- Conduct themselves in a responsible manner in the work place and take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others;
- Use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as may be provided;
- Maintain all equipment in good condition and report any defects to their line manager or Estates Manager when they occur;
- Use only those items of equipment or machinery they have been trained and authorised to use and use it in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- Report all accidents and "near misses" via EVOLVE whether injury is sustained or not and cooperate with any subsequent investigations;
- Attend or complete all mandatory training courses and any others as requested;
- Familiarise themselves with the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and exit routes;
- Familiarise themselves with the names of qualified first aiders and the position of first aid kits; and
- Do not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

Any member of staff who would like further guidance on the contents of this Policy or who would like to raise a concern should speak to the Director of Finance and Operations or Head of Health and Safety.

All School policies and procedures referred to in this Policy are available to staff on the Eyrle.

## 2.7 Overview of the Health & Safety Management Structure





### **3. Health & Safety Arrangements**

#### **3.1 Communication & Consultation**

The School will ensure there is effective communication and consultation with staff on health and safety matters.

The Health & Safety Committee will be the forum through which staff will be consulted in relation to any change which may substantially affect their health and safety at work, for example new procedures, new equipment or ways of working.

Staff are encouraged to report issues or concerns without delay to either the Estates Manager, Head of Health & Safety or Director of Finance and Operations. Should a staff member be concerned about the response they have received to the issues they have raised, they are advised to speak to the Director of Finance and Operations or the Headmistress directly.

#### **3.2 Risk Assessments**

The School will conduct comprehensive risk assessments of all departments, facilities, and activities to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate control measures in accordance with the School's Risk Assessment Policy. It is the responsibility of the Heads of Department and/or the individual with oversight responsibility of the activity to ensure risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the Risk Assessment Policy.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to address any changes in circumstances or new risks that may arise.

#### **3.3 Information & Training**

All new staff will receive a comprehensive induction to the School which will include information relating to safeguarding, IT systems, day to day operations, Staff Handbook and health and safety.

The health and safety induction will provide specific information and procedures relevant to their role and is supplemented by any on the job training and inductions provided by their line manager.

In addition to the above, all staff are required to complete a variety of health and safety related online training courses on the iHASCO system depending on their role.

Staff must attend or complete all training courses and apply any new instructions or guidance provided.

Staff are requested to contact the Head of Health & Safety to discuss additional training that may be required from time to time.

#### **3.4 Maintenance of Buildings & Reporting of Issues**

All staff are responsible for good housekeeping in their places of work and being alert to any issues or health and safety concerns. Staff should use the Premises Services Desk system to report matters requiring attention without delay and should not leave it for other staff members.

Heads of Departments are required to complete a termly Safety Inspection Checklist to help identify potential health and safety issues. These checklists are reviewed by the Estates Manager and the Head of Health and Safety.

The Estates Manager is responsible for the checking and maintenance of all machinery and equipment under his control.

### **3.5 Smoking (including vaping) at Work**

Smoking (including vaping) is not permitted on or immediately outside the school premises. Further guidance is available from the Staff Handbook.

### **3.6 Alcohol & Drugs**

The School's Alcohol and Drugs Policy provides clear guidance to all staff on the use of alcohol and drugs.

### **3.7 Health Centre & First Aid**

The School has two qualified School Nurses and a qualified first aider who provide cover during normal school hours and are based in the Health Centre. The School Nurses provide advice and assistance in relation to the treatment of injuries and health-related issues.

First Aid boxes are located around the School site and are clearly labelled. The Nursing Manager is responsible for checking and replenishing kits every term. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarize themselves with the location of first aid kits.

Training is available to all staff who wish to become first aid qualified. A list of first aid qualified staff is maintained by the Head of Swimming and circulated to all staff on a termly basis.

Please refer to the Health Centre Policy for more information.

### **3.8 Accident Reporting**

All accidents and near misses either within School buildings and grounds or any offsite locations whilst taking part in School activities, i.e. trips or sporting fixtures, must be reported via the online reporting system, EVOLVE.

To access EVOLVE, please click on the link on the Staff Web Portal main page.

Accidents and near misses must be reported if they involve staff, students and visitors to the School. If a student is injured during a time where close supervision is not required (e.g. break-time), the School Nurse or other attending staff member should report the accident via EVOLVE.

Where required, the accident or near miss will be investigated to determine the cause and any relevant contributory factors. Appropriate steps will then be taken to address any hazards, amend systems of work and/or educate staff and students.

In some circumstances, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

(RIDDOR) requires the School to report an incident to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). All RIDDOR reports will be made by the Director of Finance and Operations or the Head of Health & Safety via the HSE's online reporting form.

A summary of accidents and near misses will be presented to the Health & Safety Committee every term for discussion.

Please refer to the Accident Reporting & First Aid Policy on the Eyríe for further information.

### **3.9 Visitors to the School**

Any external speakers or visitors to the School must be approved by the Headmistress in accordance with the External Speakers Policy.

Staff inviting external speakers or visitors are responsible for their supervision and safety whilst on site and must accompany them for the duration of their visit.

### **3.10 Hire of Premises**

The School hires out its facilities (e.g. swimming pool, astro pitch and sports hall) to external clubs and organisations outside of school hours and during the school holidays.

All external hirers must agree to the School's terms and conditions as stipulated in the external hirer's agreement. The Estates Manager is responsible for all external hirers and ensuring they have been provided with the key health and safety and security information. The Estates Manager is supported by the Operations Coordinator.

### **3.11 Contractors**

The Estates Manager is responsible for the appointment and management of contractors carrying out construction or maintenance work on the school site. The School will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that contractors are competent.

Contractors are required to provide the School with details of their own health and safety arrangements and a valid certificate of public liability insurance.

Contractors who may be working unsupervised during term time or when students could be on site, will be required to provide confirmation of clear DBS checks completed by their employer.

Visitor badges must be worn at all times. Contractors must read and sign the Asbestos Register.

### **3.12 Security**

The School's Security Policy sets out the measures that will be adopted to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff, students, visitors and contractors are protected from security risks.

### **3.13 Emergency Procedures**

The School recognises that emergencies can occur unexpectedly and it is vital to be prepared to respond effectively to any situation that may arise. The School's Emergency Procedures set out the steps and protocols to be followed in various emergency scenarios including flooding and serious public health incidents.

The procedures to follow in the event of a fire are documented in the School's Fire Evacuation Procedures.

### **3.14 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The School will provide suitable PPE to any staff member who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety while at work which hasn't been adequately controlled by other means. All PPE will be provided free of charge.

The Heads of Departments will assess where PPE is required and will ensure staff members are appropriately trained in the correct usage, maintenance and storage of PPE.

Staff members must wear PPE as required. Staff members are responsible for checking PPE prior to use and reporting any faulty or damaged PPE immediately.

### **3.15 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

The School will ensure that all substances which have the potential to cause ill-health or harm to staff are appropriately assessed in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, and that, so far as is reasonably practicable, measures will be introduced to minimise risk.

The School will complete COSHH assessments to identify and evaluate the risks associated with the use or creation of such substances, their storage and disposal and to implement control measures to limit exposure to staff and others.

The Heads of Departments are responsible for completing COSHH assessments and obtaining suppliers' safety data sheets for all substances used on school premises. The COSHH assessments and safety data sheets will be kept electronically and available to all in the event of an incident.

New substances may not be introduced into the workplace until they have undergone a COSHH assessment. Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of the COSHH assessments and have received appropriate training prior to any exposure.

The School will review the COSHH assessments and control measures at least once a year, to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective.

### **3.16 Display Screen Equipment**

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) refers to any electronic equipment that includes a display screen, such as computer monitors, laptops and tablets. The use of DSE has become an integral part of school life therefore it is essential to identify and mitigate the potential health and safety risks associated with its use.

Staff members who are regular users of DSE are encouraged to complete the online DSE training course on

iHASCO which will help them ensure their own workstation is set up correctly. Once the course is complete, staff members can complete an online assessment of their own workstation and identify if they need any additional equipment such as a screen riser or wrist support. 'Users' are defined as staff who use DSE daily for continuous periods of an hour or more.

The School encourages regular breaks from DSE use and regular eye examinations to detect any vision related issues. The School will reimburse the cost of eye examinations for staff that are regular users of DSE. Please speak to Accounts for further information.

Staff are requested to speak to the Head of Health & Safety to request enrolment on the iHASCO course.

### **3.17 Fire Safety**

The School's Fire Safety Policy sets out how the School manages the risk associated with fire. The Fire Safety Policy provides information on fire risk assessments, roles and responsibilities, training, systems and controls and personal emergency evacuation plans.

The Fire Evacuation Procedures sets out how staff and students should exit School buildings upon hearing a fire alarm, the exit routes that should be taken, the assembly points for the specific School sites and how to complete registers.

All staff must read and comply with the Fire Safety Policy and Fire Evacuation Procedures. New staff members will be shown the nearest emergency exits and assembly points by their line managers as part of their induction.

Planned fire drills take place every term to ensure all staff and students are fully aware of what to do in an emergency.

### **3.18 Occupational Health**

The School is committed to protecting its staff members as far as reasonably practicable from any health risk which may arise from work or the working environment.

The School recognises that workplace stress is an issue that can have an adverse impact on those affected and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stress factors. The School will seek to maintain a well-managed work environment, in which all reasonably practicable steps will be taken to keep work related stress to a minimum.

All staff should be alert to possible symptoms of stress either in themselves or in colleagues and should take appropriate action to address the issue as set out in the School's Stress Policy. Where stress factors are identified, the School aims to work with staff to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to reduce and manage stress.

Staff are encouraged to speak to their line manager in the first instance if they are experiencing work related stress.

### **3.19 Educational Visits**

The School provides a variety of educational trips, both within the UK and overseas, throughout the

academic year.

Please refer to the School's Educational Visits Policy and Educational Visits Handbook for further information on how trips are planned, risk assessed and approved.

### **3.20 Asbestos**

The School's Asbestos Management Plan sets out the actions taken to manage asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and best practice guidance.

The Estates Manager holds a copy of this document as well as the latest Asbestos Survey and Register. All documentation is readily available to all those who need access to asbestos information, including the emergency services.

Staff who may be required to work in areas that contain ACMs must complete the online Asbestos Awareness training course on iHASCO. They are also required to sign the Asbestos Register on an annual basis to confirm they are aware of the location of ACMs within the School.

### **3.21 Electricity**

The School is committed to ensuring that electrical installations and equipment are safe and suitable for their intended use and in compliance with safety regulations to prevent accidents, injuries, and damage to School property.

The School ensures that the fixed electrical wiring installation is inspected by a competent specialist electrical contractor every 5 years.

Portable electrical equipment is tested annually by a competent electrical contractor and records are maintained by the Estates Manager.

Staff must report any issues or defects in electrical equipment to the Estates Manager without delay. Staff must check portable appliances prior to use and are requested not to daisy chain extension leads or overload a circuit with appliances.

### **Personal Equipment**

Staff are not permitted to bring in their own personal electrical equipment onto School premises without prior permission from the Estates Manager, (e.g. microwave ovens, kettles) and on no account should staff bring heaters in from home due to the potential fire risk. Where permission is granted by the Estates Manager, the piece of equipment will need to be included in the relevant risk assessment and be subject to regular PAT testing.

Staff are permitted to bring in phone chargers provided they are double insulated and are visually inspected prior to use. Damaged or faulty phone chargers must not be used. Phone chargers must not be left on when not in use.

### **3.22 Legionella**

The School ensures that its water systems, including plumbing and water storage systems, are properly maintained and monitored to prevent conditions that would support the growth of legionella bacteria.

The School engages a competent external specialist to undertake a legionella risk assessment every two years.

### **3.23 Working at Height**

Working at height refers to any activity above ground level. In a school environment there will be a variety of educational activities and maintenance work where working at height cannot be avoided and therefore must be appropriately risk assessed and managed.

Staff must ensure that appropriate equipment and safety measures are in place for any working at height activity, including use of PPE.

Staff who may work at height and use ladders are required to complete the online working at height and ladder safety training courses on iHASCO to ensure they are aware of potential hazards and required safety measures.

Staff are requested to speak to the Estates Manager prior to undertaking any working at height to ensure the work has been appropriately risk assessed and the right equipment and trained staff are available to safely complete the work.

### **3.24 Swimming Pool**

The Pool Safe Operating Procedures (PSOP) sets out the School's approach to water safety and how it manages the risks associated with swimming pool operations.

The Head of Swimming is responsible for ensuring the safe use of the pool by both students and staff.

The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring that regular checks are undertaken in relation to water quality as well as the safe management and operation of the pool plant room.

All Premises Assistants who undertake regular water quality checks and work in the pool plant room have completed the Pool Plant Operators Course.

### **3.25 Manual Handling**

Staff are required to assess any potential manual handling tasks beforehand to ensure that they are physically capable and the task can be carried out safely with minimum risk.

Staff are requested to seek assistance from the Premises Team in relation to any manual handling tasks they feel are beyond their capabilities.

Staff who regularly carry out manual handling tasks are required to complete manual handling training.

### **3.26 Lone Working**

Staff may often work alone during the normal school day. However, in certain scenarios, additional measures will be required to ensure their safety. These include working in remote areas of the School such as boiler rooms, the pool plant room or visiting Cople Fields.

In these instances, staff are required to inform another member of staff of the area in which they will be working and how long they expect to be there. Staff should take either a mobile phone or a radio with them in order to call for help if needed. Young people are not permitted to work alone.

Staff should not carry out any work alone which could place themselves at risk of injury, i.e. manual handling or using ladders. In these scenarios, the staff member should be accompanied by another competent person to provide assistance or oversight.

### **3.27 Slips, Trips and Falls**

All staff are responsible for ensuring good housekeeping within their work area and in particular keeping it clear from hazards which could give rise to slips, trips and falls.

Staff should ensure any spillages or debris are cleaned up immediately. Large spills which cannot be dealt with by the staff member should be clearly marked and reported to the Premises Team.

Any concerns in relation to damaged flooring, loose paving slabs, pot holes or uneven walking surfaces should be reported to the Estates Manager.

Heads of Departments are required to complete a termly Safety Inspection Checklist to help identify potential slip and trip hazards. These checklists are reviewed by the Estates Manager and the Head of Health and Safety.

### **3.28 Lifts**

There are a number of passenger lifts located around the School site for use by staff and students as required. There is also a dumbwaiter in the main School corridor which is used by the Catering Team for transporting food up to the first floor.

All staff are responsible for using the lifts safely and reporting any issues or faults to the Estates Manager without delay. Staff must ensure that safe load limits are not exceeded when using a lift or when moving goods and equipment between floors.

The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring all lifts are thoroughly examined by a competent person at regular intervals.

### **3.29 Pressure Systems**

The School ensures that all Pressure Systems on site are adequately managed and maintained to reduce the risk of danger occurring from system failures and/or misuse.

Pressure Systems within School premises include:

- Barista Style Coffee Machine in Chequers



- Autoclave and Steam Engine in Science

Inspections are carried out by external competent persons on the equipment in accordance with the written schemes of examination. Any questions or concerns in relation to such equipment should be directed to the Estates Manager in the first instance.

### **3.30 Noise & Vibration**

The School manages, so far as reasonably practicable, noise and vibration hazards that fall under its control.

Certain activities undertaken by staff will expose them to noise and vibration due to the use of specific pieces of equipment, i.e. LEV system, hedge cutters, tractors etc. The School manages the exposure levels by limiting the time staff use the equipment, rotating work activities and providing PPE, including ear defenders. The School will monitor exposure levels and put in place additional control measures as required.

Staff are also required to complete training in relation to these hazards as suitable for their roles.

### **3.31 Driving For Work**

The School maintains a number of vehicles to transport students and staff to a wide range of sports and educational activities. All School vehicles are subject to regular safety checks and inspections.

Only authorised drivers who have completed the required level of training are permitted to drive a School minibus. The Head of Health & Safety maintains the list of all authorised drivers.

The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring all vehicles are properly maintained and run. Please refer to the BGS Vehicle Policy & Handbook for further information.

### **3.32 Vehicle Movement Areas**

Staff car parks are available at the Junior School, Senior School, Astro and Cople Fields. Staff must request a parking permit and display this in their car at all times if using this facility.

Parking is only permitted in designated parking spaces and care must be taken not to block other cars, the pavement or access to the Sports Field or Randle Hall. Cars must not block exits from School buildings or emergency escape routes.

Any staff who use their personal vehicles for business purposes must notify the Head of Health & Safety.

### **3.33 Gas Safety**

The School ensures that all gas installations and appliances are properly maintained and regularly serviced/inspected. Only registered gas safe engineers are permitted to carry out any work or inspections on the School's gas installations and appliances.

Staff must report any issues or defects concerning gas installations to the Estates Manager without delay.

## Appendix A – Members of the Health & Safety Committee

Gemma Gibson	Headmistress
Carolyn Howe	Head of Junior School
Martin Scoble	Director of Finance and Operations (Chair)
Rachel Gentry	Governor
Jacqui Jackson	Head of Health & Safety
Verity Mason-Mcleod	Director of Sport
Ed Castro	Swimming Pool Manager
Jordan Durrant	Director of Rowing
Michelle Logan	Nursing Manager
Emma Redfern	Head of Design and Technology
Toni Lovett	Head of Food and Nutrition
Chris Lugsden	Head of Art and Technology
Lynne Gethins	Head of Science
Katie Tombs	Catering Manager
Rebecca Wise	Estates Manager
Helen Constanti	IT Manager