

Wheatfield Primary School

'High Achievement through Growing and Learning Together'

Noise Policy

(Non-Statutory)

Issue No 1

January 2018



Approved by Headteacher:
Approved by Governors:
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CHANGE RECORDS SHEET

Issue No.	Date	Summary of Change	Amended by
1	January 2018	Original policy document.	Denise Hickson

SUMMARY

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school guidelines and policies. If you require further details of this school guideline then please refer to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed during the Health and Safety audit process and updated as and when changes occur within that process or as part of a legislative change to policy. This is to be reported in the annual H&S report to governors.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the policy:

H&S Health and Safety

MAIN DOCUMENT

1 NOISE REGULATIONS

These Regulations contain the legal obligations on employers to prevent damage to the hearing of employees from excessive noise whilst at work.

2 DEFINITIONS

The Regulations define actions required when certain levels are reached. There are three levels which are:

- a. Lower exposure action value - This is where an employee has a daily or weekly personal exposure to noise of 80dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 135 dB(C).
- b. Upper exposure action value - This is where an employee has a daily or weekly personal exposure to noise of 85dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 137 dB(C),
- c. Exposure limit value - This is where an employee has a daily or weekly personal exposure to noise of 87dB(A) or a peak sound pressure of 140 dB(C).

3 KEY REQUIREMENTS

Regulation 5 (1) requires that the employer, where an employee is likely to be exposed to noise at or above the lower exposure action level, ensure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment be carried out.

Regulation 5 (2) indicates the employer, in conducting the risk assessment, shall assess the levels by observation of specific working practices, by reference to relevant information and if necessary, measurement of the level of noise.

Regulation 5 (3) indicates the risk assessment include the level, type and duration of exposure, the effects of exposure, information provided by manufacturers and the availability of alternative equipment.

Regulation 6 requires that the employer either eliminate at source, the risk of damage to the hearing of his employees from exposure to noise, or if not possible to eliminate, to reduce it to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. Where an employee is likely to be exposed to noise at or above an upper exposure action level the employer must reduce the exposure to as low as is reasonably practicable by establishing and implementing a programme of organisational and technical measures, excluding the provision of personal hearing protectors.

Regulation 7(1) requires that employers provide their employees, if requested by them, with personal hearing protectors, when their exposure to noise is at or above the lower exposure action value.

Regulation 7(2) requires that the employer, where unable to reduce the levels of noise below the upper exposure action level, provide personal hearing protectors to any employee who is so exposed.

Regulation 7(3) requires that for any area where the employer is unable to reduce the levels of noise below the upper exposure action level, access to the area is designated a hearing protection zone, demarcated and identified and access restricted where this is practicable.

Regulation 8 (1) requires that the employer ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that anything provided under these regulations, with the exception of personal hearing protection, is fully and properly used and maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

Regulation 8(2) requires that the employee make full and proper use of personal hearing protectors provided to him and any other control measures provided by his

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employer and that if he discovers any defect in personal hearing protectors or control measures to report it to the employer as soon as is practicable.

Regulation 9 requires that the employee, where a risk assessment indicates that the exposure to noise of an employee is a risk to health must ensure the employee is placed under suitable health surveillance.

Regulation 10 requires that the employer, where an employee is likely to be exposed to noise at or above the lower exposure level, provide his employees and their representatives with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training on:

- a. The nature of risks from exposure to noise.
- b. The organisational and technical measures taken in order to comply with the requirements of regulation 6.
- c. The significant findings of the risk assessment.
- d. The availability and provision of personal hearing protection.
- e. Why and how to detect and report signs of hearing damage.
- f. The entitlement to health surveillance.
- g. Safe working practices to minimise exposure to noise.
- h. The collective results of any health surveillance undertaken.

4 COMMENT

The regulations have limited impact in schools because the noise levels experienced are not constant throughout the day and staff exposure, because noise is averaged out over the working day, are below the exposure action levels. This is not always the case though with the main areas of concern being Design and Technology and Music. The other area to be considered is site management as this can include use of machinery including tractors, high powered drills and chain saws.

5 ACTION TO BE TAKEN

- 5.1 The H&S Coordinator needs to advise staff of the need to consider if any of the machinery and equipment in use or any activities give rise to concern.
- 5.2 The H&S Coordinator should ascertain from feedback whether the activities indicated are felt to be of concern by undertaking a basic noise assessment. This being use of a noise meter to decide what level of noise occurs and an assessment of the period over which the noise occurs.
- 5.3 For any area the H&S Coordinator identifies where noise levels are or may be above action levels then a more detailed assessment of the noise will need to be undertaken. This can be undertaken in-house but as the aim of the assessment is to identify what steps should be taken to reduce noise levels it is essential that whoever undertakes the assessment is competent, i.e. able to give advice on noise reduction.
- 5.4 If any changes are made to equipment/machinery, practice or the environment then the noise assessment needs to be revised.
- 5.5 Where the noise levels are not adequately controlled by physical measures, e.g. sound proofing, physical enclosures etc. then personal protective equipment may need to be provided and areas marked.
- 5.6 H&S Coordinator should review the noise assessment regularly or when it is no longer felt to be valid.

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APPENDIX A MANAGING NOISE RISKS

The following flow chart produced by the Health and Safety Executive illustrates the steps to be taken in order to manage noise risks within the workplace (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/Noise/flowchart.htm>).

