London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames

Carlisle & Hampton Hill Federation

Work at Height
Guidance and Policy

This policy was reviewed:	Summer 2021
This policy was ratified by Full Governing Body (if applicable):	Not Applicable
This policy will be reviewed again:	Summer 2023
Governor committee responsibility:	Finance & Premises Committee
Statutory Policy:	No

Legal Requirements:
The Working at Height Regulations 2005 cover any work with a risk of injury by a fall from height; this includes work below ground level.

The Regulations require that all work at height is properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a manner that is safe; suitable equipment should be provided and staff should be competent, (appropriately trained) to carry out the work.

It is the policy of Carlisle & Hampton Hill Federation to ensure there are arrangements in place to both assess and manage the risks of any work at height carried out on the premises.

In order to enable this, the Headteacher has nominated suitable member(s) of staff to manage & undertake the tasks and ensure they have received sufficient information, instruction & training in order to be able to carry out the role.

The school carries out an annual review of the work at height activities taking place; this includes any activities undertaken by classroom staff as well as the Caretaker. Where there are high risk activities and/ or activities are carried out on a regular basis there are written risk assessments in place.

Guidance:

Within a school a variety of work at heights takes place. For example:

- retrieval of stationery or other objects from high shelving; putting up displays;
- putting up festive decorations;
- painting and decorating;
- retrieval of footballs or other items from flat roofs;
- maintenance of equipment located on flat roofs;
- replacing bulbs, maintenance or adjustment of stage lighting
- window or roof replacement
- building extensions and new builds

Planning

When planning work at height activities consideration is given to whether the task is actually necessary. Where possible the need for work at height is eliminated and the task will be carried out from ground level using appropriate equipment.

Guidance:

Avoiding the need for work at height:
Consider how the work at height element of a task could be eliminated, e.g. using telescopic equipment from the ground, using binoculars for inspection work, etc.

If a Caretaker or Site Manager plans to get onto a roof to retrieve footballs or other items, consider firstly whether this is an essential task. In this particular scenario, consider what can be done to prevent items landing on the roof in the first place, e.g. installation of wire fencing (either high height wire fencing from the ground, or wire fencing attached to the side of the building wall). In the latter solution, consider the need for access to the roof for future maintenance and design around this.

In the absence of preventative measures, explore whether the items could be retrieved from ground level with the use of a broom or similar long-handled object.

Where work at height is intended to take place outside it will not take place during wet or windy weather.

School staff do not access fragile roofs under any circumstances. Where access to fragile roofs is required this is only undertaken by specialist contractors following appropriate risk assessment and using a Work at Height Permit to Work.

Undertaking a Risk Assessment

Prior to undertaking a work at height activity, a suitable & sufficient risk assessment is carried out. Where there are significant hazards these are recorded. The school makes use of the Action HR Work at Height risk assessment template.

Guidance:

Risk Assessment:
When conducting a work at height risk assessment the following areas should be considered. This list is not exhaustive and other significant hazards may become apparent for your work activity, which will also need to be taken into consideration.

The assessor must ensure that all work at height:

- is necessary;
- is properly planned and organised;
- considers weather conditions that could endanger health and safety;
- is carried out by trained and competent people;
- is carried out in a safe environment;
- uses suitable equipment that is appropriately inspected (e.g. is a mobile elevated work platform available instead of ladders?);
- are the risks from falling objects properly controlled;
- is access to a fragile roof required?

Consideration must also be given to:

- ensure work at height is only carried out if it is safe to do so and there are no other suitable means to carry out the work (e.g. extendable tools)
- ensure work is properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out in as safe a way as is reasonably practicable;
- plan for emergencies and rescue;
- take all this into account in the risk assessment.

Common factors in work at height accidents
The Health and Safety Executive has identified a number of common factors resulting in falls from heights. Experience has shown that such incidents usually arise due to poor management control rather than because of equipment failure.

- Failure to recognise a problem
- Failure to ensure that safe systems of work are followed
- Failure to provide safe systems of work
- Inadequate information, instruction, training or supervision provided
- Failure to use appropriate equipment
- Failure to provide safe plant/equipment

Location
It must be ensured that the place where the work will be carried out (including the means of access) is safe and includes features to prevent falls where reasonably practicable. It may be necessary to segregate the area to ensure safety, (e.g. to reduce the risk of a ladder being hit by a vehicle).

Edge protection (including guardrails)
Edge protection is a physical barrier (permanent or temporary) around a structure or location that prevents a person falling. When working in an area such as a flat roof, stating a person will not go near an edge of a drop is unlikely to be a suitable control. A simple mistake or loss of concentration can cause a fatality or serious injury. Having a physical barrier greatly improves the safety.

Where hazards are present, for example roof lights or sky lights in a roof which is to be worked on, the roof lights and skylights need to be fenced off to prevent workers falling through them.

An example of temporary edge protection is scaffolding; permanent edge protection is generally built into a structure (preferably during the initial construction of the structure) to protect areas where work may be carried out e.g. where air conditioning units or skylights etc need regular maintenance.

Architects should consider permanent edge protection at the initial design stage of a new building; this can then be designed to enhance the aesthetics of the building. Also, Designers intending to place plant on a roof e.g. air conditioning unit, should consider edge protection when deciding on a protected route of access.

Equipment
All equipment used to work at height must be suitable for the task, kept in good condition and regularly inspected. This information should be recorded. Equipment that gives collective protection takes priority over personal protective equipment. Below is a list of examples of working at height equipment. This list is not exhaustive:

- work platforms
- crawling boards
- safety harnesses
- ladders
- step ladders
- kick steps

Tables and chairs are NOT working at height equipment and should never be used for this purpose.

Using ladders should always be the last option and only used for access or for short duration tasks that takes 30 minutes or less

Fall Arrest Equipment and Harnesses
If any risk of a fall remains then managers and workers must minimise the distance that may be fallen. This can be achieved through the use of harnesses, scaffolding and/or the use of crash mats (inflatable safety mats) etc. Depending on the system used, these can prevent a fall or mitigate the distance and consequences of a fall. The selection of appropriate equipment and training on use is also a requirement.

Working on Fragile Surfaces
Any work on fragile roofs must be carried out by a specialist contractor. Any work near fragile surfaces such as skylights must be provided with suitable edge protection such as fencing or barriers.

Health Condition
The physical condition of the people involved e.g. age, fitness, pregnancy or vertigo must always be taken into consideration before working at height.

Falling Items
It is important to prevent injury from falling items while working at height. Any person working at height must ensure their tools and materials are suitably secured so debris or other items will not fall on passers-by. This may mean segregating the area where work is being carried out.

Weather Conditions

Conditions should be considered and appropriate controls put in place before work begins. No work at height should take place outside during wet or windy weather.

Suitable and Sufficient Equipment

Where work at height is required staff will be provided with suitable equipment. This includes, step ladders and ladders that meet the Class 1/ EN 131 standard.
All equipment is stored safely & securely and receives visual inspection on a regular basis and prior to each use. There are written, dated records of each visual inspection.

Information, Instruction & Training

Members of staff receive training appropriate to the level of hazard & risk associated with the work at height activity they carry out.

All members of classroom and office staff have received instruction from the Site Manager as to the correct set-up & use of the step ladders.

Only the following member(s) of staff are allowed to use the ladders and they have attended ladder safety awareness training within the past three years.

Name of member of staff:	Date of last training:
Site Manager	See Training Records

Guidance:

Information, Instruction & Training:
Suitable & sufficient work at height training should include:

- Summary of the legal requirements
- Identifying the types of work at height equipment available
- Identify appropriate types of personal protective equipment
- How to carry out a work at height risk assessment and the hierarchy of controls
- Inspection and pre-use checks for ladders
- How to safely set-up & use step ladders and ladders

When employing staff for a role that specifically includes work at height activities the school should make sure that it employs people with sufficient skills, knowledge to perform the task, or, if they are being trained that they do not undertake any work at height until they have completed that training.

Where the training is in house the new member of staff must work under the supervision of somebody competent to do it.

In the case of low-risk, short duration tasks (short duration means tasks that take less than 30 minutes) involving ladders, competence requirements may be no more than making sure employees receive instruction on how to use the equipment safely (eg how to erect the step ladder or how to tie a ladder properly). For activities such as putting up displays and/ or festive decorations, training can take place in house.

The erecting and use of a tower scaffold, such as a PASMA tower must be carried out by a trained & competent person. The person must hold a valid PASMA tower certificate/ ID card, (this requires recertification every three years). Training can be provided by the manufacturer, the supplier of the equipment, or it can be provided by a suitable outside organisation. For further detail please see Use of Work at Height Equipment Guidance available on SLA online.

Review

As with all risk assessments the work at height assessments are reviewed annually or more frequently should there be a change to the described circumstances. This review is carried out by Headteacher.

Management of Contractors

Carlisle & Hampton Hill Federation maintains high standards of health & safety and requires contractors & their staff to undertake their work in a way that does not put themselves or others at risk. As such the school has a Managing & Monitoring Contractors Policy in place, (using the Action HR Guidance and Policy Template).

When choosing contractors directly, the school makes use of a Safety Systems in Procurement, (SSiP) pre-assessment scheme, such as CHAS (Contractors Health and Safety Scheme) in order to ensure that the organisation chosen has the legally required health & safety standards in place.

In planning work, the school requires the contractor's method statements and risk assessments in advance of the commencement of work.

All contractors on site, whether engaged directly by the school or by a third party receive regular monitoring. The form & frequency of the monitoring is commensurate with the level of risk of the activity and will be agreed as part of the work planning process.

Guidance:

During the process of selecting a contractor:

The following points are methods of ensuring the safety of non-employees in school, as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

- Highlight the hazards present that may affect the contractor's work, for example if they are working on a roof area, roof lights, fragile roofs or lack of edge protection. This is important as it helps to ensure that the contractors make sufficient plans for the job and are aware if they will need particular equipment.
- Confirm what access they have to health and safety advice.
- Confirm what arrangements they would make to reduce the risk of falls from height, for example, what access equipment will they be using?
- Confirm what safety training their staff have received.
- Ensure the school is provided with copies of risk assessments for the work and method statements.

NB: Where projects are organised by the Local Authority, the Diocese or an outside organisation such as Achieving for Children a number of the above points will have been addressed on behalf of the school. However, the school must still discuss specific hazards with the contractor that the LA, Diocese etc may not be aware of.

During the work:

If, during the course of the work, you are concerned about safety, draw this to the attention of the contractor. If it is a Local Authority/ Diocese etc managed project, contact the managing organisation immediately.

Title:	**Print Name:**	**Signed:**	**Date:**
Headteacher:			

School Business Manager:			