



Wychwood School  
OXFORD

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

**Author: PDG**

**Last Reviewed: September 2021**

**Date of next Review: November 2023**

### **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (Including Radioactive) (COSHH): Policy Guidance**

#### **1 Scope**

This guidance is applicable to all employees of, workers for, and pupils of the School when using substances hazardous to health.

#### **2 Objectives**

2.1 To ensure that foreseeable work activities using/generating hazardous substances are identified.

2.2 To ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place where significant risks have been identified.

2.3 To ensure that suitable control measures are put in place to protect the health, safety and welfare of those who may be affected by activities at the School.

#### **3 Guidance**

3.1 Heads of Department (including support departments) will be responsible for the management of hazardous substances within their areas of responsibility.

3.2 Hazardous substances include:

- Those classified as very toxic, toxic, harmful, irritant and corrosive.
- Biological agents connected with work with micro-organisms.
- Substantial quantities of any dust.
- Substances with a maximum workplace exposure limit assigned by the Health & Safety Executive.
- Radioactive substances.
- Any other comparable substance, e.g. pesticides.

3.3 Typical areas which will need to be considered are:

- Chemical usage in science laboratories and in cleaning, maintenance and grounds maintenance.
- Biological agents, such as bacteria and micro-organisms.

- Adhesives, paints, cleaning agents etc. used in art, drama, maintenance, cleaning and catering activities.
- Fumes from soldering and welding in workshops & maintenance.
- Wood dust from workshop and maintenance.
- Pesticides in grounds maintenance, pest control.
- Exposure to radioactive substances.

#### 3.4 Heads of Department will ensure that:

- Where hazardous substances are used or stored on the school premises, a risk assessment will be undertaken and any required control measures will be implemented.
- Quantities of substances stored will be kept to a minimum and an inventory of substances is maintained.
- Material safety data sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous substance in use will be available at the point of use and the instructions for transportation, storage, handling and disposal will be followed.
- Those using hazardous substances are competent to do so and in particular where there are designated standards, e.g. use of pesticides.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment will be available.
- Hazard signs will be displayed at locations where substances are stored.
- That pupils using hazardous substances are supervised at all times.
- Any health surveillance requirements are identified and appropriate surveillance implemented.
- Appropriate information, instruction and training, together with the keeping of records takes place.
- Where any contractors are used, that suitable and sufficient risk assessments incorporate the use / generation of hazardous substances has been undertaken.

3.5 Maintenance, examination and testing of control measures will be the responsibility of the Finance & Support Staff Manager alongside the Heads of Departments. Such arrangements will cover:

- Fume cupboards.
- Other local exhaust ventilation.
- Respiratory protective equipment.
- Other personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, aprons, eye protection.

3.6 Records will be kept by the Finance & Support Staff Manager and will include:

- Records of the thorough examination and testing of local exhaust ventilation equipment (undertaken at least every 14 months) for a period of 5 years.
- Records of inspection of respiratory protective equipment for a period of 5 years.
- Records of health surveillance and monitoring for 40 years in relation to individuals.

3.7 The Head of Physics is the School Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS). S/he will:

- Have attended an appropriate course in radiological protection.
- Prepare risk assessments on each activity that involves the use of ionising radiation.
- Prepare rules for working with radioactive substances.
- Notify the Health & Safety Executive that the School is a "user".
- Ensure that practical work is limited to:
  - Sealed sources
  - Specified Open source for half-life demonstration
  - Geological specimens

- Ensure that apparatus capable of generating x-rays operating at 5 kilowatts or more (other than cathode ray oscilloscopes, television receiving sets or visual display units) are not used.
- Ensure that experiments on radiological sources are only undertaken by year 12 and 13 pupils under supervision.
- Ensure that younger pupils are limited to watching teacher demonstrations.
- Ensure that a strict regime is implemented for the storage and accounting of radioactive substances (including a locked steel box, with warning sign).
- Ensure that a user log is kept for removal and return of substances.
- Ensure that any staff have received appropriate training.
- Ensure that emergency procedures include arrangements for dealing with radioactive materials.