

Schools

Health & Safety Auditing and Self-monitoring Arrangement

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1.0 Statement of purpose/objectives

This arrangement will assist and enable the School & Council to meet its statutory duties.

School Governors, Managers/Headteachers must check and monitor their health and safety standards and management systems to demonstrate a commitment to providing a well-managed, safe place of work and a caring organisation.

2.0 Scope

This arrangement applies to all maintained schools within Shropshire Council, including community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools, pupil referral units and the statutory youth services.

3.0 Duty of Care

Liability for failing to meet the legal duty of care would only arise if an incident occurred and it can be proved that the risk was foreseeable, but no action had been taken to avoid it. Children and young people are owed a higher duty of care and those working with children and young people must reflect this.

4.0 Health & Safety Audits and Self-monitoring.

Health and Safety **Audits** are conducted periodically by the Health and Safety Team. There is no set frequency for carrying these out. How often they are conducted will depend on the work activities being undertaken, the risk levels those activities pose and the standard of health and safety management in place.

The aim of the **self-monitoring** checklist is to provide an aide memoir and guidance to enable schools to assess the health and safety performance against predetermined standards to recognise shortfalls, achievements and where necessary take remedial actions and manage the residual risk.

Self-monitoring is conducted by completing a self-monitoring checklist periodically by the school, arranged by the Headteacher/Governors.

5.0 What you must do

Work with the appointed School's Health and Safety Officer to find a mutually convenient time to meet to conduct a Health and Safety Audit. Complete a self-monitoring checklist on an annual basis. Act on any findings of a Health and Safety Audit or self-monitoring checklist.

6.0 Implementation

Management guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions is provided and updated to support the implementation of the arrangement.

7.0 Compliance

Compliance with this arrangement will be reported by the Health & Safety Team to the Director of Education & the Health, Safety and Welfare Group. Where serious contraventions or shortfalls are identified in the audit report, these will be escalated to the appropriate level, including the appropriate director, who will be advised to expedite actions and request a written report on progress.

8.0 Review of Arrangement

This arrangement will be reviewed by Health and Safety Team every 5 years or sooner if there are significant changes that need to be implemented.

Consultation/Approving Bodies

Consultation	Health, Safety and Welfare Group	April	2009
Approval	Health and Safety Forum	Oct	2009
Reviewed	Health and Safety Team	July	2012
Reviewed	Health and Safety Team	April	2014
Reviewed	Health and Safety Team	May	2020
Reviewed	Health and Safety Team	Aug	2026

Health and Safety Self-Monitoring and Auditing Arrangement

Frequently Asked Questions

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1.0 Who is responsible for health and safety in schools?

The local authority is the employer in the case of community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools, pupil referral units and the statutory youth service. In practice Shropshire Council has delegated the day-to-day management of health and safety in its schools to the Headteacher. However, the Council retains the ultimate responsibility no matter who carries out the tasks.

2.0 Why does the Council need to evaluate its health and safety performance?

Organisations have a legal duty to put in place suitable arrangements to manage health and safety. The HSE publish a framework, [*HSG65 Managing for health and safety*](#), to help organisations do that effectively. The Council is committed to implementing this framework and evaluation of health and safety performance is one of the key elements, this equally applies to the school self-monitoring and management of health and safety.

Shropshire council as the employer, has a duty to monitor the management of health and safety in schools, under section 29(5) of the Education Act 2002, local authorities have powers to direct health and safety matters relating to school premises or school activities taking place elsewhere.

3.0 What is an internal Health and Safety Audit?

The audit is a systematic review of local health and safety practices and management systems. It is undertaken by the Health and Safety Team against standards documented in the Council's Health and Safety Management System, i.e. the Policies and Arrangements relating to health and safety management that are published on [*Shropshire Learning Gateway*](#).

4.0 What is the purpose of a Health and Safety Audit?

The primary aim of the audit is to identify the effectiveness of the schools Health and Safety Management Systems. This is achieved by evaluating the schools means of managing health and safety risks arising from its activities. The approach is designed to ensure 'performance' itself has been audited and not solely the 'documentation' that may or may not exist.

The audit **does not** attempt to provide a definitive or detailed report on all workplace conditions or risk exposures. Assessing and auditing health and safety management performance in this way is a matter of sampling; it is not about

providing a complete picture. The audit reflects conditions that were made apparent only at the time of the audit.

The audit will identify strengths and obvious shortcomings in the management of health and safety within a given premise/team.

5.0 How frequently will a Health and Safety Audit be conducted

The frequency of the audit will be decided according to known risk factors within the team/premise e.g. potential impact, high risk work activities, accidents and incidents etc. The aim is to audit each school between 3 and 5 years.

6.0 What is the internal Health and Safety Audit process?

The auditing system follows the following four steps:

Step 1 – Schedule

The school will be contacted to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet with the Health & Safety Officer to conduct the audit. Typical attendees from the school may include the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, Business Manager, Caretaker and the Nominated H&S Governor.

Step 2 – Prepare

The Health & Safety Officer will prepare by analysing previous audit reports, incident reports, communications with the school and completed self-monitoring checklists (SMC).

Step 3 – Audit

The Health & Safety Officer will use an appropriate question set designed to probe the effectiveness of the school's health and safety management system. The audit meeting will be used to question the Headteacher/Business Manager and staff on work practices, to review health and safety documentation, to walk round the premise/team's work areas and/or work activities in progress.

Prior to leaving the school, the Health & Safety Officer will summarise the main issues identified during the audit. Should any imminent danger of someone being seriously injured be identified, the Headteacher will be informed straight away and immediate action must be taken. Where higher risk concerns are identified, a brief confirmation email detailing the issues will be sent to the premise at the earliest opportunity after the audit (preferably within two days).

Step 4 – Report

Within four weeks of the audit visit, a report will be produced and forwarded by email to the Headteacher/Business Manager. A delivery and read receipt may be requested.

At an agreed time after the audit report has been received the school must provide to the Health and Safety Officer an update on the corrective actions taken to address any shortfalls identified. The Health and Safety Officer will then decide if further support, advice or follow up is required.

The Health and Safety Team will provide a quarterly summary to the Director of Education & a bi-annual summary to the Health, Safety & Welfare Group of the audits undertaken, actions completed and actions outstanding. Actions shall be monitored by the audit tracker.

7.0 Self-monitoring

A self-monitoring checklist will be devised and revised as necessary by the Health and Safety Team.

This checklist is available on SLG or from the Health and Safety Team, for schools to complete and return at least annually. (Following DfE Guidance, Section 13 [Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools](#))

Self-monitoring is an opportunity for schools to review their health and safety management arrangements critically and identify where improvements are needed. Schools should:

- Identify any gaps, weaknesses or areas requiring improvement.
- Seek advice from the Health and Safety Team where support is needed by emailing health.safety@shropshire.gov.uk or contacting their Schools Health and Safety Officer.
- Submit completed self-monitoring reports to the Health and Safety Team using the email address above.

Schools are expected to complete any actions identified by the self-monitoring checklist and an update on the progress may be requested by the Health and Safety Team.

The results of self-monitoring checklists shall be presented to DMT meetings for education & summarized to the Health, Safety & Welfare Group