



# Health & Safety Policy

November 2022

## **“Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility”**

*Verita International Schools is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Our policies, procedures, and safer recruitment ensure students are safeguarded from any forms of neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional harm*

### **BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Board of Verita International School, as the employer, has overall responsibility for the health & safety of their employees and all persons affected by the school's operations.

Specifically, the Board is responsible for:

- Reviewing the school's health and safety policy annually and implementing new arrangements where necessary.
- Providing appropriate resources within the school's budget to meet statutory requirements and the school's health and safety policies, procedures, and standards.
- Seeking specialist advice on health and safety matters which the school may not feel

competent to deal with.

Duties and responsibilities have been assigned to staff as indicated below out below.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR**

The Director, supported by the Board, is responsible for the day-to-day management of health & safety.

Specifically, the Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring adherence to statutory requirements and school health and safety policies, procedures, and standards.
- Developing a health and safety plan detailing the responsibilities for ensuring health and safety within the school.
- Co-operating with the board to enable health and safety policies and procedures to be implemented and complied with.
- Ensuring effective health and safety management arrangements are in place for carrying out regular inspections and risk assessments, implementing actions and submitting inspection reports to the boards where necessary.
- Communicating the health and safety policy, and other appropriate health and safety information, to all relevant people, including contractors.
- Carrying out health and safety investigations.
- Ensuring all staff are competent to carry out their roles and are provided with adequate information, instruction, and training.
- Ensuring that the premises, plant, and equipment are maintained in a serviceable condition.
- Reporting to the board any significant hazards which need rectifying.
- Monitoring purchasing and contracting procedures to ensure compliance with school policy.

The Director may choose to delegate certain tasks to other members of staff. It is clearly understood by everyone concerned that the delegation of certain duties will not relieve the Director from the overall day-to-day responsibilities for health and safety within the school.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE STAFF**

The office staff are responsible for supporting the Director in the day-to-day administration and implementation of the health and safety policy.

Members of the office staff will be allocated specific health and safety roles to be carried out as part of their job description.

In addition to responsibilities delegated by the Director, the office staff are specifically responsible for:

- Maintaining, or having access to, an up-to-date library of relevant published health and safety guidance from appropriate sources, and ensuring that all staff are aware

of, and make use of, such guidance.

- Ensuring regular health and safety risk assessments are undertaken for the school's activities, and that control measures are implemented.
- Ensuring that appropriate safe working procedures are brought to the attention of all staff.
- Resolving health, safety and welfare problems when members of staff refer to them, and informing the Director of any problems to which they cannot achieve a satisfactory solution with the resources available to them.
- Carrying out regular inspections of all areas of the school to ensure that equipment, furniture and activities are safe, and recording these inspections where required.
- Arranging for the repair, replacement or removal of any item of furniture or equipment which has been identified as unsafe.
- Maintaining records related to health, safety and welfare.
- Training and supervision to enable employees and students to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety.
- Ensuring that all accidents are promptly reported and investigated using the appropriate forms.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL EMPLOYEES**

All employees have general health and safety responsibilities. Employees must be aware that they are obliged to take care of their own health and safety while at work, along with that of others who may be affected by their actions.

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others in undertaking their work.
- Comply with the school's health and safety policy and procedures at all times.
  - Apply the school's health and safety policy and be directly responsible to the Director for the application of the health and safety procedures and arrangements;
- Report all accidents and incidents in line with the reporting procedure.
- Cooperate with school management on all matters relating to health and safety.
- Not to intentionally interfere with or misuse any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Report all defects in condition of premises or equipment, and any health and safety concerns immediately to the school office.
- Report immediately to the school office any shortcomings in the arrangements for health and safety.
- Ensure that they only use equipment or machinery that they are competent / have been trained to use.
- Make use of all necessary control measures and personal protective equipment provided for health and safety reasons.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

## **General Risk Assessments**

The school risk assessments (for all activities, teaching and non-teaching, premises and one-off activities) will be coordinated by a class teacher, School Director of the school Medical Team staff, following guidance contained in this policy, and are approved by the Director.

These risk assessments are available for all staff to view and are held centrally in the school office.

Risk assessments shall be reviewed every term in line with the monitoring inspection, or following significant changes to the activity or premises, or following an accident/incident, or following feedback from an interested party. Staff are made aware of any changes to risk assessments relating to their work via Google Chat and the teacher Portal..

Risk assessments shall take account of the individual needs of all employees, students, parents/guardians, visitors and any other persons affected by the School's activities.

### **Individual Risk Assessments**

Specific risk assessments relating to individuals, e.g. staff member or student, are held on that person's file and will be undertaken and approved by the Director and/or the office staff. Such risk assessments will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Director and/or the Health & Safety Committee.

It is the responsibility of employees to inform the Director and/or the Health & Safety Committee of any medical condition (including pregnancy) which may impact upon their work.

It is the responsibility of students' parents/guardians to inform the Director and/or the office staff of any medical condition which may require support during school hours. Curriculum Activity Risk Assessments

Risk assessments for curriculum activities will be carried out by the responsible staff member, referring to the model risk assessments, and the office staff for advice if required.

## **MONITORING AND INSPECTION**

A general inspection of the school's premises, equipment and facilities shall be conducted daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly by the School security officer.

Monitoring inspections of individual classroom shall be conducted regularly by classroom teacher

Monitoring inspections shall be recorded on the provided form and records of monitoring inspections shall be kept in the school office.

The office staff are responsible for following up items detailed in monitoring inspections.

The Director is responsible for conducting an annual inspection and reporting findings to the board, including a report on the performance of health & safety management systems.

## **TRAINING & COMMUNICATION**

All new employees shall receive training in health & safety aspects related to their role as part of their induction.

Staff training includes, but is not limited to, emergency procedures, health & safety, first aid,

Any changes to health & safety policies shall be briefed to all staff during regular staff meetings,

Health & safety is a standing item on all staff meeting agendas.

Training records will be available.

Employees are encouraged to provide feedback on health & safety issues. Feedback received shall be considered by the Director and the Board and acted upon if deemed appropriate.

## **ACCIDENTS**

All accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, no matter how seemingly minor, must be reported to the school office without delay.

A Student and a Staff Accident Report is located on the Student Information System and in the school office. It must be completed following any accident. Details recorded include a brief description of the accident, who was involved, location, date, time and action taken.

The school office shall investigate all accidents, report their findings to the Director and act accordingly to minimize the risk of further occurrences. Where equipment or systems of work are found remedial actions shall be taken immediately.

The Accident Book shall be reviewed annually by the school office and any trends identified reported to the Director for action.

Completed Accident Books must be kept for a minimum of 3 years.

### **Accident Reporting**

- Deaths (to be reported by telephone without delay).
- Injuries to an employee resulting in them being unable to work for 3 or more consecutive days (including weekends).
- Injuries to students, and other non-employees, through activities connected to the school's activities
- Specified occupational illness or disease

- Specified dangerous occurrences

## **Accidents - Students**

In addition, the following arrangements are in place should a student suffer an accident:

- All school students, parents/guardians are informed via Seesaw, phone call or email.
- Parents will be notified in the event of a major head injury requiring hospital attention or 'one to one' observation.

## **Educational Visits**

The staff of Verita International School aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and believe that school trips are an essential resource for learning and a key component of the curriculum.

All School trips are planned in advance and risk assessed, in accordance with the Field Trip policy

When planning a school trip, the responsible teacher shall:

- Seek permission from the Director for the trip, as they have ultimate responsibility for the students, irrespective of whether they are present on the trip or not.
- Remember that they (the teacher) are responsible for all aspects of the trip, including preparation and post-trip activities, and that during the trip they are responsible for the care and welfare of the students.
- Ensure that before a trip takes place, a member of staff visits the venue to assess the risks that may occur there, or on the journey, and check the availability of essential facilities, e.g. toilets, eating areas etc...
- Lead staff member to complete an off-site risk assessment form before trips which require a higher level of risk management e.g. Residential trips. Risk Assessment forms must be handed to the Director for approval.
- Ensure that the location of the venue and the length of the journey are taken into account when considering the trip's suitability for the students, in terms of their cultural requirements, physical disabilities, age, size and maturity.
- Ensure that a full costing for the trip is conducted and approved by the Director, to determine the level of any parental contribution that may be required.
- Ensure that at least 2 weeks before the trip is due to take place a letter is sent home to the parents/guardians of all students attending, containing all relevant details, including venue, subject, justification, times, parental contribution, clothing, equipment and spending money for the students. The letter shall include a permission slip for the parents to complete and return, giving their permission for the student to attend.
- Ensure that enough adults are attending to help supervise the students:
  - Upper School: At least 1 adult per 10 students.
  - Lower School: At least 1 adult per 8 students.
  - Early Years: At least 1 adult per 6 students.

## **During the Trip**

While undertaking the trip, the responsible teacher shall:

- Ensure that the safety of the students is the first priority.
- Ensure that all adults attending the trip, including parent/carer volunteers, are fully briefed on their role and responsibilities including safeguarding of students, the aims of the trip, any emergency arrangements, and are assigned to a group of students which does not contain a relative of theirs.
- Ensure that all students are prepared for the trip by explaining the aims of the trip, the expected standards of behaviour, the importance of following all rules and of not taking any undue risks.
- Ensure that a first-aid kit, sick bags (where transport is to be used) and mobile phone for emergency usage are taken on the trip.
- Ensure that students are wearing school uniform or appropriate clothing and correct footwear, as required for the trip.
- Ensure that a list of all students attending, including emergency contact numbers and medical requirements, is taken on the trip.

## **After the Trip**

Once the trip is complete, the responsible teacher shall:

- Consider producing a display of photos and work produced by the students.
- Write a short review to be included in the weekly newsletter.

## **Insurance**

Verita International School has purchased, and shall maintain, suitable levels of liability insurance to cover our activities and facilities.

## **SECURITY**

Verita International School treats the security of our students as a top priority. Security arrangements are monitored and reviewed regularly by the Health & Safety Committee office, and following a security related incident or feedback.

Security arrangements currently in place include:

- Keeping all external doors locked to prevent unwanted visitors and to ensure students cannot leave the premises unaccompanied or with an unknown adult.
- Keeping the front door locked
- Keeping internal and external areas secure by closing all gates and front door on arrival and departure from the premises.
- Ensuring all visitors and staff sign-in in the visitors book upon arrival, and sign-out when they depart,
- Ensuring all visitors show identification upon arrival if unknown to the school.
- Ensuring students never open the front door and staff only admit known/expected persons to the school.

- Fitting security locks to all windows identified as requiring them by the insurance company.
- Keeping all gates and boundaries in good repair and checked regularly.
- Ensuring that all parents/guardians are made aware of the arrival and collection arrangements, including early collection, and the procedures that will be followed should they be delayed and their child not collected.
- Requiring parents/guardians to inform staff in advance, by email or in writing, if another adult will be collecting their child.
- Ensuring that students are handed over personally to the collecting adult.
- Providing lockable metal filing cabinets for personnel files etc. to satisfy data protection, confidentiality and fire risk requirements.

## **LEVELS OF SUPERVISION**

Verita International School recognises the importance of maintaining suitable levels of supervision for our students. The minimum staffing ratios outlined shall always be adhered to.

The following applies to all areas of the School:

- Students will always be within sight of an adult.
- Roll will be taken at the beginning of the morning sessions to ensure students are on the premises, including daily absence procedures.
- Students will be escorted and supervised in outside areas.
- Students will be supervised when eating and drinking.
- Adults will be aware of students using the toilet/bathroom.

## **CLEANING & HYGIENE**

Verita International School recognises the importance of maintaining clean and hygienic premises. The following health & safety arrangements are in place:

- A cleaning schedule has been established for all areas of the school.
- A cleaning schedule has been established for all school equipment.
- Cleaning staff are provided with suitable protective clothing (e.g. plastic gloves and aprons).
- Cleaning staff are provided with suitable hand washing facilities.
- All cleaning products are kept in locked cupboards out of reach of students.
- All premises are to be cleaned and tidied before students arrive.
- Hygienic and safe cleaning materials are available for use in emergencies.
- Toilets are regularly checked for cleanliness.
- Surfaces and tables are wiped clean between activities.
- Regular pest control visits are conducted by a competent specialist pest control contractor for preventative control.
- Good health and hygiene practices are actively promoted through notices, signs,



posters, leaflets and staff meetings.

## **Personal Hygiene**

Verita International School recognises the importance of promoting good personal hygiene practices. The following health & safety arrangements are in place:

- Staff and students are encouraged to observe good practice in matters of personal hygiene at all times.
- Students are encouraged to use the toilets correctly.
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly, especially before and after handling food, after using the toilet, after handling plants and animals, and after messy or dirty activities, particularly out of doors.
- Students are encouraged to place their hands over their mouths when they cough or sneeze.
- Students are taught to respect cultural differences that influence people's different attitudes to hygiene.
- Students are taught hygiene awareness through planned and spontaneous discussion, routines, activities and topics.
- Staff are encouraged to set a good example to students in matters of personal hygiene.
- Good health and hygiene practices are actively promoted through notices, signs, posters, leaflets and staff meetings.

## **KITCHEN SAFETY**

In addition to Food Health & Safety policies the following health & safety arrangements specific to the kitchen areas are in place:

- The kitchen is out-of-bounds to all persons except kitchen staff.
- Environmental health regulations are to be enforced.
- The floors are to be kept dry and free from obstruction - non-slip flooring has been installed.
- Care shall be taken when handling heavy and/or hot items.
- Training in food preparation and handling is offered to appropriate staff.
- Food preparation and handling procedures are monitored and assessed regularly.
- Food preparation areas shall be kept clean and hygienic.
- Students are encouraged to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet.

## **CONTRACTORS ON SITE**

The office staff are responsible for ensuring that all contractors engaged to work on school premises are suitably competent to conduct their activities and possess the correct levels of insurance.

All contractors are required to report to the school office, sign the visitor's book and be briefed on any health & safety arrangements relating to their work on the premises

(including fire procedures and vehicular access).

Contractors will be asked to provide the school office staff with risk assessments and method statements for the work to be undertaken, which shall be agreed with the school before work commences on site.

All work shall be arranged for suitable times of the day to minimise the risk to employees and students.

All contractors, as visitors, on site during school hours must not be left alone with any students for safeguarding reasons. Regular contractors, known to the school, who have to attend during school hours will have safeguarding clearance via the school office.

The office staff shall monitor areas where contractors work and keep records of all work completed.

## **STAFF WELL BEING**

Verita International School recognises that the mental and physical wellbeing of our employees is key to the running of a successful school and the service delivered to our students.

All employees must declare to the school office any medical condition and regular medication they require, as well as providing emergency contact details for use in emergencies. All employee records shall be treated as confidential.

A staff room has been provided for employees to take their breaks, rest periods and refreshments in.

Employees may discuss in confidence with the Director any personal health or domestic issue which they feel may impact on their role at the school.

Employees must report to the Director any incidents relating to staff wellbeing such as violence, intimidation, stress or bullying.

Approved Nov 2022

By the founder: Michael Wolper