



## **Site Management and Caretaking Compliance Code**

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## **1. Introduction**

This Code outlines the safe working practices necessary to ensure that the significant risks associated with site management and school caretaking activities are suitably controlled. Reference should also be made, where appropriate, to other WNAT Compliance Codes

## **2. Responsibilities**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this Compliance Code is brought to the attention of relevant staff; and for monitoring its implementation and ensuring the completion of the related risk assessments where required

The headteacher must ensure that where roles such as caretakers have elements of premise management, risk assessment etc., their training needs in relation to their responsibilities are identified and suitable training is provided

## **3. Training and assessment**

Due to the increased potential for exposure to hazards associated with the role of site manager and caretaker there is a requirement to complete suitable training. Training is provided via an online system and should be completed as required.

Records of training are recorded within the system utilised.

Site managers are responsible for ensuring that all caretaking staff and those likely to be exposed to chemicals (cleaners) complete the annual skin self-assessment questionnaire with records held. Where additional control measures or adaptations are identified this should be discussed with the headteacher for implementation accordingly. All cleaners should be issued with the Cleaners H&S handbook annually and declare they have received and understood the information within.

## **4. Risk assessment**

Schools must be able to demonstrate that they have considered the significant risks at their site and for their related activities, and document how these are to be controlled, to reduce the risks to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP). The risk assessments must then be shared with those undertaking or responsible for the activity, and schools must ensure that the controls implemented are understood and effective. See WNAT Risk Assessing Compliance Code for further guidance.

The Risk Assessment should be reviewed annually or whenever there are developments that suggest it is no longer valid, e.g., following an incident, a significant change in how tasks are carried out, or when guidance is updated. Review does not necessarily mean carrying out a new risk assessment but checking over the existing assessment to ensure it is still valid and then updating it or making changes as necessary.

Site Managers have a responsibility for the completion and review of the Risk Assessment.

## **5. Compliance**

As per all organisations schools will have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with numerous Regulations, Guidance and Approved Codes of Practice (ACOP) to meet the legal requirements of the H&S at Work Act 1974.

As delegated by the headteacher it is the responsibility of the Site manager, and where applicable the caretaker, to ensure that compliance requirements are met and maintained. To assist the WNAT Estates Management System (EMS) has been created and should act as the main management tool for the recording and sharing of information relating to compliance at the respective school site.

## **5.1 Monitoring**

It is the responsibility of the Trust Deputy Chief Operations Officer (DCOO) to monitor the compliance requirements and to provide support where required with feed back to the headteachers and trustees at regular intervals.

## **5.2 Plant and work equipment**

Plant includes items such as boilers and air conditioning units whereas work equipment includes items such as hand tools, portable electrical equipment, extraction systems, Roller doors, ladders, tower scaffolds etc.

WNAT employ the services of numerous contractors to carry out inspections, servicing and testing of plant and work equipment as there is often a compliance requirement. Where this is the case all reports provided post service, inspection and testing are to be reviewed with remedial recommendations added to the relevant action log. Where an issue poses an impact to H&S or the operation of the school it is to be highlighted as a priority issue.

However, there are some aspects that require on site checks to be conducted by site managers and caretakers as follows.

- Site inspections. Site inspections should be conducted at regular intervals and should utilise a checklist to ensure that all areas are covered. A checklist will assist in removing complacency developed by regularly walking around the site. See Annex A.
- Monthly checks on the condition of ladders. All equipment used to conduct Working at Height is to be inspected to ensure it is fit for purpose with records maintained. See WNAT Working at Height Compliance Code for further information.

Regarding tools and portable equipment, a visual inspection should be carried out each time they are used. Regarding electrical equipment particular attention should be paid to the condition of the plug, lead, casing and switches. Faulty or damaged equipment should be taken out of use and marked accordingly until the fault has been rectified.

## **5.3 Asbestos checks**

Site Managers and Caretakers should be aware of the content of the asbestos survey and the Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) that sets out how the asbestos materials identified in the asbestos register will be managed. This information is also to be made available to all contractors tasked with maintenance requirements.

Site Managers and Caretakers retain responsibility for the periodic visual checks on the condition of asbestos materials in line with the periodicity defined in the Asbestos Survey. Records are to be maintained within the AMP.

For further information see the WNAT Asbestos Compliance Code.

## **5.4 Legionella checks**

All schools utilise the services of a Water Management Contractor, however, there remains a requirement to conduct on site weekly flushing of seldom used outlets in addition to the flushing of all outlets post long term school closure. This is to assist in minimising the risk of legionella.

Site managers of high schools and Caretakers at primary schools (with the support of the Trust Estates Manager) have a responsibility to review all reports supplied by the contractor post service, inspection and testing. Where recommendations for remedial work is provided this information should be added to the relevant compliance action log and should be discussed with the headteacher. Any issue impacting H&S or the operation of the school should be treated as a priority requirement.

For further information see WNAT Legionella Compliance Code.

## **5.5 Fire checks**

In high schools the Site Manager will likely be nominated as the point of contact for onsite fire management, however, the headteacher retains overall responsibility.

Due to the potential negative outcome of a fire, irrespective of size, the requirements to service, inspect and test fire alarm systems and associated equipment such as extinguishers is contracted to a suitably experience contractor. The Site Manager and caretakers at primary schools are to ensure that all reports received post service, test and inspection are reviewed with remedial requirements added to the relevant action log. This is to then be discussed with the headteacher with issues likely to impact H&S or the operation of the school highlighted as priority requirements.

Additionally, all sites employ the services of a contractor to conduct the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) every 2 years. The findings of the FRA should be transferred to the relevant action log to allow tracking of the remedial works with issues impacting H&S or the operation of the school highlighted a priority requirement.

Site staff retain the responsibility for the weekly testing and recording of the fire alarm in addition to conducting termly evacuation drills

For further information see WNAT Fire Compliance Code.

## **5.6 Management of contractors**

Contractors on school sites typically include maintenance contractors, builders and specialist contractors. Site Managers and Caretakers will often be the main point of contact for all contractors and must ensure that the contractors abide by H&S rules and regulations to ensure they do not expose school staff, students or visitors to increased risk. See WNAT Use of contractors Compliance Code for further information.

## **6. Site security and lettings**

The caretaker is likely to have responsibility for site security when opening the premises at the start of the day, locking and unlocking gates during the day and when evening and weekend lettings take place. The aim of keeping the site secure is to prevent and detect unauthorised entry, prevent the spread of fire and protect property.

Doors, windows and external gates should be locked at the end of the day. During lettings or open evenings etc, all unused areas should be kept locked.

Site managers and Caretakers are likely to have been nominated as one of the school's key holders to be contacted in the event of an out of hours emergency. Due to the increased risk posed with the potential hazards of attending out of hours intruder alarms staff should be aware of the requirements of Lone Working and should abide by the following at all times

- Upon notification of the activation of the school intruder alarm the individual responding is to contact the police and request on site assistance.
- The responding person is not to enter the site until police assistance is made available including to silence the alarm.

For more information see WNAT Lone working Compliance Code

## **7. Severe weather**

Decisions regarding closure of schools due to snow and other severe weather conditions are taken by the headteacher, but practical tasks such as clearing access routes and gritting are likely to be carried out by the caretaker or site team.

Caretakers and site staff should make reasonable efforts to clear main access routes (on paths, steps, ramps, at building entrances) and to put down grit as promptly as possible. Sufficient quantities

of grit are to be maintained to cover prolonged periods of severe weather. Consideration should be given to the procurement of grit spreading equipment for larger sites and areas.

Site managers and caretakers have a responsibility for ensuring that gutters and drains remain clear to minimize the potential of localized flooding. Following periods of heavy rainfall known areas of concern should be inspected to ensure there are no potential issues such as water ingress from standing water on flat roofs noting restrictions on roof access due to the lack of safety systems. Where access is not possible using on sit equipment such as ladders fitted with standoff brackets then local contractors are to be commissioned to inspect and address issues.

See WNAT Working at Height Compliance Code for further guidance.

Following periods of severe weather, a site walk should be conducted to identify potential issues impacting H&S or the operational effectiveness of the school such as damage to trees.

Although not a mandatory requirement WNAT insist that tree surveys are conducted to display due diligence and to provide information in the event of potential claim against the school.

## **8. Cleaning**

Cleaning in schools is usually carried out by caretakers themselves, or by directly employed or contracted cleaning staff.

Equipment stores should be kept in a tidy state and there should be no excessive accumulation of 'spare' or reserve supplies. Chemicals must be stored securely and appropriately with an up to date contents list held with suitable COSHH assessments in place.

Directly employed cleaners should be aware of the risk and COSHH assessments in connection with their role, and the required control measures. It is expected that contracted cleaners will receive appropriate training from their employer. All WNAT cleaners are to be provided with a copy of the WNAT Cleaners H&S Handbook annually and are to sign as having received and understood. Additionally, all employed cleaners and site staff are to complete the annual skin self-assessment questionnaire.

Where issues are identified the site manager and headteacher should ensure adaptations are made as required.

## **9. Manual Handling**

Caretakers sometimes carry out tasks that involve moving and handling heavy or awkward objects.

Caretakers should flag potential concerns regarding back injuries as early as possible. Where the injury affects their work or work continues to affect their injury, staff can also be referred to the school's occupational health provider.

Caretakers who move and handle objects should ensure that the task has been assessed and the appropriate control measures implemented. Where possible manual handling should be avoided.

For further information see WNAT Manual Handling Compliance Code

## **10. Hazardous substances**

All substances that are hazardous to health, must have an associated COSHH assessment.

Chemicals used in school caretaking may not pose significant risks if you use them correctly and know what to do if something goes wrong. Labels on products and the safety data sheets identify hazardous chemicals, tell you what the dangers are and how to avoid them. The COSHH assessment process then ensures that the correct controls are in place for the way the chemical is used.

For further information see WNAT Hazardous Substance Compliance Code.

## 11. Working at height

**NOTE – Furniture such as chairs and desks are not authorised as suitable equipment for use when working at height. They must not be used at any time irrespective of task duration.**

School caretakers carry out various short duration tasks that could involve working at height such as clearing guttering or retrieving objects from flat roofs (Where safety systems permit).

A significant proportion of accidents involving falls from height occur because ladders are not securely placed and fixed or because of poor standards of erection or misuse – or not using the correct means of access – e.g., tower scaffold. Many of these happen when the work is of 30 minutes duration or less.

Site teams that assemble, dismantle, move and inspect mobile access (scaffold) towers must hold PASMA certification.

For further information see WNAT Working at Height Compliance Code

## 12. Lone working

Caretaker/ cleaner duties will sometimes involve working alone, e.g., before the start or after the end of the school day, during holidays, or when attending as a key holder at out of hours emergency call outs.

For information see WNAT Lone Working Compliance Code

## 13. Grounds maintenance

Most schools use contractors for general grounds maintenance. Where schools deploy caretakers or their site team to carry out these tasks the activity must be subject to a risk assessment with suitable control measures in place such as service requirements of equipment and potential additional training.

If chemicals or sprays are used by caretakers for weed, pest and disease control as part of general grounds maintenance, these must also be subject to the COSHH assessment process, and consideration should be given to the level of competence required to use these substances safely in the school environment.

If there are circumstances where 'agricultural pesticides' are needed, it is likely that the person using the product will need to hold a certificate of competence.

## 14. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Caretakers are likely to require several items of PPE to do their job safely. These could include: safety footwear, hi-visibility jackets, gloves, overalls, hard hats, eye protection and ear defenders.

All PPE which is required must be provided free of charge.

Caretakers should ensure that loose clothing, long hair etc., that could become entangled in equipment or machinery, is secured; and that loose jewellery is removed.

Damaged or defective PPE should be repaired or replaced promptly. Records of PPE issued must be kept.

## 15. Swimming pools

Pool maintenance is contracted to a suitably experienced contractor, however, some on site testing is required to monitor chemical levels etc. Where this is the case the caretaker should be suitably trained to conduct the role effectively.

All pool chemicals are to be stored as per the manufacturer's instructions and COSHH assessments are to be in place along with the required Material Data Sheet.

## Annex A to WNAT Site Manager and Caretaker Compliance Code

### Site inspection checklist

<b>1</b>	<b>Fire Precautions</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are escape routes and fire exits clear and unobstructed		
	Are combustible materials kept away from heat sources		
	Are emergency exits and escape routes clearly marked and visible		
	Do fire exit doors open easily ( i.e. not stiff /broken, or needing a key to unlock)		
	Are all fire extinguishers fully charged and operational		
	Are all the elements of your fire alarm system (including call points, alarms / detectors etc tested / serviced in accordance with the frequencies specified in your Fire Log Book		
<b>2</b>	<b>First Aid</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are first aid boxes correctly and adequately stocked		
	Are First Aiders clearly identified		
<b>3</b>	<b>Housekeeping</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are waste bins routinely emptied		
	Are floors / corridors clear of rubbish, materials and equipment		
<b>4</b>	<b>Slips / Trips and Falls</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are floor and stair surfaces / coverings in good condition ( i.e. no worn/raised edges, no broken treads on stairs)		
	Are all areas free from trailing cables / wires		
	Are steps / changes in floor levels clearly marked / obvious		
	Are handrails in good condition		
	Are wet floors or spillages dealt with appropriately		
	Are floors free from loose rugs and mats, especially on shiny / slippery floor surfaces		
<b>5</b>	<b>Electrical Safety</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>



	Are there sufficient sockets to avoid the use of adapters or extension leads and overloading		
	Have portable electrical appliances been tested within the previous year (unless frequency has been reduced following risk assessment)		
	Are plugs, sockets, cables, flexes in good condition		
<b>6</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is internal and external lighting sufficient		
	Are lights and diffusers clean and in working order (no missing/broken bulbs/tubes)		
<b>7</b>	<b>Storage</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is all stored material / equipment stored safely		
	Is all shelving / racking secure		
	Is appropriate equipment available for access to any high shelving or racking		
	Are boiler rooms kept free of combustible materials		
	Are any hazardous substances correctly labelled and stored in a safe manner		
	Are all hazardous substance storage areas clearly marked as such		
<b>8</b>	<b>Furniture / Equipment</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is all furniture / equipment safely positioned and appropriate for its usage		
	Are ladders kept secure		
	Are ladders in satisfactory condition and suitable for the tasks carried out		
	Are ladders inspected formally and records kept		
	Are records up-to-date for all equipment requiring statutory inspection (e.g. hoists, lifts, pressure vessels, gas appliances etc)		
	Are any necessary guards and protective devices in position and operating effectively		
<b>9</b>	<b>Workplace Safety</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are any asbestos containing materials (ACM) in good condition		

	(refer to your site asbestos register for details of any ACM's on your site)		
	Are any necessary legionella checks being carried out / recorded and any remedial actions being undertaken (as detailed in the Legionella Risk Assessment for your site)		
	Where you have safety film fitted to glazing is it in good condition i.e. no cuts, slits, scratches, not bubbling, not milky in appearance and no wavy lines when viewed at 45 degree angle?		
	Is there a comfortable working temperature		
	Are toilet facilities in good working order with hot and cold water available for handwashing		
	Are main access paths kept clear of leaves / snow & ice		
	Are access paths in good condition		
<b>10</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are all staff aware of how to report an incident		