



The
COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL
Leftwich

Achieving Excellence

Document Control Sheet

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The County High School Leftwich
Granville Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 8EZ
Telephone: 01606 333300

STANDARD FOR THE USE OF ELECTRICITY AT WORK

1. PURPOSE

Introduction

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, came into force on 1 April 1990. The Regulations require precautions to be taken against the risk of death or personal injury from the use of electricity in work activities. The Regulations impose duties on employers, the self-employed and on employees, additional to those under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in respect of electrical systems, electrical equipment and conductors.

2. AIM OF STANDARD

The aim of this standard is to reduce, so far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of injury associated with the use of electricity at work and to set the requirements for compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. To meet this aim the School will:

- Assign responsibilities for managing the risk from the use of electricity at work through the normal system of management within the structure of the school.
- Develop and promote procedures for informing staff of the risk associated with the use of electricity at work and for safe working practices.
- Undertake a programme of testing, inspection and maintenance of fixed installations and portable and transportable equipment.
- Set up and maintain records of all test, inspect and maintenance and any actions undertaken because of that process.

3. SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Scope

The school's approach for fulfilling its legal obligation under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 is incorporated in this standard, which is intended as the minimum requirement for all persons undertaking or managing the use of electricity or electrical equipment within the School.

This standard provides detail on the school's principles relating to the use of electricity at work, organisational responsibilities, procedures and record keeping.

This standard applies to all full time and part time employees, temporary, agency and contract staff, volunteers and all other persons for whom the school has a direct or indirect responsibility e.g. students.

Responsibility

The procedures for managing and monitoring the risks associated with the use of electricity at work specified within this standard are detailed within the school health and safety arrangements.

4. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The Memorandum of Guidance on the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (HSR25) gives advice not only on how to deal with the risks associated with working with electricity but also on the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974.

Specific guidance for establishments is detailed in the Health and Safety Executive publication: HSG 85 - Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, Safe Working Practice with Electricity.

Guidance and HSC/E guidance publications are available from the Head of Estates.

5. DEFINITIONS

Fixed Installation

This term is applied to all systems designed to conduct an electrical current. The definition extends up to and includes the power outlet socket.

Portable and Transportable Equipment

This term is applied to equipment which is not part of a fixed installation but is, or is intended to be, connected to a fixed installation, by means of a flexible cable and either a plug and socket or a spur box, or similar means. It includes equipment that is either hand held or hand operated while connected to the supply, is intended to be moved while connected to the supply, or is likely to be moved while connected to the supply. Some examples could be portable electric tools, floor cleaners, fans, kettles, televisions, laptop computers, desk lamps, photocopiers, printers, desktop computers and kitchen appliances.

User Checks (visual)

This term is applied to the frequent checks, which can be carried out, by equipment users and/or the person supervising the use of the equipment.

Formal visual inspections

This term applies to systematic checks carried out at pre-determined intervals by a competent person and formally recorded. This process will be used as a method to monitor the effectiveness of the user checks.

6. TESTING

Fixed Installation

The responsible person, normally the Head of Estates, shall determine which fixed installations are subject to hard wire testing on a frequency of every 5 years by a competent Electrical contractor.

The responsible person will ensure that testing, inspection and maintenance of fixed electrical systems is carried out in School premises by a competent Electrical Contractor:

The responsible person should determine that the following installations will be tested on an annual basis or in accordance with any conditions of licence.

- Fire Alarm Systems
- Emergency Lighting
- Hall lighting

Portable and transportable equipment

The school shall determine high and low risk environments in which portable and transportable electrical equipment is used.

All arrangements for testing, inspection and maintenance of portable and transportable appliances, as defined by risk assessment, shall be incorporated into the school systems for managing health and safety. This assessment will be reviewed every three years, or as contract arrangements permit.

In locations assessed as higher risk there is a requirement for risk assessment to be carried out to determine testing, inspection and maintenance frequencies for portable and transportable equipment. Assessments will take into account the way equipment is used, the environment it is used in, together with the experience of past maintenance and information on previous faults.

Areas of higher risk include:

- The Canteen
- Science Labs
- Premises
- D+ T Workshops

Use of electrical equipment brought in from uncontrolled sources should be actively discouraged.

7. COMPETENCE

Wherever possible, all school owned/controlled electrical appliances will be inspected and tested by a competent Contractor. Such Contractors shall have, as a minimum requirement, a certificate for Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) or other, appropriate electrical qualification.

8. PROCEDURES

a. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

PAT and equipment maintenance may only be undertaken by Contractors who hold a certificate for Portable Appliance Testing.

b. User Checks

Users of electrical appliances should undertake a visual inspection of such equipment at appropriate intervals. The more susceptible the appliance is to damage, the more frequent the user check must be. For some equipment, this could be every time it is used. The purpose is to check there are no obvious signs of damage or failure. The inspection is to include a check of the condition of the mains socket used, the appliance's plug, mains cable (whole length including its fixing to the appliance) and the integrity of the appliance itself. If any damage is discovered, that would or could affect safety, the appliance is to be quarantined and labelled, "Damaged. Do not use". The matter is then to be reported to the Head of Finance/Site Manager who, in turn, must take steps to have the item repaired or replaced.

9. RECORDS

The school will keep records relating to testing, inspection, refurbishment and maintenance of fixed electrical installations, normally held by the Site Manager.

Any Health and Safety File kept in a premise as required by the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 must be updated regularly with information on maintenance, testing and refurbishment of the electrical system.

Portable appliance tests are to be retained, by the appropriate department, for a minimum of 3 inspection tests per item tested. Such records may be paper based or stored electronically but must be readily available for inspection if required.

IN ADDITION

The following installations will be tested:

- Fire Alarm Systems (Quarterly)
- Emergency Lighting (Monthly)
- Hall Lighting (Annually)

USER CHECKS will cover visual checks of the following items: cable sheath, plug, cable extensions or joints, equipment casing.

VISUAL INSPECTION will also identify other evidence of damage, misuse or overheating and will take into account the conditions in which the equipment is used (i.e. external use in adverse weather).