

HEALTH AND SAFETY

2025/26

1. Introduction

1.1. Rochester Independent College recognises that under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, it has a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health Safety and Welfare of all its employees, In addition, it has certain duties towards students, the public and other people who use the premises of the college from time to time, these duties being implicit in the above Act.

1.2. Governance of Health & Safety

The Board of Governors of the college have overall Health & Safety responsibility and has a duty to ensure the Senior Leadership Team fulfils their duty to ensure compliance with health & safety legislation. The Board of Governors employ a senior member of staff to oversee Health & Safety on their behalf. The Compliance Director works closely with the college's Senior Leadership Team and health and safety staff to support them.

The Governors ensure the college Senior Leadership Team are fulfilling their health & safety duties by visiting the college on a regular basis and by termly reports to Governors.

1.3. The Senior Leadership Team accept these duties and will continue to promote good standards of Health, Safety and Welfare that comply fully with the terms and requirements of the 1974 Act, Regulations made under the Act and Approved Codes of Practice. The Senior Leadership Team considers that Health & Safety is a responsibility at least equal in importance to that of any other function of the college. It is their aim to provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, students and visitors.

1.4. The arrangements and procedures for health and safety made by The Senior Leadership Team cannot in themselves prevent accidents or ensure safe and healthy work conditions. The Senior Leadership Team believes that only the adoption of safe methods of work and good practice by every individual can ensure everyone's personal health and safety. The Senior Leadership Team will take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce hazards to a minimum but all staff, students and visitors must appreciate that their own safety, and that of others also depends on their individual conduct and vigilance while on the college premises or while taking part in college-sponsored activities.

2. Duties

2.1. The Senior Leadership Team, in consultation with the Principal will:



- make themselves familiar with health and safety legislation and codes of practices which are relevant to the work of the college;
- ensure that there is an effective and enforceable policy for the provision of health and safety throughout the college;
- periodically assess the effectiveness of this policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made;
- create and monitor the management structure.

2.2. The Senior Leadership Team will take such steps as are reasonably practicable:

- to maintain safe and healthy working places and systems and methods of work to protect all employees, students and others, including the public in so far as they come into contact with foreseeable work hazards;
- to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working, teaching and learning environment for all employees and students with adequate facilities and arrangements for their welfare;
- to provide all employees and students with the information, instruction, training and supervision in Health and Safety and Risk Assessment that they require to work safely and efficiently. The Compliance Director and the Facilities Manager (being the nominated college Health & Safety Officers) will provide all necessary information and this will be disseminated to all Heads of Departments;
- to develop safety awareness amongst all employees and students and as a result of this create a climate for individual responsibility for Health & Safety at all levels;
- to provide a safe environment for all visitors to the premises of the college, bearing in mind that these visitors may not necessarily be attuned to certain aspects of the teaching and college environment;
- to effectively control the activity of all outside contractors when on college premises. The Senior Leadership Team will require that, apart from routine supervision and control of the contractors, copies of the Contractors Safety Policies be provided and approved before the commencement of any contracts;
- to encourage full and effective two-way consultation on Health & Safety matters by utilising the management structure of the college, the academic and other committee members active within the college, and the Health & Safety Officers. The provisions of Regulation 3 of the Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 will be implemented by direct consultation with employees themselves through staff meetings.
- to ensure that this Policy is used as a practical working document and that its contents are publicised fully throughout the college.

2.3 The Senior Leadership Team has appointed Health & Safety staff to support the Principal. The Health & Safety staff are considered competent persons in accordance with Section 7 of The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and will ensure that the Senior Leadership Team are made aware of any changes of legislation that may affect Health & Safety



within the college. The Health & Safety staff are also supported by the Dukes Education Group Compliance Director, who acts as the company senior lead on Health & Safety.

2.4. The Principal and Health & Safety staff:

- The Principal and Health & Safety staff will collectively be responsible to the Senior Leadership Team for the implementation of this policy. They will constantly monitor the effectiveness of this Policy and its implementation at all levels and will bring to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team any necessary changes in legislation.
- The Principal and Health & Safety staff will:
 - be aware of the basic requirements of health and safety legislation and codes of practices relevant to the work of the college and shall take action to ensure that the requirements are met;
 - ensure safe working conditions, practices and procedures throughout the college;
 - consult with members of staff on health and safety issues and encourage all employees to promote health and safety and suggest ways and means of reducing risk;
 - arrange systems of risk assessment to allow the prompt identification of potential hazards and implementation of appropriate measures to control risks;
 - identify the training needs of staff and students and ensure, within the financial resources available, that all members of staff and students, who have identified training needs receive adequate and appropriate training and instruction in health and safety and risk assessment matters;
 - collate accident and incident information and, when necessary, carry out investigations;
 - monitor the standard of health and safety throughout the college, including first aid and welfare provision, and encourage all employees and students to achieve high standards of health and safety, and discipline those who consistently fail to consider their own, and/or others' health and safety.

2.5. The Principal

The Principal will have the responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and development of safe working practices and conditions for teaching staff, support staff, students, visitors and any other person using the premises or engaged in activities sponsored by the college in relation to academic / student function of the college. The Principal will take all reasonably practicable steps to achieve this end through the heads of the appropriate departments, senior members of staff, teachers and others as appropriate.

2.6. The Health & Safety staff:

- have the responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and development of safe working practices and conditions in relation to the non-academic function of the college.
- ensure that all members of the public using the facilities of the college will be given sufficient information in order to allow them to avoid any risks to their Health & Safety.



- be responsible for ensuring that all new legislation, in respect of Health & Safety, will be brought to the attention of the Senior college Management.
- be available to advise on Risk Assessments in conjunction with individual Heads of Departments.

2.7. Supervisory Staff

All supervisory staff (Heads of Departments, coordinators etc.) will make themselves familiar with the requirements of health and safety legislation relevant to the work of their area of responsibility.

- They will be responsible to the Principal and have overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation and operation of the college's health and safety policy within their relevant departments.
- They will ensure, in-particular, that:
 - health and safety procedures are followed correctly;
 - suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out within the department, for which they are responsible, and that all necessary actions to remove hazards or control risk are implemented. They will record risk assessments in an appropriate manner and review annually;
 - staff, students and others, including new employees, under their jurisdiction, are instructed in safe working practices and all health and safety information is communicated to the relevant persons;
 - all plant machinery and equipment in their department is adequately guarded; in safe working order and that measures are taken to avoid improper or unauthorised use;
 - toxic, hazardous, and highly flammable substances in the department in which they work, are correctly used, stored and labelled;
 - appropriate protective clothing, equipment first aid and fire appliances are provided and readily available in the department in which they work.
 - Supervisory staff are responsible for reporting any health and safety concerns, within their department, to the appropriate person.
 - New recruits to have a full induction upon appointment including Health and safety, Fire procedures, first aid procedures and sign to confirm understanding of given training
 - additional training to be given appropriately based on the roles and job descriptions for all staff to include but not limited to Manual handling, COSHH, PPE, Use of power tools, working at heights.

2.8. All Members of Staff

- All staff will make themselves familiar with the requirements of health and safety legislation relevant to the work of their area of responsibility.
- They will take reasonable care of their own health and safety and any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.



- They will cooperate with their colleagues to enable health and safety duties to be met and high standards achieved
- They will be familiar with the college health and safety policy and procedures and comply with the requirements therein and ensure they are applied effectively by staff and students.
- All staff have a responsibility to report any defects in the premises, plant, equipment and facilities which they observe.

2.9. Health & Safety Specialists

The college will have reference to an external health and safety consultancy which will provide support in health and safety within the college. They will, in particular, advise on changes in legislation and assist in the monitoring of health and safety performance in the college. They may be contacted through Dukes Education Compliance Director.

2.10. Hirers, Contractors and Others including visiting speakers/guests

There are separate policies for Contractors and visiting speakers/guests.

- When the premises are used for purposes not under the direction of the Principal, then the principal person in charge of the activities for which the premises are in use will have responsibility for safe practices.
- The Health & Safety Officers will seek to ensure that hirers, contractors and others who use the college premises conduct themselves and carry out their operations in such a manner that all statutory and advisory safety requirements are met at all times.
- When the college premises or facilities are being used out of normal college hours for a college sponsored activity then, for the purposes of this policy, the organiser of that activity, even if an employee, will be treated as a hirer and will comply with the requirements of this section.
- When the premises are hired to persons outside the employ of the college, it will be a condition for all hirers, contractors and others using the college premises or facilities that they are familiar with this policy, that they comply with all safety directives of the Senior Leadership Team and that they will not, without the prior consent of the Senior Leadership Team
 - Introduce equipment for use on the college premises; alter fixed installations;
 - Remove fire and safety notices or equipment; take any action that may create hazards to persons using the premises or to the staff or students of the college.
 - All contractors who work on the college premises are required to ensure safe working practices by their own employees to comply with legislation.
 - In instances where the contractor creates hazardous conditions and is unable to eliminate them or to take action to make them safe, the Principal / Health & Safety Officers will take such actions as are necessary to prevent persons in his/her care from suffering risk of injury.
 - The Senior Leadership Team draws to the attention of all users of the college premises that they must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything which is provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.



3. Additional procedures

3.1. Staff Consultative Arrangement

The Senior Leadership Team, through the Principal and Health & Safety Officers, will make arrangements to ensure that proper and efficient channels of communication are established throughout the college to allow the rapid exchange of information on all health and safety issues. There is a question on all appraisals asking if there are any H&S issues they want to raise.

3.2. Codes of Practice & Safety Rule

In consultation with the Senior Leadership Team (where appropriate) the Health & Safety Officers will approve codes or practice/procedures for the observation of safety requirements in the college.

3.3 Risk Assessment & Site Audit

The Principal and Health & Safety staff will ensure that risk assessments and a safety assessment of all college-sponsored activities is conducted / reviewed annually. All risk assessments are written with the subject leaders. All Risk assessments are available online in the shared folders (college policies and risk assessment folder) and each member of staff is asked to acknowledge that they have read any Risk Assessment that is relevant to them. The site audit (conducted termly) will identify defects and deficiencies, together with the necessary remedial action or risk control measures. The results of all such surveys will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team and also at termly H&S meetings.

3.4 Emergency Plans

- The Principal will ensure that an emergency plan (NMS9: Critical Incident Policy) is prepared to cover all foreseeable major incidents which could put at risk the occupants or users of the college. This plan will indicate the actions to be taken in the event of a major incident so that everything possible is done to: save life; prevent injury; minimise loss.
- The plan will be agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and will be rehearsed annually. The result of rehearsals will form part of the regular risk assessment survey and the outcome will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team.

3.5 First Aid

- The arrangements for first aid will be adequate to cope with all foreseeable major incidents. A first aid policy provides the details of how this is to be provided.
- A list of trained first Aiders is to be displayed in prominent positions throughout the premises.
- Supplies of first aid material will be held at various appropriate locations throughout the college, as determined by the Health & Safety Officer. They will be prominently marked and all staff will be advised of their position. The materials will be checked and replenished, as required, and appropriate records kept.



- Adequate and appropriate first aid provision will form part of the arrangements for all out-of-college activities.
- A record will be made of each occasion any member of staff, student or other person receives first aid treatment either on the college premises or as part of a college-related activity. Recording and reporting of incidents will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and will form a key part of efforts to reduce risk. The Health & Safety Officer will receive all reports of injuries and take necessary action in accordance with RIDDOR regulations.
- All reported incidents are investigated, and records of this and actions needed or taken are kept with the accident form
- Off site visits will be planned and managed in accordance with the college policy for external visits.

3.6 Occupational Health

The Senior Leadership Team places high importance to the well-being of the students and workforce and have made arrangements for the support of staff, particularly in relation to work related stress.

Maintenance team to have Health Surveillance minimum every 3 years due to potential exposure to noise, HAV, chemicals

Access to support and advice can be obtained by contacting the Dukes Education Director of People. RIC openly promotes the use of Health Assured - phone number: 0800 0305182.

3.7 Fire Safety

The Senior Leadership Team places a very high level of importance to Fire safety, prevention, training and equipment. The fire safety policy contains the details of their plans and procedures in this regard.

3.8 Security

- The Senior Leadership Team are very conscious of both the advantages and potential risks of the college's prime locations in an urban environment and have taken extensive measures to provide for the safety and security of staff and students.
- The main academic site has a manned reception area whilst the accommodation centres have resident boarding and teaching staff who look after the students and the site on a duty rota.
- The college site has a small area of car parking. This is restricted to authorised vehicles. In relation to other risks of traffic movements, students are briefed on UK road safety as part of their induction process.
- CCTV is installed in all boarding buildings covering entrances or critical areas. The CCTV policy covers this in more detail.

3.9 The Management of Asbestos



- The Health & Safety staff are responsible for the Management of Asbestos and hold the Asbestos Register. An Asbestos Management Survey has been carried out and all areas of asbestos are known by key staff. Any works that are planned to take place in areas where any doubt might exist must be referred to the Health & Safety Officers.
- Six Monthly checks to be conducted by trained and competent in-house staff.

3.10 Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

- All chemicals and substances with the potential to be hazardous are managed in accordance with guidance from the HSE and CLEAPSS. The former relates to the small numbers and amounts of materials used principally as cleaning products in buildings and the latter relates to the teaching of science and the materials and processes used.
- The Subjects Leads in Science are responsible for ensuring that all procedures and controls within the science department are carried out in accordance with CLEAPSS guidance.
- The Health & Safety staff are responsible for ensuring that the COSHH assessment for cleaning materials is carried out on an annual basis.

3.11 Workplace safety

The Senior Leadership Team acknowledges that many staff have high levels of conscientiousness and carry out work beyond their normal hours. In relation to this they have issued guidance on Lone Working, and in relation to other aspects of workplace safety attention is drawn to the Behaviour policy and the Dealing with Abuse towards College Staff policy.

3.12 Maintenance of plant and equipment

- The Facilities Manager is responsible for ensuring that regular testing and maintenance of the following is carried out:
 - Fire Alarms and firefighting equipment
 - Legionella L8 and water temperature tests
 - Pressure vessels
 - Gas Safety
 - 5 Yearly Electrical check
 - PAT Testing
 - Food safety/environmental health
 - Alarm systems
 - A/C and ventilation
 - CCTV
- And that a comprehensive log of such tests is maintained. Where the college occupies premises under the control of others, the Health & Safety staff are to ensure that statutory testing and maintenance is carried out and recorded.

3.13 Security/violence

The Principal ensures that all practicable measures are taken to avoid violent incidents. Steps will be taken to ensure that in areas identified as those where a violent incident can be



expected to arise, a risk assessment has been carried out, the areas are adequately staffed and that the facilities are reviewed and improved to reduce the possibility of a violent incident. Staff are also advised to refer to the college's violence to staff policy.

3.14 Slips and trips

Slips and trips can happen almost anywhere and are the most common cause of major injury at work. 95% of major slips result in broken bones and they can also be the initial cause for other types of accidents such as a fall from height. Slips and trips are responsible for, on average, over a third of all reported major injuries. Most slips occur in wet or contaminated conditions and most trips are due to poor housekeeping yet the solutions are often simple and inexpensive. A suitable assessment of the risks should identify the necessary controls and these should include:

- prevention of contamination;
- management of spillages and cleaning regimes;
- effective matting systems;
- choice of suitable footwear;
- design of workplace and work activities;
- maintenance of plant and the work environment;
- specification of appropriate flooring;
- housekeeping;
- where reasonably practicable, clearing ice and snow from affected areas, and effective training and supervision.

All staff and students have a responsibility to themselves and others to take care in all areas and under all circumstances where the risk of a slip or trip is heightened.

3.15 Ladder Safety

Falls when working at height remain the most common kind of workplace fatality, accounting for around a quarter of all worker deaths and 8% of all non-fatal injuries every year, with many involving a fall off a ladder. It's essential that people use the right type of ladder for a task and know how to use it safely.

All maintenance staff are trained in the safe use of ladders and working at height and all ladders are checked every 3 months following the Government Guideline LA455

Non maintenance staff are advised to contact the maintenance dept for any high level works needed.

3.16 Review

The Senior Leadership Team and Board of Governors will review the policy annually and update, modify or amend it as necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff and students.



Policy Approved by Principal:

Signed: *Alistair Brownlow*

Dated: 30 August 2025

Created/Updated	Author	Approved by	Date
March 2018	ME	AB	March 2018
September 2018	CD	AB	September 2018
September 2019	DM	AB	September 2019
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August 2021	DM	AB	August 2021
August 2022	DM	AB	August 2022
August 2023	DM	AB	September 2023
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