Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy

St Joseph's is a happy, welcoming community, enriched by our diversity, where we strive to be better than our best.

A place where we love one another, love learning, love Jesus and love life.

Date of Policy	Autumn Term 2023
Next Review	Autumn Term 2024

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Introduction

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is fully committed to protecting the health of our pupils and staff. Members of staff who regularly use display screen equipment (DSE) will take the necessary precautions to limit their exposure to risk.

This policy outlines the areas of concern, along with solutions to, the risks around regular use of DSE. Although this policy is designed for staff, the safety procedures described will also apply to pupils who use DSE for prolonged periods of time.

The HSE has defined DSE as:

- Conventional cathode ray tube screens.
- Liquid, crystal or plasma displays used in flat-panel screens and touchscreens.
- Screens used to display line drawings, graphs, charts or computer-generated graphics.
- Screens used in work with television or film pictures.
- Non-electronic microfiches.
- Closed-circuit television.

Members of staff who are covered by this policy are those who:

- Would normally use DSE for continuous periods of more than one hour at a time.
- Use DSE more-or-less daily, for periods of more than one hour.
- Need to quickly transfer information to or from DSE.
- Need to apply high levels of concentration.
- Are highly dependent on DSE or have little choice about using it.
- Need special training to use DSE.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to the following legislation, including, but not limited to:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Health and Safety Policy.

2. Health Issues

2.1. Regular users of DSE are at risk from a number of health issues; however, these can be mitigated through information sharing and well-designed safety procedures. Some of the risks include:

- Fatigue
- Eye strain
- Upper limb problems
- Repetitive strain injury
- Back pain

3. Headteacher responsibilities

3.1. The headteacher will ensure that all DSE related risk assessments are in place and up-to-date.

3.2. All controls and procedures must be regularly monitored. Where weaknesses are identified, a process for improvement will be enacted.

3.3. Training will be arranged for members of staff who require it.

3.4. A system for information sharing will be established and regularly monitored.

3.5. A system will be in place to report problems or issues with the current policy.

4. Teacher Responsibilities

4.1. All teachers have a duty to take care of their health, as well as the health of their pupils.

4.2. Teachers, who supervise lessons which involve DSE, will ensure correct usage by pupils at all times.

5. Maintaining the workstation

5.1. A comfortable typing position will be used. The space between the user and the keyboard will be practical and comfortable. Teachers will ensure pupils are not hunched or stretching unnecessarily.

5.2. The mouse will be to the right of the keyboard, if the user is right-handed. For left-handed users, a left-handed mouse will be made available.

5.3. Items will be placed at an accessible distance.

5.4. Adjustable chairs will be used to ensure all users are seated in a comfortable position. Teachers will ensure that all pupils are aware of how to adjust their seating position.

5.5. Foot rests will be made available for users who require them.

5.6. Display screens will be fully adjustable. This includes being physically adjustable by tilting or swivelling, or through the electronic settings such as adjustable brightness and colour saturation.

5.7. Any pupils or staff with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) will be provided with any additional support they require. Any reasonable adjustment requests will be submitted to the SEND coordinator (SENDCO).

6. Maintaining the learning space

6.1. If a room is used primarily for ICT equipment, lighting levels will be slightly lower than otherwise required.

6.2. Blinds will be installed in work spaces that are primarily used for ICT. This will be done to reduce occurrences of glare, which can lead to eye strain.

6.3. The flooring in ICT rooms will be anti-static and non-slip.

6.4. The school will adhere to the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA)'s recommendations of a space of between 1 and 1.5 metres between workstations, and a space of 1.2 metres will be left in gangways to allow ease-of-access for wheelchair users.

6.5. All electronic wires and cabling will be covered, using trunking and rubber cable covers, to prevent tripping.

7. HSE recommendations

7.1. The HSE has a number of suggestions and recommendations for remaining comfortable during working times. Teachers will keep these suggestions in mind when monitoring pupils who are using DSE. These suggestions will also be used by teachers.

7.2. A full list of these suggestions can be found in the appendix.

8. Eye Tests

8.1. If a member of staff who is a regular DSE user requests an eye test, the school will reimburse the cost of the test.

8.2. If an eye test shows that the member of staff requires glasses, the school is required to pay for them, if they are required for work with DSE.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1. The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy and procedures annually, and amending it accordingly following any incidents or concerns.

HSE Suggestions for Avoiding DSE Health Risks

The HSE has developed a list of suggestions which ensure a comfortable working environment.

In order to ensure comfort, the following adjustments should be made:

- Forearms should be kept horizontal.
- Eyes should be kept at the same height as DSE.
- Workspaces should be arranged to accommodate all the users' documents.
- The desk should be arranged to avoid glare, possibly by facing away from windows.
- Blinds or curtains should be adjusted to keep out excessive light.
- There should be plenty of space below the desk for the user to move their legs.
- To avoid pressure from seat edges, footrests should be used by shorter users.

To minimise issues that arise from regular keyboard use, the following advice is suggested:

- The space in front of keyboards should be used to rest wrists and hands.
- Users should keep wrists straight whilst typing.
- Soft touch pads should be used to provide extra support for users' wrists and hands.
- The mouse should be kept in reach to avoid stretching.
- If a keyboard is not being used, it should be moved out of the way.
- Users should avoid using excessive force on the keyboard or mouse.

When reading the screen, users should consider the following advice to reduce the risks from eye strain:

- Individual characters on the screen should be clear and sharp. If they are not, the settings of the DSE should be checked.
- The brightness and contrast of the DSE should be changed to suit the lighting conditions of the room.
- The surface of the screen should be kept clean at all times.
- Where possible, text size on the screen should be adjusted to the users' individual needs.

By taking regular breaks, the risks from eye strain and other DSE related risks can be reduced. Because of the varied nature of work carried out by users of DSE, the HSE does not give specific advice for teachers. However, in their general guidance they state:

- Regular, shorter breaks are better than longer breaks. For example, 10-minute breaks every hour are better than 20-minute breaks every two hours.
- Users should be given some discretion at which times they take breaks.
- Breaks should take place away from the workstation.