

Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston SWB Academy

Management of Legionella Policy

Policy version control

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1. Introduction and context

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) are committed to the health and safety of our staff, pupils and visitors. Ensuring the safety of our school community is of paramount importance to us, and this policy reflects our dedication to creating a safe learning environment.

This policy has been created to ensure the school is in compliance with all legislative requirements with regard to the control of legionella in water systems for all employees and pupils. The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), in addition to the Care Standards Act 2000, provide the legislative basis for this policy.

In addition, this policy highlights our arrangements to extend good practice, as far as is reasonably practicable, to all others affected by our activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all schools and academies within OAT.

3. Definitions

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia caused by organisms found in water. It is the most well-known and serious form of a group of diseases known as Legionellosis. Legionellosis is the term used for infections caused by legionella pneumophila and other similar bacteria.

4. Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for the safety of all members of the school community lies with the governing board.

The Principal is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy, namely to:

- Prepare and implement a written scheme for preventing and controlling the risk of legionella
- Implement and manage the scheme
- Ensure appropriate training is provided
- Ensure that the testing and flushing of water outlets is carried out as outlined in appendix one
- Ensure a legionella risk assessment is carried out
- Keep records of all flushing, testing, disinfection procedures and certification for a minimum of five years.

However, this responsibility may be delegated to a member of staff. Under our policy, this responsibility is delegated to the health and safety officer.

5. Procedure

5.1 What are the risks?

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of water droplets infected with the legionella bacteria.

Legionella bacteria can occur naturally in lakes, rivers, etc. and in the water systems of buildings, such as schools.

The bacteria thrive between 20°C and 45°C but can be killed by elevated temperatures or chemical treatment methods.

Control is commonly achieved through suitable maintenance of the water system and its plant. Water storage procedures, preventing the bacteria from proliferating, also provide additional control.

Those at high risk of infection include: those over 45 years of age, smokers, heavy drinkers, those suffering from chronic respiratory or kidney disease and those with impaired immune systems.

5.2 Incident reporting

All incidents of legionella will be reported as soon as possible to the nominated health and safety officer using the OAT online incident reporting system.

The health and safety lead will be responsible for informing the Principal as outlined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The notification will cover:

- Details of the sample
- The organism present in the sample
- Location
- Advice on appropriate remedial measures.

If a member of the school community is taken ill following exposure to legionella, the chair of governors will be notified immediately.

5.3 Reporting procedure

Should an incident require reporting to the Incident Contact Centre (part of the HSE) the health and safety lead, or a person appointed on their behalf, will file a report as soon as is reasonably possible informing OAT Head Office who will submit a RIDDOR report on behalf of the academy.

5.4 Incident Investigation

All occurrences of legionella, however small, will be investigated by an appointed party and the outcomes recorded.

The length of time dedicated to each investigation will vary on the seriousness of the occurrence.

After an investigation takes place, a risk assessment will be carried out, or the existing assessment amended, to avoid reoccurrence.

5.5 Risk assessment

The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring potential hazards are identified and for ensuring risk assessments are completed for all areas of risk in the school.

Annual risk assessments will take place exploring the risks of legionella in the school, or whenever a new water system is introduced.

The health and safety lead is responsible for carrying out the risk assessments.

The risk assessments will investigate whether:

- Control measures are being instigated fully
- Correct water temperatures are being maintained
- Engineering controls, such as temperature control valves, are in working order.

All failures will be immediately reported to the Principal.

The governing board will be informed of risk assessments allowing issues to be prioritised and actions to be authorised along with funds and resources.

6. Related Documents

- OAT Health and Safety Policy
- Risk assessments
- OAT Incident Reporting Procedure

7. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing body; any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.