

Advice and support

For additional advice and support, contact your NASUWT Local Association or Regional Centre.

Contact details can be found:

- on the NASUWT website at www.nasuwt.org.uk;
- in the NASUWT diary; or
- by phoning 03330 145550.

Further information

Advice on the application of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 and the Revised Approved Code of Practice is available from HSE Area Offices. Advice on the first-aid arrangements is available from the local Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS).

The HSE guidance 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' can be found on the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk.

'First aid at work' (HSE):
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf.

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The largest teachers' union in the UK

First Aid

health&safety
at work

The largest teachers' union in the UK

This leaflet provides essential information relating to first-aid regulations and procedures.

The Regulations regarding first aid in schools

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 and the Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) apply to all employees who work in educational establishments. Failure to comply with any provision of the relevant ACoP may be used in criminal proceedings as evidence that a Regulation to which the provision relates has been contravened.

The Regulations do not apply to pupils and visitors, although the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommends that employers should consider making some provision for them.

Employers have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAW) to ensure that their establishments are safe and healthy places. Throughout the UK, there is a common-law responsibility for employers and for those working in educational establishments to look after children in their care and schools, colleges, central services and other educational establishments have traditionally provided first-aid facilities for pupils. The HSE welcomes combined arrangements in general, as long as they do not dilute the level of provision for employees.

The duty to make provision for first aid

This duty rests with the employer, who should provide adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities. The Regulations place *'a general duty on employers to make, or ensure that there is made, adequate first-aid provision for their employees if they are injured or become ill at work. Employers must also inform their employees of the first-aid provision made for them.'*

Statement of first-aid policy

The HSE recommends that every educational establishment should prepare a written statement of its policy on first aid, covering both employees and non-employees. This could form part of the written statement of policy on health and safety required by section 2(3) of the HASAW Act 1974. The written

statement should include the names and locations of first-aid personnel and the locations of equipment, special arrangements for dealing with accidents away from the establishment or outside normal hours, and arrangements for liaison with ambulance services.

First-aiders

A first-aider is someone who has completed training appropriate to the level identified in the needs assessment (see HSE: 'First aid at work').

In educational establishments, which are likely to be regarded as having relatively low hazards, both of the ACoPs suggest that a first-aider would be needed at the rate of 1 to 50 employees. The employer has to provide, as a minimum, an appointed person at all times when the employees are at work. As part of a risk assessment, all employers should consider the total number of people on site when assessing first-aid needs. An employer may appoint as many first-aiders as are considered appropriate. Employers should also ensure that adequate first-aid provision is available during times when the site is open for extended services and for educational visits.

Appointed persons

Where no first-aiders are provided, the Regulations require appointed persons to be available to look after first-aid equipment and take charge of a situation if an accident occurs (e.g. to call an ambulance). No training is specified although HSE recommends instruction in emergency first-aid (resuscitation, control of bleeding and treatment of unconsciousness) for appointed people.

First-aid boxes

All establishments should provide first-aid boxes, equipped according to HSE guidance as appropriate, in easily accessible places and in each laboratory, gymnasium or sports hall, workshop, food technology and catering area. Inspection of first-aid boxes should form part of the regular inspection regime carried out by the NASUWT Representative.

The employer is responsible for ensuring that first-aid boxes:

- are strong containers impervious to dust and damp;
- are clearly labelled 'First Aid' and are marked by a white cross on a green background;
- contents are readily available to anyone wishing to use them;
- only contain first-aid supplies; and
- are frequently checked to make sure that they are fully equipped and usable at all times and are replenished as soon as possible after use.

The HSE recommends as a guide and where there is no special risk in the workplace, that a minimum stock of first-aid items would be:

- (a) a leaflet providing general first-aid guidance;
- (b) 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes);
- (c) two sterile eye pads, with attachments (e.g. Standard Dressing No. 16 British Pharmaceutical Codex (BPC));
- (d) four individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile, but, if not sterile, covering appropriate for serious wounds should also be included);
- (e) six safety pins;
- (f) a selection of sterile wound dressings, which should include six medium-sized sterile unmedicated dressings (approx 12cm x 12cm); and two large sterile unmedicated dressings (approx 18cm x 18cm); and
- (g) one pair of disposable gloves.

Equivalent or additional items are acceptable. Tablets or medicines should not be kept in the first-aid box.

There is no compulsion on NASUWT members to agree to being a first-aider or appointed person. The duty to make provisions lies upon the employer, but this does not give them the right to require teachers to undertake additional responsibilities for first aid and related matters.

The NASUWT advises teachers not to take these roles as they can be vulnerable to legal challenge.