



Working at Height Policy

Status	New Policy
Agreed by the Governing Board	December 2023
Review Cycle	Every two years
Next Review	December 2025
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Mission Statement

We accept all students **as they are** and believe that every one of them is **entitled** to the very **best education**, delivered in an **environment** that is **supportive, caring and safe**.

Our goal is to develop our students to become:

- **Successful** Learners.
- As **independent** as possible.
- **Confident** individuals and self-advocates.
- **Effective** communicators and **contributors**.
- **Responsible** citizens.

We will do this by working to **ensure we get every aspect of their provision just right**, helping them to achieve academically, personally, socially and morally.

Stone Bay School: ***“getting it right for every student”***.

Rights Respecting Schools

The Unicef UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) is based on principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The RRSA seeks to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. A Rights Respecting School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.

Legal Framework

At Stone Bay School, we recognise that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when working at heights. This policy has been established to identify risks and manage the risks accordingly.

The school has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees. The school also has obligations under The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (as amended).

Within this policy, “working at height” refers to situations where staff, in the course of their duties, work at heights and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly with immediate access to assistance.

Definition

Stone Bay School adopts the definition of the HSE, which defines work at heights as any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury or death.

Working at heights procedure

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring suitable procedures are in place for undertaking risk assessments for all situations requiring work at height. These procedures must ensure that all involved are aware of the precautions and methods of work to be followed, including emergency action to be taken if necessary.

Working at height should be avoided, where it is practicable to do so, but where work at height cannot be avoided, the risk and consequences of falls should be prevented, using either an existing place of work that is already safe or the right type of equipment. This includes:

- Taking into account weather conditions that could compromise safety.
- Undertaking as much work as possible from the ground.
- Checking that the place where work at height is to be undertaken is safe. Each place where people will work at height needs to be checked each time, before use.
- Preventing materials or objects from falling or, if it is not reasonably practicable to do so, taking suitable and sufficient measures to make sure no one can be injured.
- Ensuring that workers can get safely to and from where they work at height.
- Ensuring equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly.
- Storing materials and objects safely to ensure they won't cause injury if they are disturbed or collapse.
- Workers ensuring that they don't overload or overreach themselves when working at height.
- Taking precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces.
- Considering emergency evacuation and rescue procedures.

This Policy includes a generic assessment of risks for working at height. In every situation of working at height, a ladder safety – user checklist will be completed.

It is the responsibility of the individual concerned to ensure all necessary precautions and methods are adhered to at all times, in accordance with their instructions and training.

Any person, who becomes aware of circumstances involving work at height, where the existing control methods are ineffective, must inform the headteacher as soon as possible.

Individual risk assessments must cover all work currently undertaken at heights (or proposed to be), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or the lack of available assistance should something go wrong. Once relevant tasks are identified, the following must be considered:

- Plant and equipment: Plant and equipment used by individuals working at height will be assessed for suitability and safety.
- Access and egress: Some work at height may require access to locations that are difficult to access or egress. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are safe.
- Lone working: Work at height will not be undertaken when working alone

Work equipment should be assembled and/or installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and in keeping with industry guidelines.

Where the safety of the work equipment depends on how it has been installed and/or assembled, the headteacher should ensure it is not used until it has been inspected in that position by a competent person.

Any equipment exposed to conditions that may cause it to deteriorate, and result in a dangerous situation, should be inspected at suitable intervals appropriate to the environment and use.

A record will be maintained of any inspection for types of work equipment, including guard rails, toe-boards, barriers or similar collective means of protection, and working platforms, both fixed and mobile.

Working platforms used for construction work and from which a person could fall more than two metres must be inspected:

- After assembly/installation in any position.
- After any event liable to have affected its stability.
- At intervals not exceeding seven days.

Where it is a mobile platform, a new inspection and report is not required every time it is moved to a new location on the school/academy premises.

Any equipment, such as a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP), which has come from an external supplier, must be accompanied by a clear indication to everyone involved, when the last thorough examination has been carried out.

Risk Assessment

The school's risk assessment will include the following considerations:

- Safety of the pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and the general public.
- Hazardous nature of any general work at height on the site (i.e. environmental conditions).
- Required competency level of staff to undertake work at height.
- Required level of competence and ability to use access equipment.
- Required level of supervision.

- The safest equipment to use on site.
- The condition of access equipment and its maintenance.
- Other methods of safe access for higher risk or time-consuming jobs at height.

Control measures

In order to manage general risks, the following control measures have been put place. Members of staff working at height must:

- Not undertake work for which they are not trained.
- Take reasonable care of their health and safety.
- Not put themselves in danger.
- Know, and follow, safe working procedures.
- Never rush or cut corners.
- Follow reasonable targets.
- Stop for regular breaks and, if possible, change activity after prolonged periods.
- Inform the headteacher of any relevant medical conditions.
- Inform the Headteacher / Business Manager of any hazards or accidents encountered.

The following communication procedures will also be put in place.

- Carry a mobile telephone at all times when working at height.
- The worker will inform someone when they are working at height, how long they will be, and when they expect to be finished.
- In the event that a worker has an accident or falls into difficulties, they are to use their mobile telephone to contact the headteacher, their nominated person, or the emergency services.

First aid kits are available throughout the school. These locations will be communicated to all members of staff.

Training of staff

The school Business Manager will ensure that only individuals with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience are employed to perform a task at height, providing, where necessary, the appropriate training by an accredited trade organisation.

Where staff members are currently undergoing training, they should work under the supervision of somebody competent to work at heights.

Where a working at height activity is low-risk and of a short duration, competence requirements may be no more than making sure an employee receives instruction on how to use the equipment and appropriate on-the-job training.

Where a member of staff finds that they are required to use an item of access equipment on which they have not had instruction/training, or where they are unsure of correct or safe use, then they are to contact the school Business Manager prior to use.

The school Business Manager will maintain an up-to-date record of all instruction and training given to staff members.

Refresher training will be provided every three years.

Circulation

This policy will be circulated to every staff member working at height, who shall annually sign a statement which affirms that he / she / they have

- Received a copy of the policy
- Has read and understood the Policy
- Has agreed to comply with the Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the School Business Manager in conjunction with the Headteacher, who will make any necessary changes and communicate this to all staff.

Appendix 1



Stone Bay School Ladder safety – user checklist

Location:

Nature of work

Check completed by: Date:

All users of ladders should be able to answer 'yes' to each of the following questions, or to the alternatives given, before starting a job.

		Yes	No
1	Have alternatives to working at height been considered?		
2	Is there an appropriate risk assessment in place for this task?		
3	Is a ladder the right equipment for the job?		
4	If so, is it in good condition and free from slippery substances?		
5	Are weather conditions suitable for ladder work at height?		
6	Can the leaning ladder be secured at the top?		
7	If not, can it be secured at the bottom?		
8	If not, will a second person stationed at the base of the ladder provide sufficient safety?		
9	If not, can a ladder stability device be used?		
10	Is the support for the ladder now adequate at both the upper point of rest and the foot?		
11	Is a ladder 'stand-off' device needed due to fragile nature of surface at contact point of ladder, such as plastic guttering or fascias?		
12	Is the angle of the ladder correct?		
13	Is there at least 1m (3 rungs) above the landing platform?		
14	Is there adequate handhold at the place of landing?		
15	If it is necessary to carry tools and equipment, is there a way of carrying them that allows the user to keep their hands free for climbing?		
16	If an extension ladder is used is there sufficient overlap between sections?		
17	On step ladders, are the stays, chains or cords in good condition?		
18	Can the ladder be placed sufficiently near the work on a firm, level surface?		
19	Is the ladder clear of overhead electric power lines?		
20	Is footwear in good condition and free from mud or grease?		
21	Is the working area free from hazards?		
22	If not, have suitable precautions been taken?		

Do Not:

- use a make-shift ladder
- use a ladder which is too short
- support a ladder by its bottom rung or hang it by an upper rung
- stand a ladder on an unsteady base
- allow more than one person on a ladder at a time
- over-reach from a ladder
- use metal, metal reinforced or wet ladders near electrical conductors
- use ladders with cracked or broken rungs or other defects
- support a scaffold board on a rung
- erect a ladder in high wind conditions
- perform ladder work in front of a door which may be opened