

# **Tithe Farm Primary School**



## **Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy**

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## Statement of intent

Tithe Farm Primary School is fully committed to protecting the health and safety of our pupils and staff, in line with our statutory duties. This policy is in place to ensure that members of the school community who regularly use display screen equipment (DSE) are supported and understand how to take the necessary precautions to limit the potential risks surrounding regular use of DSE.

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

For the purposes of the policy, the school will define display screen equipment (DSE) as inclusive of the following:

- 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

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety responsibilities and duties for schools'
- HSE (2020) 'Working safely with display screen equipment'

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school provides a safe place of work and learning for all staff, pupils and visitors, in line with its statutory duties.
- Overseeing that staff receive training so that they can perform their duties with DSE in a safe manner.
- Ensuring whole-school familiarity with the requirements of the appropriate legislation and codes of practice.
- Assessing the efficacy of this policy and ensuring any necessary changes are made.

2.2. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring all risk assessments related to DSE are in place and up-to-date.
- Arranging training for staff using DSE where necessary.
- Ensuring the steps and requirements laid out in this policy are implemented at all times.
- Regularly reviewing this policy and its efficacy, in conjunction with the governing board.

2.3. Members of staff using DSE are responsible for:

- Ensuring they only use DSE once they have undertaken the appropriate training.
- Using DSE in line with the health and safety measures set out in this policy, and as learnt during their training, at all times.
- Informing the headteacher of any situation where the use of DSE is resulting in either injury or risk of injury as soon as possible.
- Where applicable, ensuring any pupils using DSE do so in line with the health and safety requirements of this policy.
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### **3. Workstations**

- 3.1. The school will ensure all users of DSE are aware of how to maintain a comfortable typing position, including:
  - Maintaining a practical and comfortable space between the user and the DSE.
  - Avoiding hunching or straining unnecessarily.
  - Placing the mouse to the appropriate side of the keyboard based on the needs of the user.
  - Adjusting all adjustable furniture where necessary.
- 3.2. The school will ensure it provides users with adjustable chairs where possible, to maximise comfort and ease of use.
- 3.3. The school will ensure it provides users with adjustable DSE - this includes being physically adjustable by tilting or swivelling, or through the electronic settings such as adjustable brightness and colour saturation.
- 3.4. Any pupils or staff with SEND will be provided with any additional support they require to use DSE.

### **4. Learning spaces**

- 4.1. The school will ensure it makes all learning spaces on the school site where staff and pupils will be using DSE comfortable, practical and conducive to a safe and productive use of DSE.
- 4.2. Where a room on the school site is used primarily for ICT equipment, the school will:
  - Set the lighting to slightly lower lighting levels than are required in other classrooms.
  - Install blinds to reduce occurrences of glare.
  - Install anti-static and non-slip flooring.
  - Maintain an adequate space between workstations holding DSE, e.g. desktop computer screens.
  - Ensure the room has sufficient space and pathways to permit all pupils to access DSE, including those who may need additional space to meet their needs.
  - Cover all electronic wires and cabling, using trunking and rubber cable covers, to prevent tripping.

### **5. Working from home with DSE**

- 5.1. If working from home, the school will ask staff to carry out a basic assessment of their DSE workstation at home, using the HSE's 'Suggestions for avoiding DSE Health Risks' (Appendix 1)

- 5.2. Staff and pupils who require DSE to complete their working or learning duties and commitments will be provided with the appropriate equipment from the school, where necessary.
- 5.3. Any staff and pupils being loaned DSE from the school will complete a Device Loan Agreement and Device User Agreement, copies of which will be stored by the school, in line with the Records Management Policy.
- 5.4. The school will encourage staff and pupils using DSE at home to follow some simple steps to reduce any risks associated with DSE, including:
  - Breaking up long spells of DSE use with rest breaks or changes in activity.
  - Regularly changing seating position to avoid prolonged periods of stasis or discomfort, where possible.
  - Getting up from their workstation and stretching at regular intervals, as appropriate to the user.
  - Applying filters to the screen, e.g. night-time settings, to reduce the risk of eye fatigue.
- 5.5. The school will maintain regular contact with staff and pupils using DSE to complete their working and learning commitments to assess whether any additional requirements are needed. These discussions may focus on:
  - Aches, pains or discomfort related to the arrangements for DSE use at home.
  - Technological issues with their equipment.
  - Any instances where the user has been using DSE without adequate rest and recovery breaks.
- 5.6. The school will then endeavour to meet any additional requirements where possible, including carrying out a full workstation assessment.

## **6. Health risks**

- 6.1. The school will ensure that its users of DSE have work schedules that include breaks or changes of activity, in line with its legal requirements as an employer.
- 6.2. In order to minimise the risk of adverse effects of DSE use on eyes, the school will encourage its users to:
  - Check the screen is well positioned and properly adjusted to suit their needs.
  - Ensure lighting conditions are suitable, i.e. the room is adequately lit so as to minimise the need to squint.
  - Take regular breaks from DSE use during the working day.

- 6.3. In order to minimise health risks resulting from DSE use, the school will train staff in safe working practices prior to their use of the equipment. This will include:
- Good posture.
  - Adjusting chairs and other furniture.
  - Arranging desk space.
  - Adjusting screens and lighting to avoid reflections and glare.
  - Breaks and changes of activity.
  - Workstation assessments.
  - The process for reporting issues.
- 6.4. The school will ensure that any staff or pupils working with DSE who may be at increased risk of injury, e.g. those with photo-sensitive epilepsy, are provided with the appropriate support in order to facilitate their use of DSE, where possible.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher.
- 7.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2026
- 7.3. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all stakeholders.

## Appendix 1

### 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.

