This unit requires you to know about procedures that exist in your school for the safeguarding of children, both from a health and safety point of view and with regard to child protection. The Every Child Matters framework has brought to the forefront the importance of keeping children safe and healthy and having an awareness of different ways in which, as professionals, we should work together to do this. You will need to have a clear understanding of the expectations of your role and what you should do in different situations, and you will need to show that you assist with the safety and protection of children. You should know and understand your responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment and ensuring that risks and hazards are dealt with appropriately.
What you need to know and understand

For this unit you need to know and understand:

- Setting’s safety, safeguarding and protection and emergency procedures, what these are and why they must be followed, including controls on substances harmful to health and other key aspects of health and safety
- The laws governing safety in your home country, including the general responsibility for health and safety that applies to all colleagues and to employers
- The duty of all within the sector to safeguard children, including the difficulties in situations where your concerns may not be seen to be taken seriously or followed through when following normal procedures
- Regulations covering manual handling and the risks associated with lifting and carrying children
- Safety factors and recognised standards of equipment and materials for children. Importance of using equipment that is appropriate for the age, needs and abilities of the child. The importance of following manufacturers’ guidelines
- Routine safety checking and maintenance of equipment. Safe storage of hazardous materials and disposal of waste
- Safe layout and organisation of rooms, equipment, materials and outdoor spaces
- How to adapt the environment to ensure safety for children and young people, according to their age, needs and abilities and taking into account disabilities or special educational needs, for example keeping the floor tidy to limit hazards for children/young people with visual difficulties
- When and how to use safety equipment such as safety gates, socket covers, window and drawer catches, cooker guards, safety harnesses. Safety in respect of animals, plants, sand pits and outdoor spaces
- Good hygiene practice: avoiding of cross infection, disposal of waste, food handling, handling body fluids. Issues concerning spread of HIV and AIDS virus and hepatitis
- Familiarity with adult/child ratio requirements, according to regulatory and setting requirements
- How to supervise children/young people safely, modifying your approach according to their age, needs and abilities. The balances between safety and risk, and challenge and protection for children and young people
- Policies and procedures of setting for responding to and recording accidents and emergencies. Basic first aid required in an emergency and how to apply it, recognition of and response to choking, unconsciousness, breathing difficulties, bleeding, anaphylactic...
shock, burns. Awareness of location and contents of first aid box. How to treat common minor injuries that may be dealt with on site, such as minor skin abrasions, cuts, bumps

- The importance of following instructions about children's diets carefully to avoid known allergic reactions. How you would recognise allergic reactions

- Policies and procedures of setting to deal with children/young people's illness. How to recognise when children/young people are ill, including when they cannot communicate, for example fever, rashes, headache, crying and breathlessness

- The emergency procedures within settings and the types of possible emergency. This must include:
  - a procedures for fires
  - b security incidents
  - c missing children or persons

- Types and possible signs and indicators of child abuse: physical, emotional, sexual abuse, bullying and harassment, neglect and failure to thrive not based on illness. This must include:
  - a behavioural changes such as regression, withdrawal, excessive attention seeking, aggression and negative behaviour
  - b physical indicators such as unlikely bruising, burns, marks, genital irritation or damage, hunger, being dirty, lack of health care

- Recognition that social factors, for example substance abuse, may increase a child's vulnerability to abuse

- Safe working practices that protect children/young people and adults who work with them

- Ways to encourage children/young people to be aware of their own bodies and understand their right not to be abused, according to their age, needs and abilities. These may include:
  - a use of appropriate descriptive language
  - b activities involving discussion about their own bodies

- The importance of consistently and fairly applied boundaries and rules for children/young people's behaviour, according to their age, needs and abilities, and the avoidance of stereotyping (See also Unit 19, KS, page 58)

- How to respond to children/young people's challenging behaviour, according to their age, needs and abilities and in line with the policies and procedures of the setting (See also Unit 19, K9, page 63)

- The importance of encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour (See Unit 19, K8, page 80)

- Safety issues and concerns when taking children/young people out of the setting

- The legislation, guidelines and policies which form the basis for action to safeguard children and young people
The setting’s safety, protection and emergency procedures

All schools need to ensure that they take measures to protect all adults and pupils while they are on school premises. This means that there will be procedures in place for a number of situations that may arise, including the following.

Accidents and first aid
There should be enough first aiders in the school at any time to deal with accidents. First aid boxes should be regularly checked and replenished. (See also K13, page 18.)

School security and strangers
This includes making sure that all those who are in school have been signed in and identified. Schools may have different methods for doing this, for example visitors may be issued with badges. If staff notice any unidentified people in the school, they should challenge them immediately. If you are on playground duty and notice anything suspicious, you should also send for help. Schools may also have secure entry and exit points, which may make it more difficult for individuals to enter the premises. (See also K16, page 20.)

Fire procedures
There should be clear procedures in place so that everyone on the premises knows what to do in case of fire. (See also K16, page 20.)

Emergencies
These do sometimes occur and schools should have procedures in place to deal with them. (See also K13, page 14.)

Personal hygiene
Pupils should develop routines and good practice for general personal hygiene and understand its importance.

General health and safety
Health and safety should be a regular topic at staff meetings and during assemblies, so that everyone’s attention is drawn to the fact that it is a shared responsibility.

Controls on substances harmful to health (COSHH)
Anything that may be harmful should be stored out of pupils’ reach or locked in a cupboard, for example, cleaning materials or medicines. COSHH legislation gives a step-by-step list of precautions that need to be taken to prevent any risk or injury.

Portfolio activity

Investigating safety, protection and emergency procedures

Using a copy of your school’s health and safety policy, highlight the procedures your school has in place for the areas above. If a particular area is not documented in the policy, find out whether it is recorded elsewhere. If you are unable to find the information recorded anywhere, you will need to speak to your headteacher or health and safety representative in order to find out about it. Then write a reflective account under each heading.
Laws governing safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 was designed to protect everyone at work through procedures for preventing accidents. The procedures everyone in the workplace is expected to observe are described below.

Reporting any hazards

Everyone should be alert to any hazards in school that are likely to cause injury to themselves or others. The school is required to carry out an annual risk assessment to determine which areas and activities are most likely to be hazardous, the likelihood of specific hazards occurring and those who are at risk. Pupils and staff need to be vigilant and immediately report any hazards that they notice to the appropriate person. This may be the school’s health and safety representative, the headteacher or another member of staff. You should be aware of the designated person to whom you should report health and safety matters.

Following the school’s safety policy

The school has an obligation to have a safety policy, which should give information to all staff about procedures that the school has in place for ensuring that it is as safe as possible. All new staff joining the school should be given induction training in safety procedures and what to do in case of emergencies. Safety should be a regular topic at staff meetings.

Making sure that their actions do not harm themselves or others

Staff must also ensure that any actions they take are not likely to harm or cause a danger to others in the school. This includes tidying up and putting things away after use. You must also consider the effects of not taking action, for example, if you discover a potential danger; it is your responsibility not to ignore it but to report it as appropriate.

Using any safety equipment provided

Staff need to ensure that safety equipment that is provided for use when carrying out activities is always used. This includes the safe use of tools used for subjects such as...
Pursuing safety issues

Carrie has been concerned about a safety issue in her Year 4 (P5) class. The desks are much too small for the pupils and there is barely enough space in the room for the thirty pupils and two adults to move around. She has spoken to various senior managers about it as some of the pupils who are slightly taller are really struggling to sit and write comfortably. It is November and behaviour in the class has deteriorated noticeably since the start of the academic year.

Carrie has been told that there is no funding for new furniture and the room is too small to accommodate it, so nothing can be done.

Should Carrie continue to be concerned or has she passed the responsibility on? Is there anything else she could do?

as design and technology or the use of gloves when handling materials in science activities. There should be guidelines in the school’s policy for the safe use and storage of equipment.

All staff working in a school have a responsibility to ensure that pupils are cared for and safe. The Children Act 1989 and Children (Scotland) Act 1995 also require that staff protect children from risks as far as possible when they are in their care.

In the school’s policy for the safe use and storage of equipment.

The duty of all within the sector to safeguard children

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to ensure that safety is maintained and in particular that vulnerable groups such as children are safeguarded. Standards for safety are also set by the Government department in each country responsible for education and are monitored by the body responsible for school inspections, for example, Ofsted in England and HMIE in Scotland. As well as having an awareness of health and safety, all routines should be planned carefully with safety in mind so that incidents are less likely to occur. Pupils should also be encouraged to think about safety when they are in the learning environment, so that they develop their own awareness.

Portfolio activity

Investigating legal requirements for safety

Find out about and briefly describe the requirements of the following:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Children Act 1989
- Every Child Matters

Case study

Pursuing safety issues

Carrie has been concerned about a safety issue in her Year 4 (P5) class. The desks are much too small for the pupils and there is barely enough space in the room for the thirty pupils and two adults to move around. She has spoken to various senior managers about it as some of the pupils who are slightly taller are really struggling to sit and write comfortably. It is November and behaviour in the class has deteriorated noticeably since the start of the academic year.

Carrie has been told that there is no funding for new furniture and the room is too small to accommodate it, so nothing can be done.

Should Carrie continue to be concerned or has she passed the responsibility on? Is there anything else she could do?
If you notice and report something, which you consider needs to be addressed through the correct channels but which is not subsequently followed through, you should take the matter further. You should approach the headteacher or governing body (or Local Authority in Scotland), who should have a committee that manages general facilities and should be able to advise you on what the next steps should be.

**Regulations covering manual handling and the risks associated with lifting and carrying children**

If you are asked to lift and carry pupils or equipment as part of your job, you should receive appropriate training. By the time a child is of primary age, it will be difficult for you to lift them on your own and it is unlikely that you will be asked to. However, if you are working with pupils who have special educational needs (Additional Support for Learning Needs), lifting them with hoists or other equipment may be part of your daily routine. You should be aware of the risk of spine and back muscle injury and should make sure that you follow the correct procedures. A quarter of all accidents involving staff in schools are caused by moving heavy objects.

As part of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, your employer should make sure that you always follow correct guidelines when lifting pupils or equipment. You should also be aware of the dangers of bending over small desks or tables as this can also lead to problems – it is always better to crouch down and keep a straight back.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, all adults have a duty to look after themselves.

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**Keys to good practice**

**Lifting and carrying**

- Only lift if absolutely necessary.
- Check the weight of the object or pupil before you start to lift.
- If necessary, share the load with another person.
- Make sure you are holding the pupil or object securely.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight as you lift.
- If the pupil or object is too heavy, put it down again slowly and do not attempt to continue.

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*Figure 3.3* To lift a child, two adults grasp each other’s wrists to make a four-handed seat. The child then puts an arm around each of the adult’s shoulders. The adults then stand up together.
Safety factors and recognised standards of equipment and materials for children

All materials and equipment used in schools must fulfil recognised standards of safety. The most widely used, although not legally required, safety symbol is the Kitemark, which shows that an item has been tested by the British Safety Institute. Before items can be offered for sale within the European Union, they must carry a CE symbol to show that they meet European regulations.

Key term

Manufacturers’ instructions
– information or instructions for use

Always make sure that any equipment to be used by pupils is age and ability appropriate. The guidelines given by manufacturers are intended to be a realistic means of checking that equipment is not misused. A child who is too young or too old may be unable to use the equipment safely and may hurt themselves and others as a result.

Portfolio activity

Considering the suitability of materials and equipment

Find and list as many items in your classroom that display the Kitemark as you can. How have the age and needs of the pupils you work with been taken into consideration when choosing materials and equipment? Show one way in which manufacturers’ guidelines are followed.

Routine safety checking and maintenance of equipment

The person responsible for health and safety in your school should routinely carry out safety checks or make sure that these take place on a regular basis. There should be regular walkabouts or other means of making sure that hazards are not being left unreported. Where hazards are discovered, for example, items stored on top of cupboards that could fall down when the cupboard is opened, these should be recorded immediately. Safety checks should also be made on all equipment that could be hazardous if neglected. All electrical items used in school should have annual checks, carried out by a qualified electrician. Equipment such as fire extinguishers should also be checked annually and checks recorded on the outside of the extinguisher.

Hazardous materials should always be locked away (see K1, page 4). (For disposal of waste, see K10, page 12.)
Help to keep children safe

Figure 3.5 Pupils need to be sitting properly in order to be able to write correctly

Safe layout and organisation of rooms, equipment, materials and outdoor spaces

Safe layout and organisation of rooms
Rooms should be organised safely and there should be adequate space to move around comfortably for the number of people using them. Everyone should be able to access materials and equipment as required. The furniture should be an appropriate size for the age of pupils, so that they are able to sit comfortably when working.

Preparing learning materials and equipment
All primary schools use a variety of materials that need to be prepared daily. Some, such as putting out glue and scissors, will be easily achieved, but others, for example where children are using different materials to make a collage, may take longer to organise. If there is more than one class in a year group, there may be several classes needing to use similar materials in the same week and it is important to check that there are enough to go around.

You will often have to make sure that there are sufficient general classroom resources. This includes getting out items such as maths equipment, puzzles, and resources for role play and other classroom activities. If you or other adults are working in other areas in the school, it should be made clear to you exactly what resources to use and where to find them. It should also be made clear to you where particular items are stored and whether you have access to storage areas and store cupboards. Teachers should ensure that items that are needed will be available at the time and that other classes will not be using the same resource area. Some schools may have rotas and procedures in place for ensuring that all classes have equal access to resources and facilities.
Outdoor spaces
Outdoor areas used by pupils should be safe and boundaries should be inspected regularly to ensure that they are secure. Outdoor areas should be checked before pupils go into them to ensure that they are tidy and that any litter, broken glass or animal mess has been cleared up. If you are responsible for putting out toys and equipment, make sure that pupils are aware how they should be used and reinforce rules wherever possible to remind them how to behave.

How to adapt the environment to ensure safety for children and young people
All children should be given equal opportunities and this should be remembered in the learning environment. All pupils, including those with special needs, should be considered when planning and setting out materials and resources. The environment may often need to be adapted for the needs of particular children within the class.

Factors to be considered, include the following:

- **Light** – This may need to be adjusted or teaching areas changed if a visually impaired pupil's eyes are light sensitive.
- **Accessibility** – A pupil in a wheelchair needs to have as much access to classroom facilities as others. Furniture and resources may need to be moved to allow for this.
- **Sound** – Some pupils may be sensitive to sounds, for example a child on the autistic spectrum who is disturbed by loud or unusual noises. It is not always possible for such noises to be avoided, but teaching assistants need to be aware of the effect that they can have on pupils.
When animals are in school

- Make sure pupils wash their hands after handling animals.
- Always supervise pupils’ contact with animals.
- Keep animal cages, tanks and other areas clean.
- Ensure that there are rotas and routines for feeding animals.
classrooms. You must make sure that whenever animals are kept in school, health and safety requirements are carefully considered and that there is adult supervision at all times. If your school has a policy of not allowing animals it is worth finding out the reasons for this so you can discuss it with your assessor if needed.

**Safety in outdoor environments and spaces**

Pupils should be encouraged to use the outside environment as much as possible. However, there can be dangers if outside areas are not monitored carefully. Ponds and sandpits should be covered when not in use, as both can be hazardous and uncovered sandpits can attract foxes and dogs. Toys or equipment should always be appropriate to the space available and be put away safely. Plants can also be dangerous – thorns or nettles should be kept back and any poisonous plants noted and/or removed.

**Portfolio activity**

**Procedures for checking and maintaining safety of equipment and outdoor spaces**

Can you think of any other safety equipment, which is used in your school? What are the procedures for checking and maintaining it? How are outdoor spaces monitored and maintained?

**Good hygiene practice**

You should be a good role model for pupils and always follow good practice yourself with regards to hygiene. This includes washing your hands before any activity involving foodstuffs, such as lunchtime or cooking activities. If you are giving first aid, you must make sure you follow the appropriate procedures.

**Principles of cross-infection**

When working with children you are vulnerable to picking up and also to carrying infection, so you should keep up to date with your own immunisations for diseases such as mumps, flu and meningitis. However, most childhood illnesses are most infectious before the symptoms occur and many pupils come to school with coughs and colds. Your school may have its own policy for these circumstances. For example, some children seem to have a permanent cold during winter and it would not be practical for them to be out of school for long periods. You should be aware of the signs of the common illnesses (see page 19).

**Appropriate systems for disposing of waste and for handling body fluids**

Your school will have a policy that follows local and national guidelines for handling body fluids and disposing of waste. When dealing with body fluids, you should always wear latex gloves, disposing of them after use. There should be special bins for first-aid waste, which should be disposed of appropriately.

**Key term**

Waste – unwanted materials, soiled clothing, body fluids, dressings, cleaning cloths
Issues concerning the spread of HIV/AIDS virus and hepatitis

The virus that causes AIDS is called the HIV virus. It is only spread through bodily fluids (i.e. blood, semen, breast milk and vaginal fluids). The most common ways of HIV being passed from one person to another are through unprotected sex, sharing of needles or from mother to child during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding. HIV cannot be spread through casual contact, or tears or sweat as these body fluids are not infectious.

Although there are different forms of hepatitis, it is caused by a virus that attacks the liver. It is also transmitted through blood-to-blood contact, sharing needles and general poor hygiene.

Adult/child ratio requirements

Adult to child ratios will vary according to the setting and the age group of the children. In school, it may vary according to local authority requirements within and outside school hours, whereas in nurseries and early years settings there are specific legal requirements (see the table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Adult/child ratio (legal requirements)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0–2 years</td>
<td>1 adult for every 3 children in early years group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3 years</td>
<td>1 adult for every 4 children in early years group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 years</td>
<td>1 adult for every 8 children in early years group or outside the school day; 1 for every 13 if a registered teacher is present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years and over</td>
<td>1 teacher for every 30 pupils in Reception (P1) classes in maintained (or Local Authority) schools; 1 adult for every 5 children on school trips and during out of hours activities</td>
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</table>

How to supervise children safely

When supervising pupils, you should be aware of the kinds of risks to which they are exposed and how likely these are to happen bearing in mind the age and/or needs of the child. Pre-school children, particularly those under 3 years, are more likely to have accidents as they are less likely to have an understanding of risk or danger. If you are working with pupils who have learning difficulties, disabilities or Additional Support for Learning needs, they may also be less likely to have a fully developed awareness of danger: you need to modify your supervision according to the needs of the children and their level of awareness.

You may be involved in risk assessment activities, in particular if you are taking pupils off school premises. Always encourage pupils to talk and think about any risks when they are working with you, so that they develop their own awareness of danger.

Most activities carry some element of risk. Many educationalists now believe that the current tendency for many parents to keep their children indoors and take them everywhere by car is detrimental and over-protective, as it does not allow them to explore and discover the world for themselves. Therefore, it is important for all children to have the opportunity to take some risks. (See also K24, page 26.)
Balancing learning experiences against the risks involved

Think about the areas of risk for the following groups. How does the risk involved balance with the learning experience?

- Taking a group of pupils with learning difficulties to the park
- Working with a Reception (P1) group in the outside classroom
- Going on a maths walk to local shops with Year 1 (P2)
- Working with Year 2 (P3) on a design and technology activity, using hot glue guns and hacksaws
- Doing a traffic survey with Year 4 (P5)
- Taking Year 6 (P7) swimming each week

Policies and procedures for responding to and recording accidents and emergencies

In any environment where children are being supervised it is likely that there will be incidents or injuries at some time. You may find that you are first on the scene in the case of an accident or emergency and need to take action. If you are the only adult in the vicinity, you must make sure you follow the correct procedures until help arrives. It is vital to send for help as soon as possible. This should be the school’s qualified first aider and, if necessary, an ambulance.

You will need to support and reassure not only the casualty but also other children who may be present. Children quickly become distressed and, depending on what they have witnessed, may be in shock themselves. Make sure that you and any others on the scene are not put at unnecessary risk.
Warning! If not trained in first aid, and if at all unsure about what to do, you should only take action to avert any further danger to the casualty and others.

**Resuscitation**

If you are the first on the scene and find a casualty is not breathing, you may need to attempt resuscitation. This is known as Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). In all cases you should call for an ambulance immediately. Before carrying out CPR, check that there is no further risk to the casualty or to others.

![CPR illustration](image)

For children from 1 year to puberty:

- Gently tip the head back by lifting the chin. Check the nose and mouth for any obstructions.
- Pinch the child's nose, place your mouth over the child's mouth and give five rescue breaths.
- If you have received proper training, give chest compressions using the heel of your hand in the centre of the child's chest. After 30 compressions, give two further breaths.
- Continue until emergency help arrives.

(For procedures for administering CPR to other age groups, see www.redcross.org.uk).

**Different emergencies and what you should do**

**Burns and scalds**

Cool the affected area immediately using cold water. Do not remove any clothes that are stuck to the burn.

**Electrocution**

Cut off the source of electricity by removing the plug. If there is no way to do this, stand on dry insulating material, such as newspaper or a wooden box, and push the victim away from the source using something wooden, such as a chair. Do not touch
the victim until the electricity has been switched off. Then, place the victim in the
recovery position (see below).

**Choking or difficulty with breathing**
Encourage the victim to cough to dislodge the blockage. Bend the casualty over with
the head lower than the chest and slap between the shoulder blades five times using
the heel of the hand.

**Poisoning**
If possible, find out what the child has taken or swallowed. Stay with the child and
if they become unconscious, call an ambulance and put the child in the recovery
position. Do not give the child anything to drink. Take the suspected poison to
hospital with you.

**Falls: fractures**
Treat all cases as actual fractures. Do not attempt to move the casualty. You will need
a qualified first aider to come to the scene. Support a fractured leg by tying it to the
other leg, using a wide piece of fabric such as a scarf or tie. If the knee is broken, do
not try to force it straight. If you suspect a fractured arm, support it in a sling and
secure it to the chest. If the arm will not bend, secure it by strapping it to the body.

**Faints or loss of consciousness**
Treat those who feel faint by sitting them down and putting their head between their
knees. If they do faint, lie them on their back and raise their legs to increase blood flow
to the brain. Loosen clothing at the neck and keep the patient quiet after regaining
consciousness.

**Anaphylactic shock**
This is a severe allergic reaction and can be due to ingestion of a particular food, such
as nuts, or caused by insect stings. It may cause constriction of air passages and can
be fatal. Sit the casualty up and find out if they have any medication. Seek emergency
help. If they lose consciousness, open the airway and start resuscitation.

**Bleeding**
Reassure the child and keep them calm if distressed. Elevate the wound if necessary
and put a dressing on it. If there is a foreign body in the wound, do not attempt to
remove it. Press on or around the wound to stop the bleeding.

**Breathing difficulties or asthma attack**
Ensure that the child has nothing in their mouth. Make sure they have their inhaler
and encourage them to breath slowly. Keep them away from others in a quiet area. Call
for help if there is no improvement.

**Putting a casualty into the recovery position**
If you are dealing with an unconscious person, you will need to place them in the
recovery position. This will prevent any blood, vomit or saliva from blocking the
windpipe. You should always do this unless you suspect that the victim has a fracture
of the spine or neck.

- Kneel beside the victim and turn their head towards you, lifting it back to open the
  airway.
• Place the victim’s nearest arm straight down their side and the other arm across their chest. Place the far ankle over the near ankle.
• While holding the head with one hand, hold the victim at the hip by their clothing and turn them onto their front by pulling towards you, supporting them with your knees.
• Lift the chin forward to keep the airway open.
• Bend the arm and leg nearest to you, and pull out the other arm from under the body, palm up.

If you are treating a casualty, you should be aware of the dangers of contamination from blood and other body fluids. If possible, always wear protective gloves when treating an open wound or when in contact with other body fluids. Many infections such as HIV and hepatitis can be passed on through contact with these fluids.

You should always stay with the casualty and give support by your physical presence, and as much care as you are able. If you feel that you are not able to deal with the situation, you should always do what you can and reassure the patient as much as possible while sending for help. Where a child has been injured badly, their parents or carers should be notified immediately. They will need to know exactly what is happening and if the child is being taken to hospital they will need to know where.

**How to treat common minor injuries such as minor skin abrasions, cuts, bumps**

Minor injuries such as cuts and grazes will usually be dealt with as they occur by a first aider. It is unlikely that creams and lotions will be applied; most school first aiders will clean minor injuries with cold water. A note should be sent home stating what has happened so that the parent is informed. It is particularly important that parents are aware if their child has had a bump on the head.

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**Sunnymead Primary School**

**Accident report form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of casualty</th>
<th>Exact location of incident</th>
<th>Date of incident</th>
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<th>What was the injured person doing?</th>
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<th>What injuries occurred?</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Medical aid sought</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of person dealing with incident</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of witness</th>
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| If the casualty was a child, what time were parents informed? |
|                                                            |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was hospital attended?</th>
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<th>Was the accident investigated? By whom?</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recording accidents and emergencies
Remember that following all injuries or emergencies, even minor accidents, a record should be made of what has happened and the steps taken by the staff present.

Awareness of location and contents of first aid box
You should know the location of safety equipment in school and the identity of trained first aiders. It is strongly recommended that there are first aiders in all educational establishments and in Scotland this is a legal requirement. They need to have completed a training course approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which is valid for three years. You should also be aware of the location of first aid boxes in the school. The school’s trained first aider should be responsible for ensuring adequate supply and regular restocking of the first aid box. Supplies should be date stamped when they are received as they have a five-year shelf life. If you find that there is not sufficient equipment, you must report that to the health and safety officer.

There is no mandatory requirement for the contents of first aid boxes but they should include certain items, as shown in Figure 3.12.

How to recognise and avoid allergic reactions
There are an increasing number of children who have allergic reactions to food such as nuts or intolerances to food such as wheat. All school staff should be aware of the identities of pupils who have these allergies and clear instructions on how to deal with each case must be readily available. In particular, lunchtime supervisors need to be kept informed. There may be a book containing photographs of relevant pupils, information about their condition and contact telephone numbers. In some schools, photographs and information may be displayed on staffroom walls. Care must always be taken to keep such information as confidential as possible.

Case study
Maintaining awareness of pupils’ allergies
Jemma is supervising at lunchtime. A new pupil starts to have difficulty breathing and his friend calls Jemma over. She finds out that the pupil has a nut allergy and is sitting close to a pupil who has peanut butter in her sandwiches.

- What should Jemma do first?
- What should have happened to avoid this situation from occurring?
Policies and procedures to deal with children’s illness

Signs and symptoms of some common illnesses

All staff should be aware of the types of illnesses that may occur in children and also be alert to physical signs that show children may be incubating illness. Incubation periods can vary between illnesses, from one day to three weeks in some cases. Remember that young children may not be able to communicate exactly what is wrong. General signs that children are ‘off colour’ may include:

- pale skin
- flushed cheeks
- rashes
- different (quiet, clingy, irritable) behaviour
- rings around the eyes.

Common illnesses and their characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness and symptoms</th>
<th>Recommended time to keep off school and treatment</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chickenpox – patches of itchy red spots with white centres</td>
<td>For five days from onset of rash. Treat with calamine lotion to relieve itching</td>
<td>It is not necessary to keep child at home until all the spots have disappeared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German measles (rubella) – pink rash on head, trunk and limbs; slight fever, sore throat</td>
<td>For five days from onset of rash. Treat by resting</td>
<td>The child is most infectious before diagnosis. Keep away from pregnant women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo – small red pimples on the skin, which break down and weep</td>
<td>Until lesions are crusted and healed. Treat with antibiotic cream or medicine</td>
<td>Antibiotic treatment may speed up healing. Wash hands well after touching the child’s skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringworm – contagious fungal infection of the skin. Shows as circular flaky patches</td>
<td>None. Treat with anti-fungal ointment; it may require antibiotics</td>
<td>It needs treatment by the GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea and vomiting</td>
<td>Until diarrhoea and vomiting has settled and for 24 hours after. No specific diagnosis or treatment, although keep giving clear fluids and no milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis – inflammation or irritation of the membranes lining the eyelids</td>
<td>None (although schools may have different policies on this). Wash with warm water on cotton wool swab. GP may prescribe cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles – fever, runny eyes, sore throat, cough; red rash, which often starts from the head, spreading downwards</td>
<td>Give rest, plenty of fluids and paracetamol for fever</td>
<td>This is now more likely with some parents refusing MMR inoculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis – fever, headache, stiff neck and blotch skin; dislike of light; symptoms may develop very quickly</td>
<td>Get urgent medical attention. It is treated with antibiotics</td>
<td>It can have severe complications and be fatal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonsillitis – inflammation of the tonsils by infection. Very sore throat, fever, earache, enlarged red tonsils, which may have white spots</td>
<td>Treat with antibiotics and rest</td>
<td>It can also cause ear infection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Department of Health has issued a useful poster, ‘Guidance on infection control in schools and nurseries’, which could be displayed in the first aid area as a quick reference. It clearly sets out some common illnesses and their characteristics. Some of these are listed in the table on page 19, although the list is not exhaustive. Staff must be alert to the signs and symptoms of these common illnesses and notice changes in behaviour that indicate that children may be unwell.

Children often develop symptoms more quickly than adults, as they may have less resistance to infection. Most schools will call parents and carers straight away if their child is showing signs or symptoms of illnesses. If children are on antibiotics, most schools will recommend that they stay off school until they have completed the course.

**Portfolio activity**

**Dealing with ill pupils appropriately**

Either write a reflective account detailing how you have dealt with an incident when a pupil was ill or ask your assessor to speak to a first aider or other staff member who can confirm that you acted appropriately and in compliance with school policy.

**Emergency procedures**

**Procedures for fires**

Your school is required to have a health and safety policy, which gives guidelines for emergency procedures and you should make sure that you are aware of these. Fire notices should be displayed at various points around the school, showing what to do in case of a fire and where to assemble in case of building evacuation. All adults should know what their role requires them to do and where to assemble pupils.

The school should have regular fire drills – around once a term – at different times of the day (not just before playtime for convenience!) so that all adults and pupils are aware of what to do wherever they are on the premises. Fire drills should also be practised at lunchtime or during after-school or breakfast club, when there are different staff on site and when pupils are in different environments. Records should be kept of all fire drills, any issues that occur and the action taken.

**Security incidents**

It is important that all staff are vigilant and make sure that unidentified people are challenged immediately. Do this by simply asking whether you can help the person or by asking to see their visitor’s badge. In Scotland all schools have a security entry system which causes all entrances to lock. This door can only be released by a member of staff.

**Missing children**

Fortunately it is extremely rare for children to go missing, particularly if the school follows health and safety guidelines and procedures. On school trips you should periodically check the group for whom you are responsible, as well as keeping an eye on pupils supervised by helpers. If for some reason a pupil does go missing, raise the alarm straightaway and make sure that you follow school policy.
As an adult working with children, you need to have an understanding of the different signs that may indicate that a child is being abused. Although you will do your best to ensure a child’s safety while they are in your care, you also need to look out for any signs that they are being mistreated when they are out of school. The signs may include both physical and behavioural changes. There are four main types of abuse.

**Physical abuse**
This involves being physically hurt or injured. Physical abuse may take a variety of forms and be either spasmodic or persistent. Injuries may come from children being hit, kicked, shaken, punched or beaten.

The signs of physical abuse are often quite straightforward to spot and can include bruises, cuts, burns and other injuries. However, you should be aware that such injuries can also be caused by genuine accidents. If you notice frequent signs of injury or if there appear to be other signs of abuse, it is important to take action.

Less obvious signs of physical abuse may include fear of physical contact with others, reluctance to get changed for PE, wanting to stay covered up, even in hot weather, and aggression.

**Emotional abuse**
This involves the child being continually ‘put down’ and criticised, or not given love or approval at a time when they need it the most. It includes bullying, discrimination and racism, which may also take place outside school. This could take the form of name calling, humiliation or teasing. Increasingly, it can also take place through mobile phones and the Internet.

The signs of emotional abuse are that the child is withdrawn and lacks confidence, shows regression or is ‘clingy’ towards adults, and has low self-esteem. Children who suffer from emotional abuse are likely to be anxious about new situations and may show extremes of behaviour or appear distracted and unable to concentrate.
Investigating protection and behaviour policies

List the different ways in which your school protects both children and adults through the use of safe working practices. You may need to look at your school’s child protection and behaviour policies.

Portfolio activity

As a teaching assistant you are in a good position to notice changes in pupils’ behaviour and other signs of possible abuse. You should always look out for the indicators above and, if you are at all concerned, speak to either your class teacher or the school’s Child Protection Officer (usually the headteacher/principle teacher). They will follow the school’s child protection policy and, if necessary, follow local authority guidelines for informing social services. Always keep a note of what happened, what you reported and who you told.

**Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves an adult or young person using a child sexually, for example, by touching their bodies inappropriately or by forcing them to look at sexual images or have sex.

The signs of sexual abuse may include sexual behaviour inappropriate to the child’s age, genital irritation, clinginess or changes in behaviour, regression and lack of trust of adults. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify and its signs can be caused by other kinds of abuse. It is therefore important that any signs are seen as possible, rather than probable, indicators.

**Neglect**

This means that the child is not being properly cared for and not having its basic needs met by parents or carers. Basic needs include shelter, food, love, general hygiene and medical care. The signs of neglect may include being dirty, tired, hungry, seeking attention and generally failing to thrive.

As a teaching assistant you are in a good position to notice changes in pupils’ behaviour and other signs of possible abuse. You should always look out for the indicators above and, if you are at all concerned, speak to either your class teacher or the school’s Child Protection Officer (usually the headteacher/principle teacher). They will follow the school’s child protection policy and, if necessary, follow local authority guidelines for informing social services. Always keep a note of what happened, what you reported and who you told.

**Figure 3.13 The indicators of abuse**

**Figure 3.14 Sometimes children may bring problems to your attention**
Identifying and acting on signs of possible abuse

Marie has been working in Francesca's class for six months. Recently she has noticed that Francesca, who is usually happy and settled, has become very withdrawn and less involved with her friends. She appears very reluctant to join in during class activities and at playtimes, and her clothing does not appear to have been washed. She has not had her PE kit in school for two weeks. Marie knows that Francesca's mother has been treated for alcoholism in the past, but as far as she knows this is not currently an issue. She speaks to the class teacher and tells her about her concerns.

- What signs is Francesca showing that may be indicators of abuse?
- How should Marie and the class teacher proceed?

Recognition that social factors may increase a child’s vulnerability to abuse

If you know that a pupil comes from a home background where there are likely to be pressures on the family, for example if there is a parent or older sibling who misuses drugs or alcohol, it is possible that the pupil is more vulnerable to abuse. However, it is very important that you do not jump to any conclusions or assume that abuse has definitely taken place.

Safe working practices that protect children and adults who work with them

It is important to follow safe working practices to ensure that pupils are protected from abuse. Child protection is the responsibility of all who work with children and you need to be aware of your school's policy for recording and reporting suspected abuse. Records will need to be kept of what pupils have said and when they said it, as well as notes, dates and times of any meetings that have taken place between the school and social services. If a pupil reports anything that is a cause for concern, the school needs to make sure it is followed up.

Adults who work with children also need to protect themselves by making sure that they are never on their own with individual children for any length of time or, if they have to be, that they are in an area that is open to others.

Investigating protection and behaviour policies

List the different ways in which your school protects both children and adults through the use of safe working practices. You may need to look at your school's child protection and behaviour policies.
How to encourage children to be aware of their own bodies and understand their right not to be abused

All children have a right to be safe and feel protected. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was signed by the UK in 1989, sets out the rights of all children to be treated equally and fairly. These include:

- The right of all children to grow up in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.
- The right to be as healthy as possible.
- The right to grow and develop to the best of their ability.
- The right to live in a safe environment.

Children must be protected from things that threaten to infringe these rights. This means that forms of abuse or abduction, taking them out of school without cause or making them work on activities harmful to their health must be prevented.

Children need to be taught how to keep safe in a number of different ways. As well as encouraging their awareness of health and safety issues, you should support their development by helping them to have a positive self-image. Children need to have plenty of opportunities and encouragement as they grow up to develop their independence and learn about their likes and dislikes. They should also be aware that they have a right to be safe and what to do if they do not feel safe. If you are talking to pupils about their bodies, using activities you have planned with the teacher, be aware that people use different terms to describe body parts and functions, such as going to the toilet, when speaking to children. If pupils confide in you and tell you what has happened to them, they may need time or additional help to use the right language or to draw what has happened. Pupils should be given information about organisations that exist to protect them, such as the NSPCC, Childline, Kidscape and in Scotland Children 1st (formally SSPCC).

Keys to good practice
Keeping pupils safe

- Ensure that pupils are taught to keep themselves safe.
- Encourage pupils to talk about their worries and speak to others.
- Use age-appropriate language when speaking to pupils.
- Never promise not to tell others if a pupil discloses that they have been abused.
- Set an example by encouraging co-operation and positive behaviour.

Supporting positive self-image and awareness of rights

How does your school encourage positive self-images in pupils? What kinds of activities or discussions might staff encourage in order to develop pupils’ awareness of their rights? Investigate the different forms of support that might be available through outside organisations to help with this.
The importance of consistently and fairly applied boundaries and rules for children’s behaviour

It is important that all staff are consistent when managing pupils’ behaviour (see Unit 19). Children need to have boundaries that they can understand and which are regularly reinforced by adults. If it is not clear to them how they are expected to behave or if adults give them conflicting messages, children become confused and upset, and find it hard to know how to behave next time. Although all children will test boundaries for behaviour, if they are met with the same response each time they will be less likely to repeat it. Rules should be appropriate for the age or ability of the child and the language used should make the expectations of adults clear.

When managing pupils’ behaviour, be careful of stereotyping or making assumptions about how they will behave. If pupils are expected to behave well or badly, they will usually live up to the expectation.

Case study K21

Applying boundaries and rules

Barbara is working in Reception (P1) as a teaching assistant. There is also a work experience student and a parent helper, as well as the class teacher. This afternoon, Barbara notices that the student, who is watching pupils in the outside area with her, is allowing five pupils in the sand and water when the rule is for four. When Barbara asks her about it, she replies that the pupils were upset when she had told them only four at a time and wanted to be together. She also tells Barbara that she has not allowed James and Hanif to use the bikes because ‘they always terrorise the others’.

- Should Barbara say anything to the student about what she has told the pupils?
- Why is it important that the adults in the class give pupils the same messages?
- What might have been a more appropriate way of managing James and Hanif?

How to respond to children’s challenging behaviour

Children who display challenging behaviour need to know what will happen if they regularly and persistently do this. As well as consistent boundaries, managed by all staff and agreed through school policies, there should also be age-appropriate sanctions. Be aware that what may deter younger children may not always work for older ones.

Portfolio activity K22

Managing inappropriate behaviour in different age groups

Consider the sanctions used in your school for managing inappropriate behaviour. Do they vary in line with different age groups? If not, are some more effective than others at deterring pupils of different ages? Give reasons for your answer.
Safety issues and concerns when taking children out of the setting

You need to be aware of safety issues when taking pupils out of school. If you are taking a large number of pupils on an outing or residential trip, a member of staff should undertake a risk assessment beforehand. This means that they will check what kinds of risks there might be and the likelihood of the risk occurring. The level of risk may be dependent on a number of factors:

- the adult/child ratio
- where you are going
- how you will get there
- your planned activities on arrival.

The facilities will need to be checked to make sure they are adequate for the needs of the pupils, for example, if you are taking a child with a disability or Additional Support for Learning needs. As well as a risk assessment, preparations need to include other considerations. A trip must always be planned thoroughly so that the adults are prepared for whatever happens. Preparations include the need to:

- seek and gain parental consent
- arrange for suitable safe transport
- take a first aid kit and a first aider with you
- take appropriate clothing for the activity or weather
- make lists of adults and the pupils for whom they will be responsible
- give information sheets to all helpers, including timings and any safety information
- make sure that pupils you have concerns about are in your group rather than with a parent.

Portfolio activity

Identifying safety issues for trips

Outline the different safety issues you need to be prepared for when undertaking each of the following:

- a Reception class trip to the farm
- a Year 2 trip by train to a local museum
- a Year 4 visit to a Tudor castle and gardens
- a Year 6 five-day trip to the Isle of Wight.

Legislation, guidelines and policies which form the basis for action to safeguard children

The Every Child Matters guidelines, which led to the Children Act 2004, came about as a direct result of the Laming Report following death of Victoria Climbié. The report was highly critical of the way in which the Climbié case was handled and made
108 recommendations to overhaul child protection in the UK. The main points that emerged were that:

- There should be a much closer working relationship between agencies such as health professionals, schools and welfare services.
- There should be a central database containing records of all children and whether they are known to different services.
- There should be an independent children's commissioner for England to protect children and young people's rights. A children's commissioner for Scotland has been in post for several years.
- There should be a children and families board, which is chaired by a senior government minister.
- Ofsted will set a framework that will monitor children's services.

The Children's Act 2004 required that these recommendations became a legal requirement and as a result the Every Child Matters framework was introduced to implement the Act and the wider reform programme.

(For a full outline of the Laming Report, see www.victoria-climbie-inquiry.org.uk.)

For your portfolio...

A good way of producing evidence for this unit is to go for a health and safety walkabout with your assessor. You can point out any hazards and carry out your own safety check of facilities and equipment in all areas of your school. This could include fire extinguishers and exits, first aid kits, access to first aid, how the school routinely checks equipment and stores hazardous materials, and any accidents you have recorded. You could record the walkabout, include it as evidence in your portfolio and ask your assessor to use it as part of the assessment process. They might ask witnesses in school whether you always follow health, safety and security procedures yourself and encourage pupils to do the same. For the school's policies for dealing with health emergencies, including allergic reactions, you could carry out a simulated activity showing how you would respond to different symptoms.

For the child abuse section of the unit, you may need to have a professional discussion with your assessor to show that you know and understand the different indicators of abuse and how you should respond to any concerns you may have.

Websites
- www.barnardos.org.uk – organisation dedicated to child welfare
- www.bbc.co.uk/health/firstaid – guide to first aid
- www.hse.gov.uk – Health and Safety Executive
- www.kidscape.org.uk – a charity to prevent bullying and child abuse
- www.nch.org.uk – The Children's Charity
- www.redcross.org – The Red Cross
- www.scotland.gov.uk/childrenscharter – the children's charter for Scotland
www.sja.org.uk – St John Ambulance
www.teachernet.gov.uk – gives a list of charities that work together with schools
www.unicef.org.uk

Contact details
helpline@nspcc.org.uk
nspcc helpline: 0808 800 5000