



COSHH and Hazardous Substances Policy

Wayland Stables Care Farm

Policy owner: Jake Payne, Business Manager

Approval date: 06/08/2026

Effective date: 01/09/2026

Next review: August 2027, or sooner after an exposure, spill, health-surveillance concern, new substance/process or change in law or safety information

No assessment, no use: A hazardous substance or process must not be introduced, mixed, decanted or used until it is approved, recorded and assessed, with controls, storage, emergency action, competence and disposal arrangements in place. A safety data sheet is evidence for an assessment; it is not the assessment itself.

1. Policy statement

WSCF will prevent exposure to substances hazardous to health or, where prevention is not reasonably practicable, adequately control exposure using the hierarchy of control. Controls protect staff, students, adult participants, visitors, contractors, animals and the environment.

2. Scope and definitions

COSHH covers substances/products and substances generated by work, including cleaning/disinfecting products, paints, oils, fuels where harmful exposure applies, welding/exhaust fumes, wood/feed/soil/animal dusts, moulds, microorganisms, animal waste, zoonoses, pesticides/biocides and veterinary products where applicable. Hazard may arise by breathing, skin/eye contact, ingestion, injection, infection or oxygen displacement.

Lead, asbestos and radioactive substances have separate regimes; flammable/explosive and environmental risks also require DSEAR, fire, waste or other assessment. COSHH is applied alongside—not instead of—those duties.

3. Roles

Role	Required action
Business Owners	Provide competent advice, resources, storage/engineering controls, health surveillance and assurance.
Jake Payne - Business Manager	Approve purchasing/processes; own the register and assessment system; ensure training, monitoring, contractor coordination, incident response and review.
COSHH assessor / competent adviser	Identify hazards and exposure; select controls; define monitoring/health surveillance and emergency arrangements; review evidence.
Staff and volunteers	Use only approved products/processes, follow assessment and label, check controls/PPE, supervise students, report symptoms/spills/defects and never improvise mixtures.
Contractors/suppliers	Provide current safety and method information, coordinate exposures and comply with site controls; remove waste/products as agreed.

4. Approval and inventory

1. Before purchase or acceptance, identify the task and consider eliminating the substance or using a safer form, method or smaller quantity.
2. Obtain current supplier label/safety data and technical instructions; identify generated substances and biological agents even where no SDS exists.
3. A competent person completes the task-specific COSHH assessment and any linked DSEAR, pesticide, veterinary, environmental or individual assessment.
4. Enter the approved substance/process in the register with location, owner, maximum quantity, assessment/SDS version, controls, expiry/review and disposal route.
5. Brief/train users and verify controls before first use. Unapproved donations, decanted products and household products brought from home are not used.

5. Assessment standard

Assessment field	Required consideration
Hazard	Classification/health effects, generated dust/fume/microorganism, sensitisation, infection, carcinogen or workplace exposure limit.
Exposure	Who, route, frequency, duration, quantity/concentration, task, bystanders, foreseeable misuse, spill, maintenance and waste.
People at particular risk	Young people, pregnancy, asthma/allergy, skin disease, immunocompromise, disability/SEND affecting understanding or PPE, and animals/food interfaces.
Controls	Eliminate/substitute; enclosure/segregation; local/general ventilation; automation/wet method; safe system and restricted access; hygiene; PPE last.

Assessment field	Required consideration
Verification	Exposure monitoring, examination/testing of controls, health surveillance, supervision, training and competence.
Emergency/disposal	First aid, eyewash, spill/fire/release, 999/poisons advice, gate/access, contaminated waste, environmental release and incident reporting.

6. Hierarchy and adequacy of control

Prioritise elimination and substitution, then engineering and collective controls. Reduce quantity, duration and people exposed; separate clean/dirty routes; use suitable ventilation or wet methods; and establish safe handling/cleaning. PPE supplements rather than replaces reliable collective controls.

Controls are adequate only when they meet legal exposure limits where applicable, apply good control practice, prevent skin/ingestion/infection as well as inhalation, and remain effective in real farm conditions. Never use smell alone to judge safety.

7. Farm biological and dust hazards

Assess animal dander, feed/grain/straw/wood/soil/compost dust, fungal spores, endotoxins, manure, urine, birth products, contaminated water and zoonoses such as leptospirosis or cryptosporidium according to actual animals/tasks. Apply ventilation, low-dust/wet methods, exclusion during high-exposure work, handwashing, cover of cuts, suitable clothing/PPE and cleaning without dry sweeping or compressed air where this spreads dust.

Students do not handle veterinary medicines, pesticides, concentrated disinfectants, sharps, birth products, visibly ill animals or high-exposure cleaning unless a specific lawful assessment, educational purpose, close supervision and controls permit the limited task.

8. Storage, segregation and labels

Store minimum quantities in secure, ventilated and signed locations suitable for compatibility, temperature, fire/environmental risk and unauthorised access. Separate incompatible products, food/feed, medicines and PPE; use bunding or secondary containment where required.

Keep products in original containers where practicable. Any permitted decanting uses a compatible closed container immediately labelled with identity and hazards; never use food/drink containers. Keys and emergency access are controlled; inventory and expiry/leak checks are recorded.

9. Use, hygiene and PPE

6. Follow the assessment, product label and authorised dilution/mixing order. Never mix cleaning chemicals unless explicitly assessed and instructed. Keep containers closed, use measured dispensing and protect drains/animals/food.

7. Select PPE for the substance, route, task and wearer; ensure fit/compatibility, training, storage, cleaning, replacement and disposal. Tight-fitting respiratory protective equipment requires suitable selection and face-fit testing; facial hair or poor fit invalidates protection.
8. No eating, drinking, vaping, smoking, phone use or hand-to-mouth activity in contaminated zones. Provide suitable handwashing and separate clean welfare arrangements; alcohol hand gel is not a universal substitute for washing after animal/manure contact.

10. Maintenance, monitoring and health surveillance

Examine and test engineering controls at legally appropriate intervals and after repair/change; keep records. Monitor exposure where needed to demonstrate control or where failure could cause serious health effects.

Provide health surveillance when legally indicated and likely to protect health, using competent occupational-health arrangements. Handle results confidentially; act promptly on symptoms or trends. Staff report breathing difficulty, wheeze, dermatitis, eye symptoms, fever/flu-like illness, gastrointestinal illness or other suspected work-related effects.

11. Spill, exposure and emergency response

9. Stop work, warn others, isolate the area and avoid creating further exposure. Do not enter a contaminated area without assessed competence and equipment.
10. For serious breathing difficulty, collapse, poisoning, corrosive injury or other immediate danger call 999. Use eyewash/water, fresh air or other first aid only as directed by the assessment, label/SDS and training; do not induce vomiting.
11. Remove contaminated clothing safely, protect helpers, prevent spread and use the approved spill kit/method only if trained and the release is within the plan. Escalate major, unknown, gaseous or environmental releases.
12. Provide responders with product/process, SDS/label, exposure route/time and site hazards; open the padlocked gate. Preserve containers and records.
13. Notify the manager, safeguarding lead where a student/adult is involved, commissioner/parent as appropriate, insurer/regulator/environmental authority under assessed thresholds, and record/review before restart.

12. Disposal and environmental protection

Do not pour products, medicines, pesticides, oils or contaminated washings into drains, soil or water unless the authorised disposal instruction expressly permits it. Classify, contain, label and transfer waste through an authorised route with records where required.

Empty packaging may remain hazardous. Deal with sharps, animal medicines, contaminated PPE/absorbents and biological waste under their specific procedures. Contractors do not leave unidentified materials on site.

13. Information, training and students

Users receive understandable information on hazards, routes/effects, controls, labels, SDS access, PPE, hygiene, spills, symptoms and reporting; practical competence is checked. Refresh after change, incident or evidence of poor control.

Students receive task-level instruction and supervision appropriate to age, SEND and understanding. They are not asked to interpret an SDS or carry legal responsibility. Participation is stopped where a critical control, supervision or accessible instruction is absent.

14. Records and assurance

Maintain the substance/process register, assessments, SDS/version history, purchase/quantity/location, training, control examinations, exposure monitoring, health-surveillance arrangements, incidents, waste records and actions. Retain health-exposure records for applicable statutory periods.

Jake Payne audits register completeness, unapproved products, assessment/SDS currency, storage, control tests, PPE, symptoms/incidents and action closure at least termly; Business Owners review annually.

Appendix A - COSHH register fields

Product/process and supplier; task; hazard/classification; generated substance/biological agent; SDS date/version; location and maximum quantity; assessment reference; users/restrictions; engineering controls; PPE/RPE; spill/first aid; disposal; control-test/health-surveillance needs; owner; review/expiry; withdrawal date.

Appendix B - User check

14. Approved and assessed? Label intact? Correct task/dilution? Ventilation/guards working? Others excluded? PPE correct and fitted? Hygiene/spill kit ready? Waste route known? If any answer is no: stop, secure and ask the supervisor.

Sources and related guidance

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH): overview and assessment guidance — Health and Safety Executive.

COSHH in agriculture and COSHH Essentials for farmers — Health and Safety Executive.

COSHH and agricultural workers: key messages — Health and Safety Executive.

WSCF Health and Safety, Whole-Site Risk, Fire, First Aid and Emergency Response policies — Wayland Stables Care Farm.

Approval record

Approved by	Role	Signature	Date
Jake Payne	Business Manager	Jake Payne	06/08/2026

Next review due: August 2027, or sooner under the review triggers in this policy.