



The John Moore Primary School
&
Little Foxes Playgroup

Display Screen Equipment

Self-Assessment

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Other linked policies	4
3	Self-Assessment	4
3.1	User Details	5
3.2	Fixed Workstation	5
3.3	Mobile DSE	14

1 Introduction

The John Moore Primary School/Little Foxes Playgroup's Governing Body and Headteacher recognise and accept their responsibilities under law and also under Gloucestershire County Council delegation for local management of schools.

As responsible employers and/or persons in control of premises, the requirement to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and others affected by its activities is acknowledged.

This Risk Assessment should be read in conjunction with the Main School Risk Assessment.

It is written with reference to Gloucestershire County Council SHE Guidance Note on Display Screen Equipment.

2 Other linked policies

- Health & Safety Policy

3 Self-Assessment

The self-assessment process is an important task for DSE users to undertake. Completion will enable users to identify and control risks to themselves as a consequence of using DSE. Included below are checklists for Fixed DSE Workstation and another for Mobile DSE.

Tick the answer that applies to the user's situation and identify any actions to take.

Make any notes under each section and once the checklist has been completed, record any actions arising in the Action Plan.

Users may be in a position to put in place any additional controls required; other users may need to liaise with an appropriate person depending on their circumstances and what is required.

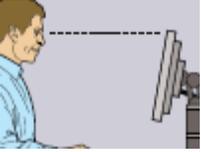
Once the additional controls have been secured, the user must update the assessment.

3.1 User Details

USERS DETAILS	
Name _____	Occupation _____
Location _____	Date of assessment _____
Line manager _____	_____
Background information (if applicable) and summary of any conditions and OH advice -	

3.2 Fixed Workstation

Display Screens			
Is the text size comfortable to read?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	It is possible to adjust the font size on most office software. It is also normally possible to adjust the 'zoom'. If you do not know how to do this, seek advice.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust font size	
Are the characters clear and readable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	The screen should be cleaned regularly and colours comfortable to the eye.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Make sure the screen is clean. Check the text and background colours work well together.	
Is the image stable, i.e. free from flicker and jitter?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	Try different screen colours to reduce flicker, e.g. darker background and lighter text.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Check user settings. If problems still exist, report this.	
Are the brightness and contrast controls adjustable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	Separate adjustable controls are not essential provided the user can read the screen easily at all times. Some monitors have buttons to adjust settings.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the screen.	
Is the screen free from glare and reflections?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	Use a mirror to see where the reflections are coming from. You may need to move the screen or the desk away from the source of reflection. Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare and reflections. Adjustable window coverings may be of help.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust position of screen and/or desk.	

Does the screen swivel and tilt? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	Swivel and tilt need not be built in but you can add a swivel and tilt mechanism. If screen tilts but does not swivel it may be possible to angle position of entire assembly using a docking station or arm. The monitor should be adjusted to a suitable position.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	If you are not able to suitably adjust the screen, ask about a replacement.	
Does the screen adjust in height so the top of screen is at or slightly below eye level? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	If you are using a standard monitor you may require a suitable stand in order to adjust the screen to a suitable height.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the screen height.	

Notes –

Keyboards			
Is the keyboard separate from the screen? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action need. Go to next question	This is a requirement, unless the task makes it impracticable (e.g. where there is a need to use portable equipment).
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Request a keyboard.	
Does the keyboard tilt? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Ensure the tilt is comfortable for your needs. Go to next question.	Most keyboards have feet which can be used to adjust the tilt.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Replace keyboard.	
Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed if this is the keying position.	Try pushing the display screen further back to create more room for the keyboard, hands and wrists.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the position of the keyboard or the chair	

		height if you are working like this: 	
Do you have good keyboard technique?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Ensure hands are in a neutral position when typing. Do not hit the keys too hard and do not overstretch the fingers.	
Are the characters on the keys easily readable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Keyboards should be kept clean. If characters still cannot be read, the keyboard may need modifying or replacing.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Clean keyboard if necessary or request a replacement.	
Notes –			

Mouse / Trackball etc.			
Is the mouse/trackball etc. suitable for the task it is used for?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	A standard mouse is usually adequate for most general office software requirements. If you have special requirements (e.g. ergonomic mouse) speak to your line manager about replacing the mouse. 
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Seek advice from your line manager in the first instance.	
Is the device positioned close to you? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed if the mouse is placed close. Go to next question.	Most devices are best placed as close as possible, e.g. right beside the keyboard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Try to prevent arm overreaching ▪ Do not leave your hand on the device when it is not being used ▪ Aim for a relaxed arm and wrist
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust positioning in accordance with guidance provided if you are stretching like this. 	
Is there support for your wrist and forearm when using a mouse/trackball?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	In most general office situations, support can be gained from, for example, the desk surface or arm of a chair or a mouse mat with in-built gel pad. If not, a separate supporting device may help. The aim is to find a comfortable working position with the device.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust as necessary	
Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	See if cleaning is required (e.g. of mouse ball and rollers). To clean the mouse rollers, remove cover and ball from underside of mouse, clean debris from rollers and re-assemble.

	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Follow guidance provided. If the device is still not working request a replacement.	Check the work surface is suitable. A mouse mat may be needed.
Can you easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of pointer?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Ensure settings are correct. Go to the next question.	Mouse settings can be adjusted using the Mouse Properties menus. To locate the Mouse Properties within Windows, go to Start, Control Panel, Mouse.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Follow guidance provided. If you encounter difficulties, seek assistance.	

Notes –

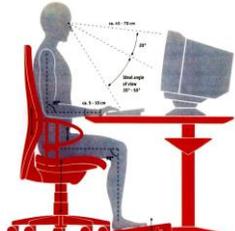
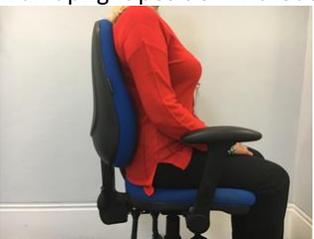
Software

Is the software suitable for the task?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Software should help the user carry out the task, minimise stress and be user-friendly. Software should respond quickly and clearly to user input, with adequate feedback, such as clear help messages. The standard Microsoft Office software is generally considered adequate for most general office functions. Consider training in Office suite.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	If you need training in any of the MS Office products (Word, Excel, Outlook etc.) or any specialised software products, speak to your line manager in the first instance and look on SAP for training.	

Notes –

Furniture

Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, papers etc? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	The desk size must be suitable for purpose but users must be realistic about the number of items you can place directly in front of you. Create more room by keeping clear desks. There should be some scope for flexible rearrangement.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Take all reasonable steps to make the available space work for your requirements. If you feel there is inadequate space, speak to your line manager.	
Does the workstation allow	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	The standard for desks should be:

adequate clearance for postural changes?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Check that you have adequate room and if necessary measure this space. If you feel there is inadequate space, speak to your line manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height: 740mm ± 20 mm • Depth: 800mm • Legroom width: 850mm. <p>This will provide adequate clearances for thighs, knees, lower legs and feet under the work surface and between furniture components (e.g. pedestals). Move any obstructions from under the desk.</p>
Can you comfortably reach all the equipment and papers you need to use?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	A document holder may be needed, positioned to minimise uncomfortable head and eye movements. It is not a requirement to have a document holder and is of most use for persons undertaking copy-typing functions.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Rearrange equipment, papers etc to bring frequently used things within easy reach.	
Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Consider mats or blotters to reduce reflections and glare.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Make necessary adjustments in line with guidance provided.	
Is your chair suitable and stable? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	<p>For a chair to be suitable and stable, it must have a working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seat height adjustment; • the seat back should be adjustable in height and tilt; • swivel mechanism; • 5 castors. <p>The chair may need repairing or replacing if you are uncomfortable or unable to use the adjustment mechanisms.</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Discuss with your line manager.	
Is the chair adjusted correctly? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed if you are sat correctly like this. Go to next question.	<p>You should be able to carry out your work sitting comfortably in an upright position without slouching or slumping forward.</p> 
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the chair if you have a poor sitting position like these, and answer the question again. 	

Is the small of your back supported by the chair's backrest?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	The user should have a straight back, supported by the chair, with relaxed shoulders. The curve of the chair's backrest should fit into the natural curve of the back.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the chair and re-answer the question.	
Are your forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the VDU? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Adjust the chair height to get your arms in the right position, then adjust the screen height, if necessary. Ensure the top of the screen is level with your eyes, or slightly below, so that you hold your head in a neutral position. Consider changing the height of the screen and if necessary use a monitor stand.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust the chair and/or VDU and re-answer the question.	
Are your feet flat on the floor, without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	When the height of your chair is adjusted correctly to achieve a horizontal position for your forearms, it is imported to check that your feet are flat on the floor, with minimal pressure on the backs of your legs. If your feet cannot reach the floor a footrest may help, but this may be because the chair is too deep for your height so will need replacing.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	The chair may not be appropriate for your height or you may require a footrest. Discuss this with your line manager.	
If standing, can you achieve good posture?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	The same DSE requirements apply to standing desks, which means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen is roughly an arm's length. • Top of screen at or slightly below eye level; • The keyboard is just below elbow height so forearms are horizontal. • The mouse on the same surface and close to the keyboard. If these requirements are not achievable the workstation should not be used or equipment provided (e.g. monitor stand or adjustable monitor arm).
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Discuss with your line manager.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Discuss with your line manager.	

Notes –

Environment

Is there enough room to change position and vary movement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Space is needed to move, stretch and fidget. There should be sufficient space to sit down and get up without difficulty. Consider reorganising the office layout and check for obstructions. Cables should be tidy and not a trip or snag hazard.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Make adjustments to work space as required. Liaise with you line manager if necessary.	
Is the lighting suitable, e.g. not too bright or too dim to work comfortably?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Lighting should illuminate the entire room. If necessary you should control light levels, e.g. by adjusting window blinds or light switches. Reposition the workstation if necessary so neither the screen nor the user are directly facing windows or bright lights. Consider shading or repositioning light sources or providing local lighting.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Make adjustments to lighting as required. Liaise with your colleagues and/or line manager if necessary.	

Notes –

Laptops used at a fixed workstation (see Mobile DSE Checklist for laptops used in different locations)

When using your laptop is a suitable desk and adjustable chair available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	If you work at a fixed desk the above checklist will apply and should be completed.	If you are using a laptop sat at a table without other equipment, this is only suitable for short term use (less than 2 hours) and no longer than 30 minutes without rest breaks (of 2-5 minutes). If you do need to use the laptop in your car, a low table or on your lap because there is no other place to work, this should be for very short tasks only (< 15 minutes).
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Do not use for extended periods.	
Do you have access to a docking station?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	For prolonged use a docking station or docking bar should be set up which allows the user to connect the laptop to a standard screen, keyboard and mouse.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	See next question.	
Do you have a laptop riser and external keyboard and mouse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	The small keyboard and screen of laptops make it more difficult to achieve a comfortable working posture. To prevent health risks you must connect the laptop to a standard screen or use a laptop stand and a separate keyboard and mouse if you intend working for more than 2 hours.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	This is essential for extended laptop use at a desk or table. You should speak to your manager about providing suitable and sufficient equipment.	

Notes –

Final Questions			
Has the checklist covered all the problems you may have working with your VDU?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	If you need assistance in addressing any further problems, speak to your line manager in the first instance.	
Having implemented changes from this assessment and given time for them to have effect, do you experience any discomfort or other symptoms which you attribute to working with your VDU?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	If you are suffering ill-health seek medical advice from your GP or contact Occupational Health who will discuss your concerns further with you.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	No further action needed. Go to next question.	
Are you aware of your entitlement to eye and eyesight testing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Your employer will pay the cost of eyesight tests and contribute to the cost of the glasses if required for DSE work..
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Speak to your Headteacher/ Manager.	
Do you take regular breaks working away from the VDU?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed.	Short, frequent breaks are recommended and are better than longer, less frequent ones. Take regular exercise and ensure you take a lunch break away from the office as even a short walk will be beneficial to your health.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Adjust working pattern to accommodate periods of work away from the screen as far as is reasonably practicable.	
Notes –			

3.3 Mobile DSE

Laptops			
<p>How do you use your laptop for work tasks?</p> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Office set up with a separate monitor, keyboard and mouse. <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop stand with keyboard and mouse. <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop used directly sat at a table or desk. <input type="checkbox"/> On a low chair and table. <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop used when stood at a desk/ work-bench. <input type="checkbox"/> On your lap. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<p>The flexibility of laptops means they can be used in different ways.</p> <p>Think about how much time you spend at each and select all those that apply.</p>	<p>Working on a laptop will lead to poor neck posture potentially leading to pain and headaches.</p> <p>If a workstation is available (a desk, adjustable chair, a separate screen, external keyboard and mouse) then always use it.</p>
<p>Do you know how to use the laptop ergonomically?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<p>Follow the guidance and move on to the next question.</p>	<p>When working in different ways, it is not always possible to use a chair with the kinds of adjustments used in offices, but there are some ergonomic principles that can be applied. A basic ergonomic arrangement with a laptop (or tablet) can be remembered by EEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyes - use a laptop stand/riser bringing the screen up to a height where the top of the screen is approximately at eye-height; • Elbows - sit at a height that means the external keyboard is at approximately elbow height; • Legs - sit in a chair so the undersides of your thighs are supported and that your feet are flat on the floor or supported by a footrest.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>See the guidance and if necessary speak to your Headteacher/ Manager about improvements and providing equipment if necessary.</p>	
<p>Can working directly on your laptop on a table/desk</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<p>Implement the guidance so far as is reasonably practicable.</p>	<p>Aim to minimise the amount of time you spend working in non-optimal conditions.</p>

be minimised by effective work planning?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	If you are unable to minimise time spent on the laptop, you should consider the working arrangement and the equipment you need.	If you have access to suitable workstation with a monitor, keyboard and mouse, make use of it. If using a laptop sat at a table without other equipment, this is only suitable for short term use.
If you work from home, what working arrangement do you have?	<input type="checkbox"/> desk <input type="checkbox"/> adjustable chair <input type="checkbox"/> external monitor, keyboard and mouse <input type="checkbox"/> dining table and chair <input type="checkbox"/> laptop stand <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above	Select all that apply.	If you choose to work at home for significant periods, you should set up an optimal working arrangement as far possible (see EEL above). This includes a suitable place to carry out work (e.g. desk or table) with sufficient working space and equipment.
Do you work with your laptop when stood up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Follow the guidance and take regular breaks.	The same requirements apply to sustained DSE work whilst standing, which means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top of screen at eye level; • The keyboard is at elbow height so forearms are horizontal. • The mouse on the same surface and close to the keyboard. If these requirements are not achievable equipment should be provided (e.g. laptop stand) or you should limit the time spent working directly on the laptop. Users should also avoid excessive standing and alternate between sitting and standing. Guidelines are users should limit standing work to 2 - 4 hours a day.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Go to next question.	
Do you work with your laptop directly on your knees?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Follow the guidance and take regular breaks.	Working with your laptop on your knees leads to poor neck posture and should be avoided where possible. If you do, this should be for very short tasks only (less than 15 minutes).
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Go to next question.	
Are you able to take appropriate rest breaks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	If you are working in less than optimal arrangements, it is vital that you take regular breaks.

	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Follow the guidance and take regular breaks.	<p>GOOD: Laptop or tablet with external keyboard, raised using stand. Suitable for: Daily/long term use. Rest breaks: 5-10 mins / hr</p> <p>MODERATE: Laptop used directly on a table. Suitable for: Short term use and no longer than 30 minutes without rest break. Rest breaks: 2-5 mins / 30 mins</p> <p>POOR: Laptop on knees Suitable for: Very short term use and no longer than 15 minutes without rest break. Rest breaks: 2-5 mins / 15 mins</p>
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Notes –

Tablets			
Are you required or expected to do sustained work on a tablet? (i.e. longer than an occasional email / text.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	See guidance.	Touch screen devices are best used for occasional use as a notepad, as an aide-memoire or to record against a checklist or pro-forma. Aim to do longer text entry on a PC or laptop.
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	If this is not relevant ignore this section.	
If you use a tablet for your work, is an external keyboard, case/stand and (where applicable) an external input device provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Set up your tablet as ergonomically as you can by using a stand / case, keyboard and input device. For any sustained work you should at least use a case or riser which raises the screen away from horizontal, and an external keyboard. Some tablets also support a cursor and external input device. However, standing a tablet up can help make the tablet screen easier to see, but it will still lead to poor neck posture. Using a stylus is a useful way of varying wrist posture if you are having to do a lot of tapping on a tablet screen.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	See guidance.	

			
Do you have to hold your tablet while you do significant amounts of screen selecting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	See guidance.	If you move about / stand while holding a tablet as part of your work detachable Grips or 'Handles' may help to reduce strain in the wrist and arm from extended periods of holding a tablet.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	No further action.	

Notes –

Transporting Equipment			
Do you have a suitable case or bag for carrying equipment and other work items?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No further action needed. Go to next question.	Rucksacks are preferable to single straps. Single strap bags should only be used for lighter loads. Wheeled bags are an option for heavy loads but don't be tempted to put too much in – at some point you will probably still have to carry it. Take unnecessary items out of your bag before travelling.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Request a bag.	

Notes –