Health & Safety Policy

Audience:	REAch2 Staff Local Governing Bodies Cluster Boards Trustees
Ratified:	REAch2 Risk & Audit Committee October 2024
Other related policies:	Please refer to Freshdesk procedures
Policy owner:	Nic Carstens – Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing
Review:	October 2025

At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones.



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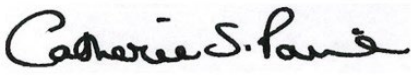
Statement of Intent

We believe that the health, safety and welfare of our children, staff and visitors is of fundamental importance. Good Health & Safety management is not a bolt on, it must form part of our daily business and be enshrined in everything we do. The Executive Team and Trustees will lead with integrity and ensure our systems and processes are conducive to a safe working environment.

Ensuring the safety of our workplace is the responsibility of us **all**. I urge all staff to read and fully understand their duties within this policy and its associated procedures and to reach out to your line manager should you have any questions or concerns over any aspect of your safety or the safety of others.



Cathie Paine

Chief Executive Officer



Gavin Robert

Chair of the Trust Board

Health & Safety Procedures

To support this policy there are a suite of procedure documents available on Freshdesk knowledge base. Procedures will be available for the below aspects of Health & Safety management, but more may be added to over time. Leaders are encouraged to check the Knowledge base pages for up-to-date information. Procedures will, for the purpose of this policy, be treated as minimum expectations, which must be attained by all schools and the Central Team.

Procedure ref	Name
HSP001	Allergens procedure
HSP002	Display Screen Equipment procedure
HSP003	Working at height procedure
HSP004	Manual Handling procedure
HSP005	Accident management procedure
HSP006	Fire safety at work procedure
HSP007	Asbestos management procedure
HSP008	Young workers procedure
HSP009	First aid at work procedure
HSP010	Risk assessment procedure
HSP011	Security management procedure
HSP012	Managing hazardous substances procedure
HSP013	New and expectant mothers' guidance
HSP014	Adverse weather procedure
HSP015	Lone working procedure
HSP016	Personal protective equipment
HSP017	Safe use of tools and equipment
HSP018	Defect reporting procedure
HSP019	Smoke free procedure
HSP020	Sun safety procedure
HSP021	Infection control and communicable diseases procedure
HSP022	Blank
HSP023	Hazardous plants guidance
HSP024	Education visits and school trips procedure
HSP025	Playground and supervision procedure

HSPO26	Driving for work and use of minibuses procedure
HSPO27	Business continuity plan

Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees will:

- Act as critical friends, and as part of their oversight of Health and Safety arrangements, provide constructive review of current Health, Safety and Wellbeing.
- Hold accountable the performance of the Trust in meeting its statutory obligations.
- Support a positive safety culture, demonstrating strong commitment to managing Health and Safety within the Trust.

The Chief Executive Officer will:

- Retain overall accountability for the Health and Safety performance of the Trust.
- Take such measures as are needed to ensure that adequate resource is made available for the management of Health and Safety within the Trust.
- Ensure that where safety critical functions are delegated, they are effectively managed.
- Represent the Trust in matters of enforcement actions and lead on external communication to the public where required.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will:

- Support the CEO in the discharge of their Health and Safety obligations by ensuring that competent advice is made available.
- Provide such reasonable resource to the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing to ensure the effective management of Health and Safety matters.
- Be accountable for the day-to-day governance of Health and Safety within the Trust.
- Receive and review half termly reports on Health & Safety performance and take forward to the Executive Team any discussion or decision points.

The Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing (HHSW) will:

- Provide competent Health and Safety support and advice to REAch2 as defined by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Provide day to day operational Health and Safety guidance and support to REAch2 schools and Central Team.
- Update and be accountable for the Trust's R1 risk register and associated school risk register, working with schools and all stakeholders to ensure high level risks are documented and appropriate management controls implemented.
- Take a lead in the review and development of new safety and risk management processes as required.
- Ensure that all schools are subject to targeted reviews to assess the suitability of risk management arrangements.
- Ensure that all staff have received suitable and relevant safety training for their job role.

- Maintain and update a CORE suite of risk assessments, related to the operational aspects of the Trust's day-to-day business operation.
- Oversee the completion of online risk assessments, ensuring that actions are reviewed and closed within a reasonable timeframe.
- Maintain a suite of associated procedures linked to this policy and ensure that new procedures are created as required or following any serious incident.
- To provide such support as is necessary for the review of claims, acting as a critical link between the Trust's insurers and the schools.

The Head of Estates will:

- Ensure all buildings are managed to ensure that they meet the Trust's statutory duties, such as the undertaking of fire risk assessments, asbestos surveys and legionella assessments.
- Ensure that, where duties are the responsibility of schools, suitable governance is in place to track and report on compliance with the Trust's statutory obligations.
- Provide oversight and guidance to the Trust on matters related to property safety and construction related activities (CDM).
- Oversee and manage centrally procured contracts relating to property compliance i.e. fire safety, electrical safety, or other compliance related contracts.
- Ensure through the programmed inspection process that all schools are visited on at least a termly basis to ensure basic levels of safety are maintained.
- Ensure that Parago statutory compliance data is monitored, and that schools' daily, weekly and monthly checks are recorded.

Heads of Service will:

- Ensure Staff are provided with a suitable induction and training for their role, providing relevant information on safety procedures.
- Ensure that any accidents that occur within their team are promptly reported via the Trust's online incident management system and in the case of serious incidents, notified to both the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing and COO.
- Champion good safety practice and embrace a positive attitude to safety management.
- Ensure that activities that go beyond the Trust's 'core risk assessment' are adequately risk assessed, and that risk assessments are shared with relevant staff members.
- Report without delay to the Headteacher or line manager any situation or practice that may have the potential to cause harm or loss.

Headteachers will:

- Be accountable for delegated Health and Safety functions within their school(s)
- Ensure where duties are disseminated, they are appropriately managed and resourced.
- Be a champion of Health and Safety.
- Ensure that new staff are provided with adequate Health and Safety induction, including the completion of the Core e-learning modules and site-specific information on fire safety arrangements.
- Ensure that all staff receive safety related training, in line with their job role and competence.
- Ensure that risk assessments are completed (where required) and reviewed at suitable periods in line with the Risk Assessment Procedure.

- Consult with the Central Health & Safety Team on school risk, ensuring that they are added to the school Risk Register by the Central Team
- Ensure that consultation with the Estates Team is undertaken on matters of premises safety and that access is permitted for any required safety improvement works.
- Ensure that no works are commissioned without a Project Consent Form being submitted and all construction related risks given due consideration.
- Ensure that staff are updated on Health and Safety matters that are communicated via the Central Team.
- Ensure the activities of the school site team are effectively managed, ensuring that statutory and compliance requirements (set out in Parago by the Estates Team) are complied with.
- Ensure a suitable number of first aiders are trained in relation to the size of the site.

The School Office Coordinators will:

- Act as primary point of contact for the Central Team on matters of Health & Safety, providing a critical link between the Central and school management teams.
- Assist the Health & Safety Team to address matters related to operational Health & Safety, such as to gather incident data, risk assessment information or to support with communicating updates on safety management systems.

The Premises leads will:

- Ensure that the Trust's compliance inspections and tests are undertaken in line with the Estates Team's online estates management system.
- Report to the Estates Team any serious property defect that has the potential to cause harm or impact on the operation of the school.
- Ensure that duties specified in the Trust's associated procedures are met.
- To ensure that defects reported by staff members or other school users are reviewed, prioritised and acted upon, to ensure that the workplace is kept safe.
- Where an incident occurs, take any necessary action to isolate or otherwise make the site safe for others.
- Ensure that they comply with the requirements set out in the Trust's associated Health & Safety procedures.

All Staff will:

- Always follow safety guidance and information provided, including any safety information provided as part of any training course.
- Never ignore an issue, if you see a situation that presents a risk to others, take action. The Trust will support any action taken to keep our staff and children safe.
- Never interfere or tamper with anything provided to ensure your safety or the safety of others. This may include removing barriers without consent or locking a fire door without understanding the consequences.
- Always report immediately to your manager any situation or process that you feel may be unsafe, or which may lead to injury to any person.
- Never undertake your work in a way that may expose others to unacceptable levels of risk.

- Where work may present a risk of injury, property damage or other such loss, ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken and agreed.
- Report injuries and losses immediately to your line manager or, in their absence, a senior staff member, ensuring a Freshdesk accident report is submitted.

Leadership Commitment

Supporting our own responsibilities within the Policy, the Trust will ensure that it leads Health and Safety effectively.

It is our leadership commitment to:

- ✓ Provide clear, visible and technically competent leadership for Health & Safety.
- ✓ Comply with all relevant statutory requirements, as a minimum.
- ✓ Proactively identify the hazards associated with our activities and remove risks where reasonably practicable to do so.
- ✓ Provide and implement effective arrangements to manage residual risks to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our workplaces are safe.
- ✓ Allocate suitable and sufficient resources to ensure health, safety and welfare is properly managed across the Trust.
- ✓ To work closely with our external stakeholders to ensure we communicate safety issues and campaign for the best learning environment possible.
- ✓ Openly share and promote this policy, and actively engage and communicate with staff, union representatives and governors.
- ✓ Always look for ways to improve our services and the safety of our buildings.
- ✓ Encourage staff to act where they feel there is a risk to our staff and pupils.

Governance Arrangements

The Trust will ensure that there is accountability for its management of Health & Safety. Governance arrangements will be put in place that ensure that full accountability is placed at all levels.

The Trust board will take overall strategic oversight of the Trust's Health and Safety performance. The Trust's Risk & Audit Committee will form a critical link between the Trust Board and operational teams, providing technical oversight of the Trust's overall safety performance. The Executive team will lead in providing strategic leadership on matters of operational risk, providing direction on day-today aspects of operational risk. For operational issues the Trust's Health & Safety Committee will lead in the review of incident trends, audit output and general issues that may impact on staff and children's safety. The Committee will feed into the Executive function and provide input into the formation on the Trust's Health & safety Forward Plan.

The Trust board will:

- Review and act upon the information provided to it by the Risk & Audit Committee to inform risk management decisions.
- Be the Trust's strategic decision maker on matters related to Health and Safety, working with the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing to agree and implement the Trust's forward plan.
- Review the resource provided for the management of Trust wide risks.
- Act critically to seek assurance on any matter of Health and Safety performance, where assurances may not be sufficient or forthcoming.
- For the practical review of Health & Safety performance the Trust's Risk & Audit Committee will take a lead in the review of overall performance, including the output from any agreed priority plan.

The Trust's Risk & Audit Committee will:

- Agree the Trust's Health & Safety Policy.
- Monitor the risk management processes to ensure mitigations are robust.
- Be informed of the Trust's Health and Safety audit programme and key findings.
- Be appraised of incidents reportable to the Health & Safety Executive under the 'Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)' guidelines as well as underlying trends in incident reports, being made aware of management's response.
- Ensure that there are adequate communication and co-operation channels between all levels of the Trust and relevant third parties, in the context of this policy.
- Seek assurance on central and school compliance with the Trust's e-learning management system and other mandated training.
- Monitor risks identified as part of the risk management cycle that present a significant risk to the school or wider Trust.
- Be informed of the Trust's overall estates compliance, to include an overview of the state of statutory tests and maintenance.
- Obtain assurance on actions taken to remedy any identified issues and to instruct any action as required to ensure that the Trust meets its statutory duties.

The Executive Team will:

- *Provide the strategic operational leadership on matters related to Health & Safety.*
- *Be assured on Health and Safety Performance, receiving updates from both the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing and Head of Estates.*
- *Review and approve any new operational procedures.*
- *Agree and approve any Trust level reporting, including reviewing and agreeing Risk & Audit and Trust Board reporting.*

The Health & Safety Committee will:

- *Review accident and RIDDOR data to ensure that key trends are being managed.*
- *Be informed of audit data and performance and assess trends in poor safety performance.*
- *Keep under review new or forthcoming legislation and ensure that the Trust is prepared for any new duties.*
- *Agree, with the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing the annual Forward plan of works.*
- *Consult and agree to any changes in Health and Safety management arrangements, providing feedback on operational impact.*

Health and Safety Representatives

Under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, a recognised independent trade union has the right to appoint safety representatives. Recognised trade unions will inform the school in writing of their appointment. Where this is the case, the school will consult with that representative on Health and Safety matters. Trade union Health and Safety representatives are entitled to raise any issue of Health and Safety as it affects employees. The Trust will consult in good time with Health and Safety representatives on any measures which may affect the employees represented by the Health and Safety representative.

The Trust will ensure that paid time off is provided for the inspections that the Health and Safety representative is entitled to undertake, as well as for training necessary to enable the Health and Safety representative to carry out their functions effectively.

Internal & External Audit

The Central Team will manage a two-year rolling audit programme. Health & Safety audits will assess the quality of on-site arrangements, management processes and estates safety compliance. This will be supplemented by the Estates Team estates safety compliance checks.

Actions arising from the audit will be recorded in Parago, and progress reported termly to the Risk & Audit Committee.

In addition to a rolling internal Health & Safety audit programme, the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) allows for a selected review of Health & Safety compliance. Whilst there is no set schedule for the review of REAch2 schools, the RPA may arrange audits at REAch2 schools at their discretion. Schools will work with the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing to prepare for any such audit and ensure that appropriate after audit support is provided.

Regulatory compliance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 2022
- The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
- Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010

This policy has due regard to national guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools'
- DfE (2017) 'Safe storage and disposal of hazardous materials and chemicals'
- HSE (2014) 'Sensible health and safety management in schools'

Measuring performance

The Trust will measure performance against pre-determined key performance indicators. Any areas where the standards are not being met will require remedial action.

The Trust will ensure the below performance indicators are satisfied:

- In terms accident reporting sees at least 80% or all incidents reviewed and closed.
- All RIDDOR reports are reported within 10 days of their occurrence.
- All schools are subjected to a support meeting at least every 2 years.
- At least 80% of audit actions are closed within their specified period.
- All schools have all relevant Parago risk assessments completed.

Getting help and support

For all Health and Safety enquiries, including reporting a concern, please either raise a Freshdesk ticket or alternatively email HS@reach2.org. For information on the Trust's whistleblowing procedures please refer to the Whistleblowing policy.

Policy Review

The Health & Safety Policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner, taking into account any legislative changes.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.