



Health and Safety Policy

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Ascent Academies' Trust complies with Health and Safety Legislation.

This policy is intended to help Ascent Academies' Trust meet its aims of:

- Providing and maintaining a safe working environment
- Establishing and maintaining safe working procedures amongst colleagues, young people, contractors and visitors to our sites
- Having robust procedures in place in case of emergencies
- Ensuring that our premises and equipment are maintained safely and regularly inspected.

This policy should be read in conjunction with various other Trust policies and procedures as detailed throughout this document. Colleagues are expected to make themselves aware of these to ensure compliance and safety for all. Additional policies and procedures to be aware of include:

- Accident Reporting
- Asbestos Policy and Management Plan
- CDM Guidance and Documentation (for building works)
- Display Screen Equipment Procedures
- Educational Visits
- First Aid policy
- Infection Control
- Lone Working
- Managing Medication
- Manual Handling Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedure
- Security Policy
- Vehicle
- Violence and Aggression
- Working at Height.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and amendments can only be made following the approval of the Board of Trustees.

This policy applies to the Trust and to all individual academies. This policy should be read by all colleagues.

Instances of non-compliance with this policy will be reviewed by the Heads of Academy and may be reported to the CEO, the Health and Safety Executive and LADO.

We wish to remind everybody involved with the Trust that should any persons have concerns relating to the implementation or adherence of our policies that they should raise these concerns with Line Management, or, if they wish to do so by following the Whistleblowing or Complaints procedures.

2 General Statement

The purpose of the Ascent Academies' Trust policy is to indicate our Trust's commitment to achieving a safe working environment for all colleagues, pupils and visitors connected with our sites and activities.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Chief Operating Officer and ratified by the Board of Trustees.

1. The Board of Trustees and Heads of Academy recognise and accept their respective responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999 and all other supporting Regulations in order to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all its employees.
2. The Board of Trustees, Heads of Academy and all colleagues will, individually and collectively, take all steps within their power, where reasonably practicable, to meet their responsibilities, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:
 - a. Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
 - b. Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
 - c. Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all Employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health & safety at work;
 - d. A safe place of work and access to it;
 - e. A healthy working environment and adequate welfare facilities.
3. Although it is the duty of the Board of Trustees and Heads of Academy to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons, any employee acting in a managerial capacity is responsible for ensuring that all persons under their charge comply with this Health & Safety Policy at all times.
4. A Health and Safety Advisor, supplied through Durham County Council, provides competent technical advice on health and safety matters where necessary to assist such employees in their task.
5. No safety policy is likely to be successful unless it actively involves colleagues themselves.

Signed

Name

Date



Mick Little – Chief Operating Officer

October 2023

3 Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees have ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety matters within our academies, however, day-to-day responsibilities have been delegated to Heads of Academy.

Trustees will

- Ensure each academy is compliant with this policy
- Ensure insurance arrangements are in place
- Liaise, as required, with any investigating bodies or authorities.

The Chief Operating Officer will

- Ensure that a written copy of our Trust's Health & Safety Policy is prepared for approval by the Board of Trustees and issued to each member of colleagues.
- Support the Board of Trustees with monitoring and review of the Policy.
- Support the Heads of Academy with the effective management of health and safety in their respective academies.
- Ensure statutory compliance with legislation and guidance in relation to health and safety.
- Liaise with health and safety advisors to undertake statutory reporting requirements, including RIDDOR reportable incidents/accidents.
- Ensure quality assurance of Health and Safety Management arrangements.
- Ensure appropriate external review and inspection of Health and Safety Management.

The Head of each academy is the 'appointed person' but may discharge some of their appointed duty responsibilities to another appropriate person. In addition, they will

- Ensure implementation of this policy
- Ensure there are enough colleagues to safely supervise young people
- Ensure that academy buildings are safe for use and repairs and proactive maintenance carried out
- Report to the COO on health and safety matters
- Ensure adequate training for colleagues
- Ensure appropriate evacuation procedures are in place and that termly fire drills take place
- Ensure risk assessments are in place and adhered to
- Liaise with the H&S Lead and Assets and Estates Manager as required
- Ensure they, and all other colleagues, hold the qualifications relevant to their role
- Support Trustees with monitoring of this policy.

The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) within each academy usually has day-to-day responsibility for health and safety, however, in the Head of Academies absence either Deputy may be required to take on responsibility of their role.

Deputy Head Teachers (Pastoral) will:

- Ensure that the training requirements for colleagues are fulfilled
- Ensure accurate records are kept of all health and safety related training, including certification dates and that copies of certification are available for scrutiny
- Ensure ongoing monitoring and recording of daily checks of facilities takes place
- Liaise directly with the Trust H&S Lead in regards H&S incidents
- Monitor and oversee accident and incident reporting via Evolve Accident Book ensuring the appropriate investigations are undertaken where necessary.

Teachers and other colleagues in charge of young persons will:

- Comply with this policy
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do
- Co-operate in regards to health and safety matters

- Work in accordance with policies, procedures and training and instructions
- Inform line managers/SLT of any situation which may cause an accident or incident so remedial action can be taken and log it on Evolve
- Model safe and hygienic practices
- Understand and follow emergency practices and procedures.

The Site Managers will:

- Ensure the health and safety policy is complied with at all times and all other relevant policies and procedures are followed regarding site colleagues and activities
- Ensure that external contractors are managed and controlled.
- Ensure that only safe working practices are adopted regarding all site related activities, to provide maximum safety for all personnel within the academy.
- Work with Deputy Heads Pastoral to ensure risk assessments are in place and communicated to all colleagues regarding site related activities.
- Ensure that any Asbestos on-site is managed in accordance with the Asbestos Policy and Management Plan. Any contractors working in the vicinity of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) must read/sign the relevant Asbestos surveys before work commences. Only suitably qualified Asbestos contractors may work on ACMs.
- Manage COSHH relating to building cleaning and site maintenance substances.
- Ensure compliance with all legislation and guidance relevant and applicable to managing the academy building and site.
- Maintain electronic copies of all site documentation and certificates where possible to facilitate access and to support disaster recovery processes.
- Promote an active health and safety culture within the academy.

Academy Health and Safety representatives will:

- Familiarise themselves with this health and safety policy and other related relevant documents.
- Set up and lead health and safety discussions/meetings with colleagues (working groups) regarding their academy.
- Review policy and other documentation, including the revision of risk assessments and fire procedures, with colleagues.
- Represent colleagues and be a contact point for health and safety queries/concerns, providing advice and obtaining additional support where required.
- Undertake health and safety walks and site inspections, working with senior leaders and external health and safety advisor when necessary.
- Promote an active health and safety culture within the academy.

The Trust Health and Safety Lead will

- Ensure the principles and details of our Trust's Health and Safety Policy are fully implemented.
- Be responsible for all aspects relating to health and safety in relation to people (colleagues, young people and visitors) both on and off site.
- Report to and attend health and safety meetings as required.
- Ensure written risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Manage and advise on Health and Safety requirements across our Trust.
- Keep abreast of changes to Health and Safety legislation and ensure that these changes are implemented across our Trust as required.
- Advise senior leaders on health and safety issues and/or queries.

- Liaise with external health and safety advisor.
- Communicate with Academy H&S reps and colleagues, providing guidance and advice.
- Promote a proactive H&S culture with colleagues, sharing lessons learned and providing regular guidance.

The Trust Assets and Estates Manager will

- Ensure the principles and details of our Trust's Health and Safety Policy are fully implemented within the estate services.
- Ensure that all statutory tests and inspections are carried out.
- Ensure that Academy Site Managers receive the information and training for the activities they undertake.
- Be responsible for all aspects relating to health and safety in relation to organised building works and accommodation.
- Be responsible for maintaining asbestos management plan.
- Report to and attend health and safety meetings as required.
- Ensure written risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed for all estates and facilities activities.
- Manage and advise on Health and Safety requirements across our Trust, in relation to Facilities Management and Estates.
- Keep abreast of changes to Health and Safety legislation and ensure that these changes are implemented across our Trust as required.
- Undertake a termly health and safety audit/review of each academy and report to each Head of Academy.
- Advise senior leaders on health and safety issues and/or queries.
- Liaise with external health and safety advisor.

Parents/carers

- It is the responsibility of parents to inform the Academy of any relevant information which may impact the health and safety of young people or others.

Contractors will

- Liaise and work with the Assets and Estates Manager as well as site teams to ensure safe working practices while on site including the relevant CDM procedures.

4 Risk Assessments

Our Trust has a Risk Assessment Procedure. It is important that colleagues take time to familiarise themselves with this procedure and any risk assessments written for academy activities that they may be expected to undertake. All colleagues in receipt of risk assessments agree to acknowledge receipt, read and understand them and comply at all times. Any concerns need to be raised at the earliest opportunity in order that risks can be addressed. The risk assessments are produced so that all colleagues know how to ensure their health and safety, and that of other people who may be affected by the work of the academy. Any queries should be raised with the Chief Operating Officer or individual Heads of Academy. The procedures and risk assessments are subject to annual review or where there are significant changes to working practices.

5 Fire Safety

Each Academy has its own emergency fire plan and evacuation plans in place. These are tested at least once per term.

Alarm testing within each academy takes place weekly.

Each Academy displays evacuation routes and fire plans throughout its buildings. Where necessary PEEPs are in place for those who require them.

6 COSHH

As a Trust we are required to control hazardous substances, which can take many forms including:

- Chemicals
- Products containing chemicals
- Fumes
- Dusts
- Vapours
- Mists
- Gases and asphyxiating gases
- Germs that cause diseases, such as leptospirosis or legionnaires disease.

COSHH risk assessments are completed by Site Managers and circulated to those who need to know via the Academy SharePoint. Where necessary protective equipment will be needed.

Hazardous substances are stored in accordance with instructions on labels and kept in their original containers with clear labels showing contents. These are kept securely away from young people.

Where necessary emergency procedures for hazardous substances are displayed near their storage location.

7 Gas Safety

All installation, maintenance and repairs are managed by the Assets and Estates Manager along with Site Managers.

All rooms that have gas pipework, flumes and appliances are regularly maintained. Rooms are also monitored to ensure adequate ventilation.

8 Legionella

The Assets and Estates Manager ensures that all sites have the appropriate water risk assessments in place and that the identified operational controls are conducted and recorded.

The appropriate HSE Approved Code of Practice is followed and adhered to.

9 Asbestos

Colleagues and contractors are briefed on the hazards of asbestos, the location of any asbestos in our buildings and the action to take if they suspect its been disturbed.

The Site Managers, overseen by the Assets and Estates Manager, has procedures in place to ensure that contractors are made aware of asbestos within the buildings and to ensure it is not disturbed by any work.

Contractors are advised to stop work immediately if they discover any material which could be asbestos and inform Site teams.

Each Academy hold their own Asbestos register.

10.1 Equipment

All equipment and machinery is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In addition, maintenance schedules outline when extra checks should take place.

When new equipment is purchased, it is checked to ensure it meets appropriate educational standards and is suitable for business use.

All equipment is stored in the appropriate storage containers and areas. All containers are labelled with the correct hazard sign and contents.

10.2 Electrical Equipment

All colleagues are responsible for ensuring they use and handle electrical equipment sensibly and safely. Visual inspections should take place before initial use.

Any young person or volunteer who handles electrical appliances must do so under the supervision of a colleague who directs them.

Any potential hazards will be reported to Site colleagues. Any equipment which is damaged must be taken out of use immediately until it is repaired.

Permanently installed electrical equipment is connected through a dedicated isolator switch and adequately earthed.

Only trained colleagues can check plugs.

All isolator switches are clearly marked to identify their machine.

Electrical apparatus and connections will not be touched by wet hands and will only be used in dry conditions.

Maintenance, repair, installation and disconnection work associated with permanently installed or portable electrical equipment is only carried out by a competent person.

The mains electrical system is tested every 5 years. Portable electrical equipment is listed within each academy. It is subject to Portable Appliance Testing (PAT testing) annually by a suitably qualified electrician in the case of small appliances and every 3 years for computer equipment. Any electrical equipment brought from home by young people or colleagues must not be used in the premises unless it has been subject to satisfactory examination and test.

10.3 PE and Outdoor Play Equipment

Equipment is visually checked before use by appropriately trained colleagues as well as daily inspections as part of the daily site safety schedule.

Young people are taught how to set up and use PE equipment safely and efficiently. Colleagues check that it is set up safely.

All PE equipment is externally checked on an annual basis.

Any damaged equipment is removed from use immediately and concerns regarding work areas and/or equipment raised with SLT and Site Teams.

10.4 Display Screen Equipment

Some members of colleagues are classified as "DSE Users." They have been given information about the risks associated with DSE use and understand how to control these risks. If colleagues

have any concerns or are experiencing any issues they feel are related to their use of Display Screen Equipment they should raise with their Head of Academy.

Please also refer to the DSE Self-Assessment Procedure.

11 Violence at Work

We believe that no colleague or visitor should be in any danger while at work and therefore we do not tolerate violent or threatening behaviour towards them. Any such incident must be logged on Evolve.

Appropriate Risk Assessments are in place to support this commitment.

Please also refer to the Violence at Work procedures and risk assessments in each Academy.

12 Smoking

Smoking or vaping (including e-cigarettes) is not permitted anywhere on Ascent Academies' Trust premises.

13 New and Expectant Mothers

Risk assessments will be carried out whenever any employee or young person notifies the school that they are pregnant. This is usually undertaken by the Deputy Head Pastoral.

Appropriate measures will be put in place to control risks identified. Some specific risks are summarised below:

- Chickenpox can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. Expectant mothers should report exposure to an antenatal carer and GP at any stage of exposure. Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox, so anyone who has not had chickenpox is potentially vulnerable to the infection if they have close contact with a case of shingles
- If a pregnant woman comes into contact with measles or German measles (rubella), she should inform her antenatal carer and GP immediately to ensure investigation
- Slapped cheek disease (parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child. If exposed early in pregnancy (before 20 weeks), the pregnant woman should inform her antenatal care and GP as this must be investigated promptly
- Some pregnant women will be at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

14 Occupational Stress

Ascent Academies' Trust is committed to promoting high levels of health and wellbeing and recognises the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors through risk assessments.

Every Academy has a Wellbeing Working Group who colleagues can go to with ideas for improving wellbeing.

Should any colleague be feeling stressed or like they need additional support this is available via either Leadership Teams or 24/7 via Education Support on 08000 562 561. Further information on Education Support is available via [their website](#) or The Guide.

15 Food Safety

To ensure food safety standards, kitchens run by Trust colleagues will use the FSA 'Safer food, better business' food safety management procedures. All colleagues will be suitably trained in food handling allergen awareness and First Aid where appropriate. Inspections will be carried out by Environmental Health on all Trust academy kitchens to ensure buildings are safe, hygienic and food standards are maintained. Any actions raised during these inspections will be addressed immediately.

Academy kitchens managed by Local Authority (LA) colleagues will be subject to LA food safety procedures and colleagues trained appropriately regarding food handling and allergen awareness.

Colleagues who work with food in lessons with young people will undergo, as a minimum, the Level 2 Food Safety course via [ProTrainings](#) on a 3 yearly basis.

16 Hydrotherapy Pool Safety

Portland academy operates a hydrotherapy pool to support the sensory and physical requirements of some pupils. The pool is operated in accordance with HSG 179 Managing Health & Safety in Swimming Pools and Pool Water Treatment Action Group (PWTAG) guidance. A Pool Safety Operating Procedure is in place and colleagues operating the pool and therapy instructors are suitably trained. Associated risk assessments are in place for individual pupils.

17 Water Safety

Some academies have water features such as ponds or streams in their grounds. These features are subject to regular inspections and updates sent to colleagues regarding weather changes that may affect conditions. Access to these areas are restricted, all activities are risk assessed and control measures put in place.

18 Training

All colleagues are provided with the appropriate health and safety training as part of their induction. Those colleagues who work in higher risk environments or have additional responsibilities are given additional appropriate training.

Colleagues who feel they require additional training should speak to their line managers for assistance.