

Health & Safety and Premises Management Policy 2025

EKC Schools Trust

Approval Date: September 2025

Next Approval: September 2026

1. Introduction

Effective health and safety management is integral to delivering our ambition for excellence in education and our performance as a Trust. Our overall objective is to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for our staff and pupils and others with whom we work.

This is a key document, which applies to all staff of the Trust. The policy is available to all parents, prospective parents, school governors and authorised Inspectors. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.

Effective management of school buildings is the responsibility of the Headteacher and named key person in the Academy e.g., School business manager or other and effective Health & Safety requirements are the responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer in each school (H&SO) – ultimately, responsibility lies with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

This document is reviewed annually by the Headteacher, SLT, SBM and H&SO or as events or legislation changes require, in each Academy as well as by the Trustees.

The Trust is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010).

EKC Schools Trust, in partnership with our Academies, will achieve this by:

- Developing and maintaining a positive Health and Safety culture with an emphasis on continually improving our performance taking into account human and cultural factors.
- Ensuring that health and safety management is an integral part of decision making and organisational processes.
- Adopting a sensible and proportionate approach to managing risks, with well-informed decision-making processes for higher risk activities and ensuring a disproportionate amount of time is not spent on trivial or everyday risks.
- Providing a safe and healthy working environment.
- Ensuring safe working methods are in place and providing safe equipment.
- Communicating and consulting with our staff and their trade union representatives.
- Complying with statutory requirements and where possible best practice.
- Investigating and learning the lessons from accidents and work-related ill health incidents.
- Providing effective information, instruction and training to enable our staff to be competent in their roles.
- Monitoring and reviewing systems and preventative measures to make sure they are suitable, sufficient and objectives.
- Ensuring adequate resources are made available to fulfil our health and safety responsibilities and objectives.
- Working with and monitoring our contractors to ensure consistent health and safety standards.

We recognise that overall responsibility for health and safety lies with all levels of management having direct responsibility for activities and staff under their control. However, all staff have a legal and moral responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

EKC Schools Trust has a duty to ensure that buildings under their control comply with appropriate statutory, regulatory and corporate standards. This task is becoming increasingly complex, onerous and difficult due to current legislation. The Trust, Local Governing Bodies and the Headteacher need to consider the building;

- **Condition:** focus on the physical state of the premises to ensure safe and continuous operation as well as other issues involving building regulations and other non-education statutory requirements.
- **Suitability:** focus on the quality of the premises to meet curriculum or management needs and other issues impacting on the role of the schools in raising educational standards.

2. What Legislation Applies to the Trust

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (ISS) - which prescribe minimum standards for school premises in academies. They include a general requirement that every part of a school's premises must be such as to reasonably assure the health, safety and welfare of the occupants.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA). This is the enabling act which sets out the broad principles for managing health and safety legislation in workplaces, which places a general duty on employers to "ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees" and requires employers to conduct their undertaking in a way that does not pose risk to the health and safety of non-employees. The HSWA is the main health and safety legislation.

3. Responsibilities and Organisation

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires schools to undertake risk assessments to identify the general fire precautions needed to safeguard the safety of occupants in case of fire, including their safe means of escape.
- The Building Regulations 2010 apply to most buildings in England and Wales and set standards, which are mainly to ensure the safety and health of people in or around buildings but also cover energy conservation and accessibility.
- The Equalities Act 2010 requires all schools to prepare and implement an accessibility strategy to improve the physical environment of the school for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN).
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 - which outline provisions that must be made in relation to the work environment.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR).
- Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) and Health and Safety Executive

(HSE) guidance documents and standards.

4. The Trust Board

The Trust Board has responsibility for ensuring that suitable and adequate organisation and arrangements are in place for the management and control of health and safety within the Trust. In particular we will ensure that:

- A written policy statement is created and communicated which promotes a positive attitude towards health and safety for staff and pupils.
- Responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are allocated to specific people and those people are informed of these responsibilities.
- A lead director for health and safety is nominated.
- People have sufficient experience, knowledge and training to perform the task required of them.
- Clear procedures are created which assess the risk from hazards and produce safe systems of work.
- Sufficient funds are set aside with which to operate safe systems of work.
- Adequate time and resources are given to individuals to fulfil their roles as defined by this policy.
- Health and Safety performance is monitored and targets for improvement are set.
- The Trust's health and safety policy is reviewed at least every two years.
- The management of health and safety considers the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

Building Regulations, which are a legal requirement aimed at achieving adequate standards for the construction of buildings. They are laid down by Parliament and are supported by separate documents containing practical and technical guidance on compliance, which are known as 'Approved Documents'.

The school premises are constantly monitored by the Headteacher (or designated Senior Staff Member), by the Health & Safety Officer (H&SO) and Local Governing Body, by the SLT, and by a range of teams/individuals who report their observations/concerns to the Headteacher, the H&SO and SLT. The Academy gives due regard to the regulations listed above.

The Headteacher (or designated Senior Staff member) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the Fixed Asset Folder.
- Managing repair or improvement projects.

The H&SO is responsible for:

- Compiling the Health and Safety policy
- Ensuring the Schools' premises are subject to a regular Health and Safety check with the Site Manager and the Responsible Governor with Health & Safety responsibilities.
- Ensuring completion of the Health and Safety audit and any works arising from it.

5. The CEO and Designated EKC Schools Trust Staff

The CEO will be responsible for all staff and activities under their control and will ensure that the requirements of relevant safety policies and procedures are implemented and complied with. In particular, they will:

- Be fully and visibly committed to ensuring that a positive health and safety culture is actively demonstrated and promoted throughout the Trust.
- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken as appropriate by competent persons and that adequate control measures are taken on a risk basis to reasonably minimise the health and safety risks to staff and any other people who may be affected by the schools' activities.
- Monitor and Review Health & Safety performance through:
 - Annual Health and Safety Audit.
- Undertaking monitoring of Health & Safety checks as outlined in Policy
- Undertaking health and safety inspections of work areas/practices in line with relevant policy.
- Setting health and safety targets and objectives through appraisals and other supervisory reviews.
- Reviewing incidents and accidents.
- Monitoring commissioned and contracted work under their control for compliance.
- Ensure that the management of health and safety in the areas under their control considers the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

6. Headteachers of Academies

All Headteachers are expected to:

- Set a personal example by including health and safety management in daily management practice and demonstrating safe personal working practices.
- Ensure prompt action is taken to resolve any situations that may adversely affect the health and safety of staff or other people.
- Ensure that they personally undertake all relevant training and all staff are given adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to carry out their duties, paying particular attention to new/inexperienced employees and trainees.
- Ensure that advice is sought from other organisations such as the Area Education Officer or the HSE where necessary.
- Ensure that all plant and work equipment provided is selected through a risk assessment process, suitable, properly maintained and subject to all necessary tests and examinations.
- Ensure that accidents and incidents (including near misses and violence and aggression) are properly reported and investigated and the findings

acted upon without delay.

- Ensure there are adequate and effective arrangements in place for consulting employees and their trade union representatives on health and safety matters that affect them.
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- Ensure information that may assist safety representatives in their role is provided to them, as necessary.
- Report to the Governing Body at least annually on school's health and safety performance.

The Headteacher and SLT are responsible for:

- Preparing a Long-Term Maintenance Plan which is prioritised within available budgets using the School Development Plan
- Reviewing policies for security, fire safety, health and safety, including monitoring processes
- Ensuring that risk assessments are prepared and acted upon
- Employing professional Property Advisers, as required, to ensure larger projects are undertaken to an acceptable standard and in compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

The Academy undertakes the following as prescribed by legislation;

The Academy ensures that the regular maintenance is carried out, in accordance with best practice and as required by legislation including the following:

- Air Conditioning Units checks
- Boiler Maintenance
- Electrical Appliances checks
- Fixed Electrical Installation testing
- Emergency Lighting testing
- Local Extraction Ventilation testing
- Fire Risk Assessments
- Fire Alarm testing
- Fire Door checks
- Fire Extinguisher checks
- PE/Gym Equipment safety checks
- Gas Appliances safety checks
- Gas Pipe Soundness checks
- Kitchen Deep Cleaning
- Passenger Lifts and Lifting Equipment checks
- Machinery Tooling checks

- Pressure Vessel checks
- Roller Doors/Shutters checks
- Automated Doors, Gates and Barriers checks
- Water Safety (L8) checks and maintenance
- Asbestos checks and maintenance of an Asbestos Register
- Working at Height Equipment checks
- Maintenance and checks of trees, boundaries and external spaces

7. All Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Exercise effective supervision of their pupils, to know the procedures for fire, first aid and other emergencies and to carry them out, if required, or pass this on to the trained member of staff, as necessary.
- Follow the particular health and safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching areas as laid down in the relevant Code of Practice and to ensure that they are applied.
- Give clear oral and written instructions and warnings to pupils when necessary.
- Follow safe working procedures.
- Require the use of protective clothing and guards where necessary.
- Make recommendations to the Head of Department on health and safety equipment and on additions or necessary improvements to plant tools, equipment or machinery.
- Integrate all relevant aspects of safety into the teaching process and where necessary, give special lessons on health and safety in line with National Curriculum requirements for safety education.
- Comply with the Trust's health and safety policy and procedures at all times.
- Not intentionally misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Take part in and contribute to health and safety inspections, risk assessments etc. as appropriate.
- Report all accidents (personal injury and vehicle), ill health, incidents of violence and aggression, near misses, hazardous situations, general health and safety concerns, defective equipment or premises to their Head of Department.
- Attend all training relevant to their role.

8. Employee Consultation/Safety Representatives

The Trust believes that consulting employees on health and safety matters is important in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment.

The Trust will consult on all matters of health and safety that may affect staff and on the provision of health and safety information and training where applicable.

Before making any decisions which could have health and safety consequences for staff, the Trust Board will inform Local Governing Bodies about the proposed course of action and give them an opportunity to express their views.

9. Pupils

Pupils, allowing for their age and aptitude, are expected to:

- Take personal responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others.
- Observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene.
- Observe all the health and safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of staff given in an emergency.
- Use and not willfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for their health and safety.

10. Procedures and Arrangements

The following procedures and arrangements have been adopted to ensure compliance with the Trusts' Policies:

General Risk Assessment

General Risk Assessments will be coordinated by the Operations/Premises Team. The Premises Team will be responsible for ensuring the actions required are implemented.

Fire Safety

A qualified and competent person will conduct the Fire Risk Assessment for the schools, which is overseen by the Premises Team and H&SO and reviewed annually. The Premises Team will develop site-specific Fire Safety Procedures in accordance with the guidance and documentation available on the Intranet.

Manual Handling

Manual Handling risk assessments will be carried out by the Premises Team and Caretakers following guidance and documentation on the intranet.

Computers and Workstations

Computer and workstation risk assessments will be carried out by individual staff members following guidance and documentation on the intranet.

Desks should be maintained to be as clear as possible.

Passwords should never be shared and should be changed on a regular basis.

Hazardous Substances/COSHH

Caretakers will identify hazardous substances for which no generic assessment exists

in the Codes of Practice mentioned below, or in the Caretaking Health and Safety Code of Practice, following guidance and documentation on the intranet.

Violence to Staff

Assessment of the risks of violence to staff will be carried out by the Executive Headteacher following guidance on the intranet. This assessment cross refers to the schools Rewards and Relationship Policy.

Curriculum Activities/Forest School

Risk Assessments for curriculum activities will be carried out by relevant Heads of Department and subject teachers using Health and Safety curriculum Codes of Practice.

Where Forest Schools are provided by Schools within the Trust, they must be managed and maintained in accordance with the standards and guidance set by the Forest School Association.

Consultation with Employees

Union-appointed safety representatives at Trust schools are consulted.

Consultation with employees not represented by a union is facilitated by the Executive Headteacher.

Safe Plant and Equipment

All plant and equipment will be inspected, maintained in accordance with industry standards and regulatory requirements. The servicing and maintaining of all plant and equipment will be by approved and competent contractors.

The Academies will complete PAT testing every two years.

Routine local testing of emergency lighting, fire alarm call points, flushing of infrequently used water outlets and monthly water temperature monitoring will be carried out by the caretakers and in line with statutory requirements.

Any problems or defects with plant and equipment should be reported to the Premises Team.

11. Information, Instructions and Training

Information and Advice

The Health and Safety Law Poster is displayed in all Trust schools staff rooms and/or Reception.

Health and Safety advice is available from the CEO/Headteacher/Team Leaders/Operations Manager.

Health & Safety Training

Induction

Health and safety induction training will be provided for all new employees and for work experience placement students by guidance issued within staff induction packs.

Training Records and Training Needs Identification

Health and safety training records are held by your line manager and/or HR Team. Training needs will be identified, arranged and monitored by your line manager.

Incident Reporting and Investigation

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health involving employees (or non-employees where the injury is caused by a defect in a work activity, equipment or premises and where the non-employee is taken directly to hospital) must be recorded in the school incident reporting system and where required, procedures for RIDDOR reporting undertaken.

Minor injuries to non-employees (i.e., pupils and visitors) where first aid is given will be reported on the First Aid Record of Treatment form. These forms are kept in the staffrooms and welcome buildings.

The Headteacher will investigate all incidents and act on findings to prevent a recurrence.

First Aid

First Aid boxes are kept throughout the schools (exact locations are displayed on posters throughout the buildings).

Employees available to provide first aid are named on posters displayed throughout the buildings.

Managing Medicines

The appointed person in schools are responsible for checking the boxes to ensure that the contents remain in date and fully stocked.

Leads in each team are responsible for control of administration of medicines to pupils. Prescribed medication will be administered to pupils following guidance and documentation.

Site Security and Visitors

All visitors must report to reception where they will be asked to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitors' badge; please refer to our Visitor Policy.

Doors will remain locked/closed at all times to ensure the security of pupils and employees on site.

On-Site Vehicle Movements

The risks of persons and vehicles coming into contact will be controlled by clear car parking bays/signs and safe supervision where required.

Selection and Management of Contractors

Contractors are selected and managed following guidance and documentation on the intranet, and from the Estates Team.

Educational Visits

Educational visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities, will be organised following guidance produced by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel.

Occupational Health

Access to Occupational Health services is via the HR portal. (refer to HR procedures).

Emergency Procedures: Fire and Evacuation

Escape routes are checked by the caretaker daily.

Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by the Caretaker weekly and by designated coordinator annually.

Alarms are tested every week and the alarm panels serviced every six months in accordance with BS 5839-1, by designated coordinator. Emergency evacuation procedures will be tested once every term and will be recorded.

Water Supply

Each Academy arranges regular risk assessments and testing of water systems (water storage tanks, shower systems and other systems which potentially hold water at a temperature between 20°C and 45°C) for all premises to ensure that:

- The school has a wholesome supply of water for domestic purposes including a supply of drinking water.
- WC's and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washbasins, sinks (including deep sinks) and showers have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.
- The temperature of hot water supplies to showers shall not exceed 43°C.

Management of Asbestos

Each school must keep an up-to-date Asbestos Register and Asbestos Management Plan as reception. Reception staff are responsible for ensuring that any contractors working in areas where asbestos is known to be or suspected to be present have signed the register. Any updates to the register must be reported to the Operations or Premises Team.

The Asbestos Register includes the most recent survey, identifying locations where asbestos is present or suspected. Only approved or licensed contractors may carry out any asbestos removal. The presence of asbestos does not necessarily pose a health risk; if it is in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed, it is often safer to leave it undisturbed.

The Asbestos Management Plan must be reviewed annually and updated to reflect any changes in legislation or policy. It should outline procedures for monitoring and controlling asbestos and identify trained individuals responsible for inspecting and recording the condition of asbestos-containing materials on behalf of the schools in the Trust.

The Asbestos Register and Asbestos Management Plan are held in each school at reception. Reception staff are responsible for ensuring that contractors who may be working in areas where asbestos has been identified sign the register and that any changes to the register are notified to the Operations/Premises Team immediately.

Drainage

Each Academy ensures that there is an adequate drainage system for hygienic purposes and the disposal of wastewater and surface water by carrying out regular visual checks and calling in drainage specialists should problems arise.

Glazing

Each Academy ensures that any glass that is likely to cause injury if it is broken is

either replaced or made safe. A safety material (e.g., laminated or toughened glass) is specified. A glazing survey should be undertaken at each Academy to identify any single pane, non-toughened or laminated glass to be replaced or approved safety film applied.

Accommodation

Each Academy will ensure that:

- There is a satisfactory standard and adequate maintenance of decoration by implementing a planned programme of redecoration through the annual adaptation and summer programme of works, but smaller tasks may be completed during the year.
- There is appropriate flooring in good condition by carrying out regular visual checks and implementing any necessary repairs/replacements.
- The furniture and fittings are appropriately designed for the age and needs of all pupils registered at the school by responding to specific requests for appropriate furniture and fittings, which are generated as a result of the annual adaptation and summer programme of works.
- Classrooms and other parts of the school are maintained in a tidy, clean and hygienic state by overseeing the work of a team of cleaners and monitoring standards of cleaning.
- There are appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill. A room is provided for medical examination and contains a washbasin and is near a disabled WC.
- There are sufficient washrooms for staff and pupils, including facilities for pupils.
- In terms of the design and structure of the accommodation, no areas of the school compromise health or safety. Upstairs windows are fitted with stops or bars, as appropriate; there are high-level handrails on stairs above an open stair well.
- Classrooms are appropriate in size to allow effective teaching, having regard to the number, age and needs of pupils by carefully monitoring the number, age and needs of pupil who will be using the classrooms and making any necessary adjustments in provision and arrangements.
- The school buildings provide reasonable resistance to penetration by rain, snow, wind and moisture from the ground by carrying out regular visual checks.
- There is sufficient access so that emergency evacuations can be accomplished safely for all pupils, by ensuring that all exits are kept clear and unencumbered, and by carrying out regular checks of the same.
- Access to the school allows all pupils, including those with special needs, to enter and leave the school in safety and comfort by ensuring that entrances are well maintained and unencumbered with appropriate access for wheelchair users.
- Where food is served, there are adequate facilities for its hygienic preparation, serving and consumption.
- The lighting, heating and ventilation in classrooms and other parts of the school are suitable for the room usage. This is done through a programme

of monitoring and through feedback from staff.

- There is adequate sound insulation of internal walls and floors to minimise disturbance from sound generated in adjacent areas.
- There is adequate lighting in each room or other internal space, ensuring it is suitable for the activities taking place.
- Adequate outdoor space is available for informal play, socialising and physical education (PE) including playing games.
- A competent person will be appointed to ensure all COSHH regulations are followed and sufficient training for staff has been implemented.

Contractors

Each Academy will ensure that:

- Adequate arrangements are in place to select, appoint and monitor anyone undertaking works.
- The competence of contractors (competence can be judged from past experience, recommendation, preselection evaluation or a combination that takes into consideration the nature and scale of the works required)
- Where necessary has the appropriate qualifications, for example GAS SAFE or NICIEC registered for work in connection with gas and electrical installations respectively.
- The contractor has a current Health and Safety policy, has current suitable insurances in place and examine risk assessments to check that contractors and others have correctly interpreted any site-specific conditions.
- Contractors follow stringent permit to work protocols, including submission of risk assessments and method statements prior to works being undertaken.
- All contractors will be supervised unless enhanced DBS checks are provided and risk assessments determine if they are permitted to operate unsupervised.

Commissioning a Building Project

Each Academy seeks a property professional to work with the school when undertaking large building projects. Large projects will be approved by the Trust as outlined in the scheme of Delegation.

The Trust will provide support from the East Kent Colleges Group Director of Estates to ensure Health & Safety Regulations are met. The property professional would be commissioned to carry out the following steps:

- **Feasibility Study:** checking the feasibility of the project and providing an early cost estimate.
- **Specification:** with the school to producing a technical specification for the work.
- **Tender:** going out to tender to a number of appropriate contractors.
- **Evaluation of Tenders:** checking the validity and accuracy of the tenders.
- **Site Management:** regular site visits to check the progress and quality of work to an acceptable standard and compliant with health & safety

requirements and relevant legislation and regulations.

- **Handover:** accepting the finished project. Carrying out snagging and testing.
- **Invoice check:** checking the validity and accuracy of invoices.

Waste

The Trust is committed to reducing its waste and recycling as much as we can, this includes cardboard, paper, electrical equipment, ICT equipment. There are things that everyone can do to contribute to this.

Each Academy follows any legal waste obligations to ensure the correct licensing of their waste and maintain such records and safe storage.

Vehicle Segregation

Each Academy ensures that appropriate traffic management systems are in place on site so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate in a safe manner.

Driving for Work

Each Academy ensures that Driving for Work guidance and Minibus Procedure is followed.

Lettings

Each Academy ensures that the premises which are used for a purpose other than conducting the school curriculum (the Dining Hall, or other area) are organised to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are safeguarded and that their education is not interrupted by other users. Hirers of Academy premises will provide evidence of public liability insurance with a minimum cover of £5million, risk assessments and evidence they are competent to run any activities on the Academy premises. A Health and safety induction will be provided by the Academy to all hirers covering fire procedures, risk assessments, reporting of accidents. All electrical being brought on the premise will be required to be approved by the designated Academy staff member and have annual PAT test certificate.

Trees

Each Academy ensures that a bi-annual tree survey takes place for which a report with priority is produced; all arboriculture work is carried out by a competent arboriculturist. Premises staff or designated person should complete routine inspections of trees as stated in the risk assessment particularly after any storms or strong winds.

Health and Safety

Each Academy's premises are subject to a regular Health and Safety check (3 times per year) by the School's Site Manager or equivalent and the Responsible Local Governor with Health & Safety responsibilities. These happen in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms and the report is taken back to the schools local governing body meetings for feedback and discussion. Any matters of concern are communicated regularly and dealt with promptly. EKC Group's Deputy Director of Estates and Facilities Management completes an annual H&S audit which is sent to and fed back to Trustees with key recommendations. This is also used as basis for school level checks.

Monitoring

Routine inspections of the premises to ensure safe working practices are being followed will be carried out by the Premises Team and H&S Committee representatives.

Inspections of individual departments and specific work areas will be carried out by Heads of Department or nominated staff.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.