Health and Safety Policy

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		Applicable Services:	Education
Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
Mandatory Policy	Yes		
Note	This policy must not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

Table of Contents

Section	
1	**Supporting Documents**
2	**Introduction**
3	**Aim & Scope**
4	**Abbreviations/Definitions**
5	**Policy Content**
6	**Responsibilities**
7	**Training Requirements**
8	**Equality Impact Statement**
9	**Sources of Information / References**
10	**Version Control (where else is this policy located, ie. Circle, Nourish, Radar)**
11	**Appendices**

1. Supporting Documents

- Risk Assessment Policy
- Premises and Site Security Policy (EDU.POL.042)
- Fire Safety Policy, Procedures & Guidance
- First Aid Policy (EDU.POL.029)
- Critical Incidents Policy (EDU.POL.045)
- Educational Visits Policy (EDU.POL.028)
- Medical Conditions and Medication Policy (EDU.POL.030)
- Allergy Safety Policy (EDU.POL.044)
- Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (EDU.POL.020)
- Supervision of Pupils Policy (EDU.POL.043)

Related policies are held within RADAR in the School's policy folder.

2. Introduction

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At Acorns School we keep our pupils, staff and visitors safe and healthy while they are in our care. We take our health and safety duties seriously and we build them into the everyday running of the school. This policy is our overarching statement of how we manage health and safety, and it sits above the more detailed policies that cover specific risks.

We are a special school. Our pupils have a wide range of needs, and some present risks to themselves or others when they are distressed. Our approach to health and safety takes account of this, so that we keep everyone safe while we keep the school calm, nurturing and therapeutic.

3. Aim & Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers, visitors and contractors at Acorns School, and to all our premises and activities, on site and off site. It aims to:

- Meet our legal duties to provide a safe and healthy environment.
- Assess and control the risks to pupils, staff and others.
- Make sure everyone knows their part in keeping the school safe.
- Keep accidents, injuries and ill health as low as we reasonably can.

This is the overarching policy. The detailed arrangements for specific risks are in the related policies listed in section 11.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

Hazard. Something with the potential to cause harm.

Risk. The chance that a hazard will cause harm, and how serious that harm could be.

Risk assessment. The process of identifying hazards, deciding who could be harmed and how, and putting controls in place.

Competent person. A person with the training, knowledge and experience to manage a particular health and safety matter.

COSHH. The rules for controlling substances that are hazardous to health.

5. Policy Content

5.1 Principles and Approach

Our approach rests on the following principles.

- Safety is everyone's job. Every member of staff has a part to play in keeping the school safe. We assess and control risk.
- We identify hazards, assess the risk, and put sensible controls in place.
- We are proportionate. We focus our effort on the real risks, and we do not let paperwork get in the way of safe practice or of pupils taking part.

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- We plan for our pupils. We take account of the particular risks in a special school and adapt our controls to each pupil's needs.
- We learn from what goes wrong. We record accidents and near misses, and we act on them.
- We work together. We consult staff on health and safety and we work with the Keys central team and outside experts.

5.2 Health and Safety in Practice

Risk assessment

At Acorns School we assess the risks across our premises and activities, put controls in place, and review the assessments regularly and after any incident or change. Risk assessment is how we turn this policy into safe practice. The detail of how we assess and record risk is in our Risk Assessment Policy.

Safe premises, equipment and maintenance

We keep our buildings, grounds and equipment safe and properly maintained, and we carry out the checks, servicing and testing required, for example for gas, electrical equipment, water systems and play equipment. The detail of site safety and security is in our Premises and Site Security Policy (EDU.POL.042).

Fire safety and emergencies

We manage fire risk through a fire risk assessment, working fire detection and alarms, clear escape routes, and regular drills. Our response to fire and to other serious emergencies is set out in our Fire Safety Policy, Procedures & Guidance, Procedures & Guidance and our Critical Incidents Policy (EDU.POL.045).

Hazardous substances

We control substances that are hazardous to health under COSHH. We assess them, store and use them safely, keep them out of the reach of pupils, and hold the safety information for each one. This matters in areas such as cleaning, science, art, design and technology, and catering.

Accidents, first aid and reporting

We record all accidents and injuries, and we report those the law requires under RIDDOR. We provide first aid through trained staff and suitable equipment, and the detail is in our First Aid Policy (EDU.POL.029). We review accident records to spot patterns and reduce repeat incidents.

Health, wellbeing and safe staffing

We look after the health and wellbeing of our staff as well as our pupils, including their workload and their exposure to distressing incidents. We deploy enough suitably trained staff to keep the school safe, and we provide the training, supervision and support that safe practice needs.

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Educational visits and off-site activities

We plan off-site activities and educational visits with a risk assessment, suitable staffing and clear emergency arrangements. The detail is in our Educational Visits Policy (EDU.POL.028).

Medical needs and allergens

We manage pupils' medical needs and allergies so that they are kept safe at school, including at mealtimes. Allergen risk management runs through our catering and risk assessment arrangements. The detail is in our Medical Conditions and Medication Policy (EDU.POL.030) and our Allergy Safety Policy (EDU.POL.044).

Contractors and visitors

We manage contractors and visitors so that their presence and their work do not put pupils or staff at risk, including checking their identity and, where needed, their vetting, and controlling their work on site. This works with our Premises and Site Security and Safeguarding policies (EDE.POL.002).

Specific risks in our setting

Our pupils' needs create some particular health and safety risks, for example during physical interventions, in sensory or low-stimulus spaces, in practical lessons and kitchens, and where a pupil may harm themselves or others. We assess these risks for individual pupils and for activities, and we train staff to manage them safely. Physical intervention is covered by our Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (EDU.POL.020), and risks linked to behaviour by our Behaviour Policy (EDU.POL.027).

5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

Accidents, injuries, near misses and hazards are recorded on RADAR, RIDDOR-reportable events are reported, and any incident with a safeguarding dimension is recorded on CPOMS. Risk assessments and safety checks are documented and dated. Leadership monitors health and safety, reviews accident and incident data, reports to the proprietor and governors and the Keys central team, and acts to reduce risks so that Acorns School keeps improving. Health and safety audits are completed at regular intervals and monitored through the school's quality assurance framework.

5.4 Equality and Inclusion

At Acorns School, this policy is applied fairly and in line with the Equality Act 2010. We make sure our health and safety arrangements meet the needs of disabled pupils, staff and visitors, and that they keep pupils safe without restricting them more than is necessary. Any concern that this policy disadvantages a pupil should be raised with the headteacher.

6. Responsibilities

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6.1 Pupils

Follow the safety rules, use equipment properly, and tell a member of staff about anything that looks unsafe or about any injury.

6.2 Staff

Follow this policy and the related procedures, carry out and follow risk assessments, keep their areas safe, and report hazards, accidents and near misses.

6.3 Leadership

Leadership at Acorns School makes sure the school meets its health and safety duties, that risk assessments are in place and current, that staff are trained, and that accidents are recorded, reported and acted on.

At Acorns School Marple the day-to-day management of health and safety is led by Miranda Rathmell, Headteacher.

At Acorns School Ashley the day-to-day management of health and safety is led by Paula Tankard – Headteacher.

Leaders must also make reference to the Keys Group Health and Safety Policy, particularly in relation to the overarching structure of group health and safety oversight, quality assurance and governance.

6.4 Governance

The proprietor and governors at Acorns School make sure the school has effective health and safety arrangements and that this policy is followed, and they review health and safety performance, including accident data.

6.5 Parents and carers

Share information about their child's needs and any risks, and follow the school's health and safety arrangements when they are on site or on a visit.

6.6 Named leads

The health and safety lead and person responsible for the premisies at Acorns School Marple is Miranda Rathmell, Headteacher.

The health and safety lead and person responsible for premises at Acorns Ashley School is Paula Tankard, Headteacher.

7. Training Requirements

All staff receive health and safety training at induction and regular updates, including risk assessment, fire safety, first aid awareness, manual handling and the specific risks in their role. Staff who carry out specialist tasks, for example using

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hazardous substances, leading visits, or carrying out physical interventions, receive the additional training their role needs at Acorns School.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

9. Sources of Information / References

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, in particular the requirement to have and implement a written health and safety policy and to meet Part 3 on the welfare, health and safety of pupils, read with the Independent School Standards guidance (April 2026).
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025, and the 2026 version from 1 September 2026).
- Equality Act 2010.
- DfE guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and on emergency planning and response.

10. Version Control

This document can also be found in Radar. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The named owner for review at Acorns School is the headteacher.

11. Appendices

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11.1 Appendix A: School-Specific Annex

At Acorns School Marple, the following local arrangements apply:

- Health and safety lead and premises lead: Miranda Rathmell, Headteacher
- Trained first aiders and their locations:

Name	Location
Miranda Rothmell	Head's office
Simone Stopford	First Aid Room / SLT office
Liam Morrison	First Aid Room / SLT office
Kate Carter	Admin office
Tanika Faricy	Y7/8 Classroom
Ellen Coot	Meeting Room / SLT office
Rianne Blaisedell	Y9 classroom
Designated teaching staff	Located throughout the school within the classroom.

At Acorns Ashley School, the following local arrangements apply:

- Health and safety lead and premises lead: Paula Tankard, Headteacher.
- Trained first aiders and their locations:

Name	Location
Paula Tankard	Head's office
Naomi Mitchell	Meeting Room / SLT office
Michelle Owens	Admin office
Daniel Timmis	Y10 classroom
Tanika Faricy	Y7/8 Classroom
Ellen Coot	Meeting Room / SLT office
Rianne Blaisedell	Y9 classroom
Roxanne O'Gorman	Meeting Room / SLT office

- Premises checks, servicing and testing schedule is detailed in our whitebooks. At Acorns School Marple these are overseen by Miranda Rathmell, Headteacher. At Acorns School Ashley these are overseen by Paula Tankard, Headteacher.
- Hazardous substances are kept in the lockable cabinets in the storecupboard on the main corridor. The COSHH information is kept in the admin office on the main corridor.
- Accident and incident recording system: RADAR
- Site-specific hazards and controls: All detailed in the COSHH file.

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