

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

Health & Safety Policy

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Trust vision

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust will ensure that all pupils achieve the highest standard of educational outcomes regardless of circumstances or background.

Rationale

The *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* places a responsibility on all employers to ensure:

- the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees
- all employees take reasonable care of their own safety
- school staff have responsibility in *loco parentis* for the safety of the pupils in their care

The Trust takes this responsibility very seriously and takes all reasonable, practicable steps to secure the health and safety of pupils, staff and others who use the premises of the Trust and its schools. This includes when participating in school-sponsored activities. The Trust believes that the prevention of accident, injury or loss and effective risk management are central to the efficient operation of the Trust's schools and are an important component of the education offer to pupils.

The *Equality Act 2010* provides a single legal framework to tackle disadvantage and discrimination as effectively as possible. The Trust recognise this framework and the *Public Sector Equality Duty* placed on it to think about how employment is structured, the removal of physical barriers and/or the provision of support to particular staff and will do all it can to make reasonable adjustments that support equality and inclusion for all.

The arrangements outlined in this Policy and the various other safety provisions made by the Trust cannot fully prevent accidents or guarantee safe and healthy working conditions but the Trust is committed to ensuring the adoption of safe methods of work and good practice by every individual staff member to minimise risk and maximise the personal health and safety of all stakeholders. To achieve this the Trust will take every reasonable step to identify and reduce hazards and remove the barriers within prevent inclusion to a minimum.

Policy aim

To provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment across the Trust and its schools for all pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

Trust duties

The success of the Trust relies on ensuring that it has safe and healthy children and staff. To achieve and sustain this the Trust places high priority on:

- the provision and maintenance of working and learning environments that are safe and without risk
- ensuring that all schools are well managed and adequately resourced to reduce the risks to the health and safety of children and staff
- health and safety monitoring and audits which meet the objectives set out in this Policy and support the achievement of high standards of health and safety throughout every school
- the active involvement and understanding of children and staff about the importance of health and safety
- a culture of open communication where children, parents and staff are encouraged to raise health and safety concerns
- all senior leaders treat the concerns of children, parents and staff seriously and respond accordingly
- the availability of competent and well-trained staff who understand the health and safety duties placed on the Trust and its schools
- access to competent health and safety advice and guidance at all times
- annual review of this Policy and associated procedures at both Trust and individual school levels with any revisions brought to the attention of children, parents and staff as appropriate

Trust responsibilities

Trustees

The trustee with responsibility for health and safety across the Trust and its schools is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The responsibilities of the CEO include:

- establishing effective policies and procedures for the management of health and safety across the Trust and its schools
- ensuring senior leaders establish and maintain effective health and safety management systems

To meet these responsibilities, the CEO is supported by the Director of Estates.

Executive leaders and headteachers

- Executive leaders and headteachers are responsible for ensuring that this Policy is followed with contextualised addendums as required to reflect individual school circumstances
- Executive leaders and headteachers utilise this Policy and associated addendums to express their commitment to achieving consistently high standards of health and safety practice
- Each school is responsible for making appropriate arrangements e.g. a school health and safety forum to raise, address and resolve health and safety issues quickly and efficiently

- Each school is responsible for appointing a staff champion with responsibility for health and safety. The Trust's nominated champions are shown below:

Director of Estates Geoff Bagley

Trust CEO Robert Bowater

Director of Estates

The responsibilities of the Director of Estates are:

- to lead and oversee the safety performance of the Trust and its schools and to report this to the Trust Board in line with the reporting schedule and ensure full compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements in line with the Academy Trust Handbook and Health and Safety legislation
- to assist and advise executive leaders, headteachers and trustees in meeting their responsibilities for health and safety and ensure that they are kept aware of their legal and management responsibilities for health and safety
- to recommend and direct appropriate interventions when safety performance requires action and improvement
- to ensure the Trust's safety management systems reflect the Trust Board's priorities for the management of health and safety and that they provide for the effective monitoring, flagging and reporting of health and safety concerns
- to ensure there is an appropriate health and safety audit system and schedule in place and report on the results of such audits as appropriate
- to lead and manage any investigations into significant health and safety failings at the Trust or its schools and report on the underlying causes of any incident to the Trust Board. This includes ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to prevent a recurrence
- to work with individual school Health and Safety Champions and support staff to ensure the continuous development and improvement of health and safety procedures and practice
- to ensure that specific training needs in relation to health and safety for all Trust staff are identified and that an on-going training programme, which identifies current and future requirements, is in place
- to ensure adequate resources in terms of time, finance and personnel are available to implement and manage health and safety across the Trust and its schools effectively

Headteachers

The responsibilities of headteachers are:

- to monitor and review health and safety performance on a regular basis and implement any identified improvements in line with the Trust's *Scheme of Delegation*

- to delegate health and safety duties to wider school team as appropriate e.g. school business managers, site managers
- to conduct an annual review of any contextualised school health and safety addendums in line with the Trust's annual review of this Policy
- to work with the Director of Estates to produce an annual *health and safety action plan* that outlines priorities and targets to be achieved to improve all local aspects of health and safety practice and align with the Trust's wider health and safety priorities

Central and school staff

The responsibilities of all staff are:

- to ensure the Trust and individual school health and safety arrangements and associated procedures are followed at all times
- to bring to the attention of their line manager, headteacher or health and safety champion any apparent deficiencies in procedures, systems or equipment that may expose children, staff, parents or visitors to unnecessary danger or risks to their health and safety
- to use all work equipment and personal protective equipment properly and in accordance with Trust protocols and any training received
- to assist the Trust during any investigations of health and safety incidents/breaches
- work safely at all times giving due consideration for the safety of others
- to notify their line manager of any health and safety training needs
- to assist the Trust in improving health and safety systems and performance through consultation, co-operation and communication
- to inform their line manager immediately of any physical or mental condition affecting their ability to work safely

Site managers

The responsibilities of site managers at Trust schools are:

- to support leaders with the identification and development of practical and effective safe working procedures
- to work with senior leaders to oversee health and safety functions in school
- to work with the Director of Estates to carry out periodic inspections and audits of health and safety
- to report any failings in health and safety performance to the headteacher
- to work with senior leaders to ensure that all health and safety related incidents are appropriately investigated, reported and recorded
- to report any communication or contact with any of the relevant enforcement authorities to the headteacher and Director of Estates immediately
- to maintain appropriate levels of professional knowledge in order to fulfil their role in a competent manner

- to set a good personal example of health and safety behaviour and preventative risk management.

Health and safety targets

In order to achieve continual improvement in health and safety performance across the Trust and its schools, and demonstrated effective governance, the *Audit and Risk Sub Committee* will conduct a twice-yearly monitoring review of overall health and safety performance and set targets for performance improvement. The targets will be documented and appropriately communicated for action by the Director of Estates. They will be generated from data and information collated from performance reviews, risk registers and internal audit outcomes.

Effective risk assessment

Safe work practices and environments can only be secured if, as far as reasonable possible, hazards are carefully identified, assessed and evaluated. This continual process of risk assessment seeks to quantify the level of risk to which people are exposed. Once the risk has been quantified, it is possible to determine what actions are necessary to either remove or reduce the risk. Significant risks will be identified and recorded on the appropriate template and uploaded to a *Health and Safety Risk Register*.

The Trust and its schools will be diligent in risk management for all children, parents, staff and visitors with special attention paid to the following groups:

- **Pregnant staff** - occasionally work in the Trust or its schools may be potentially damaging to the health of a pregnant member of staff or their unborn child. Additionally, there may also be potential risks to a new baby and nursing mother. Staff have a responsibility to notify the Trust or their headteacher when they become aware that they are pregnant. Once notified, additional risk assessments to evaluate the level of risk facing the pregnant staff member or nursing mother will be conducted and any mitigation strategies considered and put into place
- **Children with additional needs** – the safeguarding and health and safety needs of the Trust’s most vulnerable children is a major priority and will not be knowingly compromised. When required additional risk assessments will be conducted and recorded by senior leaders to ensure children’s safety is secured and any additional safety needs are met. The results of any bespoke risk assessment will be communicated to parents/guardians as well as to the child/ren involved
- **Adults with disabilities and particular health conditions** – the Trust is committed to enabling people living with disabilities and particular health conditions (including mental health conditions), to get into and stay in work. This will be supported by regular monitoring and a scheduled system of risk assessments

- **Students on work experience** – students may occasionally join the Trust or its schools to complete a relatively short period of work experience. Risk assessments will be conducted for all periods of work experience.

Risk control, reduction and removal

The Trust and its schools are diligent in applying effective risk management systems. Risk control is the process of designing, implementing and maintaining measures that reduce a particular risk. The primary purpose of risk management is to identify the measures necessary to either remove a risk completely or put in appropriate control measures to reduce the level of risk. The Trust and its schools use three possible ways to reduce risk:

- Reduce the likelihood
- Reduce the severity
- Reduce the likelihood and severity

Resultant control measures are based on the hierarchy of control outlined below:

- Eliminate the hazard at source
- Reduce the hazard at source
- Remove individuals/groups from the hazard
- Contain the hazard by an enclosure
- Reduce individual/group exposure
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

When identifying the required control measures, the Trust and its schools will give consideration to the following:

- **The number of people protected by the control measure.** It is better to use a control measure that will protect everyone, rather than relying on individuals to provide their own protection
- **The extent to which the continuing effectiveness of the control measure** relies on human behaviour. Apart from routine maintenance, it is best to have a control measure that operates without human intervention. When a control measure relies on people, it is inevitable that on some occasions it will not be used, either deliberately or inadvertently
- **The cost of the control measure.** This will be calculated over the lifetime of the control measure as some control measures have a low installation cost but are expensive to maintain, while in some cases the opposite can be true

- **The extent to which the control measure reduces the risk.** Ideally, the control measure will reduce the risk to near zero, often in practice this is not achievable, and it will be necessary to devise a detailed safe system of work.

For note:

The above bullets allow the Trust and its schools to identify whether the legal obligation of *reasonably practicable* has been achieved

For note:

The Trust has specific guidance on carrying out risk assessments for the following identified hazards.

- Noise
- Manual handling operations
- COSHH Assessments

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

In normal circumstances PPE is not regularly used in the Trust or its schools and is employed as a last resort when other control measures are impractical or not possible. The nature of occasional activities may dictate that PPE is the only acceptable control measure and its use will be justified on associated risk assessments. For the ongoing management of covid-19 the Trust will keep all preventative measures under review in line with its *Infection Control Policy* and *Outbreak Management Plan*.

The Trust and its schools will consider the following points when selecting PPE:

- is it appropriate for the risks involved and the conditions where exposure may occur?
- does it take account of any ergonomic requirements and constraints?
- does it consider the health and wellbeing of the person who will wear it?
- does it fit the wearer correctly and allow for appropriate adjustments?
- will it effectively prevent or adequately control the risks without increasing the overall risk e.g. the provision of ear defenders that would prevent audible warning sounds being heard?
- is the chosen PPE legally compliant?

Staff use of PPE:

- prior to using PPE, all staff will be provided with information, instruction and training in its use
- information will cover the hazards that the PPE is designed to protect against and any limitations in its effectiveness
- instruction will cover how to use the PPE correctly, how to test it, any maintenance that is required and how to report faults
- training will cover the use of the PPE including its cleaning and maintenance

Use of items of PPE will be recorded using the designated Trust templates. This records the type of PPE supplied, the date of issue, frequency of maintenance required, training provided, and hazards protected against.

Communication and consultation

The Trust believes that the development of a positive attitude and approach to health and safety involves the whole Trust community. The Trust is committed to communicating and consulting on health and safety issues and how they will be managed.

Over the period 2022 to 2024, the Trust aims to formalise means of consulting and communicating. Schools will establish health and safety forums as a means of communicating Trust/school health and safety initiatives, so that feedback and concerns can be explored and resolved. The outcomes of health and safety reviews will be used to inform school forums.

For note:

The Trust will always ensure that when information regarding pupil or staff health and safety is requested, it will be provided in a timely manner.

Health and safety training

The Trust recognises the importance of a clear programme of health and safety training for both senior leaders and staff. All staff receive relevant and timely training appropriate to their role to ensure they are both competent and confident in meeting their responsibilities.

All training is provided by competent and professional trainers and evaluated for value for money and effectiveness. Records of health and safety training are maintained. The Director of Estates, executive leaders and school headteachers are responsible for periodically reviewing the training needs of staff and ensuring regular refresher training is provided where appropriate.

First aid

The Trust and its schools are highly vigilant about effective first aid provision and the associated training of staff. When accidents happen the Trust is committed to ensuring that appropriate first aid is immediately available. To achieve this:

- first aid provision is set out in the Trust's *First Aid Policy*. Further guidance can be obtained in the *Approved Code of Practice L74 – First Aid at Work* which is available to all schools
- all schools nominate a responsible person to periodically i.e. monthly, check the first aid equipment and facilities
- when taking pupils off site staff are to be provided with an appropriate first aid kit for use in the event of an emergency requiring the provision of first aid

- all staff receive basic first aid training
- no Trust staff, while at work, are to provide first aid above their level of competence.
For note: executive leaders and headteachers are to ensure all staff are aware of this

Occupational stress and workload pressures

The Trust is aware that stress-related ill health is an increasing issue. In many cases, the sources of stress are not work related but should still be taken seriously and may affect an individual's capacity for work. The Trust is committed to maintaining a focus on prevention through good staff health and wellbeing management practices and sensitive support. On appointment health declarations are also completed to ensure individual staff needs are identified and responded to as far as is reasonably possible.

Workload pressures

The Trust is committed to monitoring staff workload and taking effective action where this may become excessive for whatever reason. In some situations, a member of staff may be at risk of a greater level of occupational stress due to taking on additional responsibility or promotion. It is incumbent on senior leaders to identify the potential for this before appointing to the position. Additionally, where staff members believe they are suffering from increased levels of occupational stress, they have a responsibility to bring this to the attention of their line manager straight away. To support this work, the Trust uses a range of practical resources from government aimed at helping senior leaders reduce the workload of teachers in particular. This includes the *School Workload Reduction Toolkit*.

Use of occupational health services

- **New staff**
Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that all *fitness to work* employment checks are made when employing new staff. This ensures that new staff are fit for employment and that the work they will be involved in will not present a threat to their health and safety.
- **Sickness Absence**
Where a staff member is either away from work on long-term sick, or suffers from recurrent short-term sickness absence, the Trust's *Staff Absence Policy* and associated procedures are followed.
- **Management of staff injury**
Where a staff member has been injured through any aspect of their work at the Trust, the advice of occupational health services will be sought in order to provide support to the staff member, increase the possibility of an early return to work and also reduce the possibility of a negligence claim.
- **Health Surveillance**
On rare occasions there may be need for identified staff to undergo health surveillance. This is likely in the following circumstances:

- where a staff member may be using hazardous substances that could lead to skin or respiratory irritation, high noise or vibration levels or hazardous substances that could damage the lungs or other parts of the body
- to determine the need for health surveillance from the information gained when the associated risk assessment is carried out
- where specific individual needs have been identified. Where it is considered necessary for a staff member to be placed under health surveillance, advice should be obtained from the Director of Estates

Fire safety

Fire and the effects of fire are one of the areas that could potentially affect all pupils and staff. This makes fire safety an important and ongoing consideration for the Trust. To reduce the likelihood of fire occurring and to minimise the effects should one occur, a fire risk assessment is carried out regularly and contractors are expected to conduct risk assessments before commencing any on site activity. The purpose of any fire risk assessment is to:

- identify potential fire hazards in the workplace/school
- decide who might be in danger in the event of a fire or while trying to escape from it
- evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide if the existing fire precautions are adequate
- identify the adequacy and suitability of the fire detection and fire warning systems
- ensure that there are adequate and suitable means of escape from the building/site in the event of a fire
- identify the training needs of staff regarding evacuation and fire prevention

The Director of Estates and headteachers are responsible for ensuring that all fire risk assessments are completed and that there is an effective and workable emergency plan in place for the Trust office and all schools

Violence at work

The Trust is committed to keeping all pupils and staff safe. The risk of exposure to violent behaviour is taken exceptionally seriously. Every effort will be made to prevent any such exposure and unacceptable behaviour from any individual will not be tolerated.

For note: This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's *Acceptable Behaviour Policy*.

Office safety

The Trust's central team is based at Brindley Place in Birmingham. It is important that their health and safety is also taken seriously. In order to manage office risks, concerns and response the Trust's Office Manager acts as the health and safety champion for the office. This task includes:

- ensuring relevant and appropriate risk assessments are scheduled and carried out regularly
- periodic inspection of the office environment to identify any safety hazards
- co-ordination of health and safety training requirements for office-based staff
- ensuring adherence to the landlord's *Landmark Health and Safety Policy and Procedures*

Reporting, investigation and record keeping

Reporting, investigation and record keeping are all essential aspects of the Trust's health and safety procedures. They serve to demonstrate both internally and externally that we have met the requirements of our Policy and associated statutory responsibilities. All are critical in enabling the Trust to present a clearly documented audit trail in any prosecution or civil claim. There are numerous reports and records the Trust is required to keep with each serving a bespoke purpose. Examples are outlined below:

- **implementation** - this relates to Trust systems and processes i.e. risk assessments, action plans, health and safety contractual requirements, training needs analysis and training provided
- **reporting and investigation of incidents** - all incidents involving Trust staff or operations should be reported as soon as a possible after their occurrence and at least **within 48 hours** to the Director of Estates. Incidents will be appropriately investigated in accordance with Trust processes. The level of investigation and responsibility for any investigation will depend on the seriousness of the incident
- **injuries, ill health** - incident reports, RIDDOR reports, GP notes
- **statutory requirements** - certain items of equipment require periodic tests and examinations; this includes fire equipment, electrical equipment, alarms and any Trust vehicles
- **active monitoring** - in order to ensure that the Trust is managing health and safety adequately, scheduled monitoring visits will be made to school sites by the Director of Estates
- **reactive monitoring** - where investigation of a particular incident has taken place, high quality reporting will be critical to managing improvements that may be required and implementing any lessons learned
- **evidence** - well maintained reports and records will provide statistical evidence regarding the Trust's performance improvements over time and the implementation of

this Policy. The Trust supports schools to determine the type and nature of records required

- **data and information** – any data collected is retained for various periods of time determined by the reason for collection. Examples include:
 - **statutory tests.** The records from statutory tests generally only need to be kept until they are replaced by a more recent test certificate
 - **risk assessments.** If for a general risk assessment, they need to be kept for a minimum of 3 years. If for occupational health surveillance, it can be anything up to 40 years
- **confidentiality** - Some data collected will be, by its nature, confidential. This is particularly the case with occupational health information. It is the responsibility of senior leaders to ensure that all confidential information is stored appropriately and in line with GDPR requirements with only appropriate and authorised access to it

Contact with health and safety regulatory authorities

From time to time, the Trust recognises there may be a need to have contact with one of the government's regulatory authorities e.g. over the period of a pandemic. In order to maintain a consistency of approach any such contact is notified to the Director of Estates at the earliest opportunity, particularly where enforcement action may be a possibility. At all times, the Trust will endeavour to maintain a close liaison with the *Health and Safety Executive* (HSE) with regard to health and safety matters. To maintain a positive relationship with the HSE, any issues related to enforcement or the conduct of inspectors, schools should contact the Director of Estates before entering into dialogue at a local level.

Ongoing management of covid-19 virus

Over the period of this Policy the Trust continues to be alert to the risks associated with the ongoing covid-19 virus. It continues to take a rigorous approach to protecting all pupils, staff and wider stakeholders. Although formal restrictions have been stood down by government, the Trust remains highly vigilant in monitoring infection rates and maintaining a set of agreed preventative measures. More information can be found on the Trust's website under the Covid-19 tab. This covers:

- risk management and governance
- social distancing arrangements
- cleaning, hygiene and handwashing
- use of PPE
- ventilation and hand washing
- communications to pupils, staff and parents
- working from home
- vulnerable staff

Review

The Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, parents and visitors and after any accident or event considered to be serious.

Monitoring and review	Board of Trustees Asset Management and Site Officer
Links	Staff Code of Conduct Policy First Aid Policy Lettings Policy Risk Management Policy Medical Needs Policy Disciplinary Policy Infection Control Policy Acceptable Behaviour Policy Ongoing covid-19 management strategy
Staff responsible	Headteachers Executive leaders School operational managers Health and safety champions Site management staff
Committee responsible	Audit and Risk Committee
Reviewed	July 2022
Next review	July 2023
Sign off by Chair of Trust	

*Please note that should there be any changes/further national guidance issued relevant to this Policy, it will be updated accordingly prior to the review date shown above and referred to the next Trust Board meeting.

Change Management

Issue No	Change date	Change description
1.0	Sept 2017	Initial release
2.0	Nov 2018	Updated, signed off and released
3.0	Nov 2019	Review
4.0	Nov 2020	Review
5.0	June 2021	Review
6.0	July 2022	Review