



**STOUR VALE
ACADEMY
TRUST**

Health and Safety Policy

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1. Introduction

Our commitment to health and safety forms part of the Stour Vale Academy Trust's wider agenda of social responsibility, sustainability, corporate governance and the management of risks, and ultimately the quality of education delivered to our communities. We require this same commitment from employees and contractors. Stour Vale's health and safety policies can only be implemented with the full co-operation of everyone involved and all employees must take active care of their own and others' safety.

We believe that achievement of high standards of health and safety reduces harm and losses due to accidents, incidents, and ill health, and therefore makes good business sense.

Health and Safety is integral to our asset management, the management of our human resources, and organisational development, and is included in all Stour Vale policies when and where appropriate.

All Board members and employees of Stour Vale Academy Trust are asked to join in the ownership of this document so that it achieves the aim of providing a healthy and safe place of work.

Chief Executive Officer

Date: January 2024

2. Aim, objectives and principles

2.1. Policy Aim

This policy is one aspect of our commitment to the well-being of all pupils, employees and visitors. It will support our goal of being an organisation where everyone can fulfil their potential free from work related injury or ill health; this includes employees, pupils, contractors and others who may be affected by our work activities.

2.2. Policy Objectives

- to conduct all our activities safely and in compliance with legislation and best practice;
- to provide safe working conditions and equipment;
- to promote a positive safety culture;
- to ensure our procurement promotes best practice in health and safety;
- to establish targets and action plans for continuous improvement of health and safety performance;
- to report our health and safety performance both internally and externally.

2.3. Policy Principles

Control - those with line management roles are responsible for the clear allocation of health and safety responsibilities and for monitoring that those responsibilities are implemented.

Co-operation - we all have a responsibility to co-operate as individuals and as groups to make health and safety a collaborative effort.

Communication - communication of health and safety information is essential and care must be taken to continually review and improve this. The Stour Vale Academy Trust promotes the sharing of best practice and transparency.

Competence - developing the health and safety competence of trustees, employees and contractors is at the heart of successful health and safety management.

These guiding principles are interrelated and interdependent so that consistent activity in each area is needed to promote a climate in which a positive health and safety culture can develop.

3. Organisational structure and responsibilities

This section details the specific health and safety roles and responsibilities assigned to the following posts and functions.

3.1. Chairperson of the Stour Vale Academy Trust Board

To ensure the work of the organisation is conducted in accordance with the policy and procedures for health and safety and with due regard for any statutory provisions set out in legislation.

3.2. Risk and Audit Committee

The members of the risk and audit committee will take steps which are reasonably practical and within its remit to ensure that there are adequate financial and physical resources available to support this policy. The Committee will monitor statutory compliance and expect leaders to demonstrate assurance in all areas of health and safety.

3.3. Stour Vale Central Team

The Central Team takes overall responsibility for Stour Vale's health and safety performance and in particular is required to ensure that:

- decision-making is in line with the policy and procedures for health and safety and any statutory provisions set out in legislation;
- adequate resources are made available for health and safety;
- health and safety performance is continually reviewed;
- suitable action plans for improving health and safety are developed and implemented;
- a Stour Vale health and safety audit programme is implemented and progress of remedial actions is monitored;
- a Trust-wide mandatory training programme is made available to schools and uptake of training monitored;
- members of the Central Team are available for support and advice on all aspects of Health and Safety;
- the knowledge and expertise of a competent person are made available for schools to call upon;
- schools are supported with accident reporting arrangements regarding RIDDOR and HSE guidance.

Central Team – Key Personnel

Chief Executive Officer	Mrs R Salter
Chief Finance Officer	Mr S Ralph
Director Of Operations	Mrs L Broxton
Trust Business Leader	Dr L Braznell
H&S officer for RIDDOR	Dr L Braznell
Evolve Coordinator	Dr L Braznell
Competent Person	Clearwater Risk Management

3.4. Local Governing Bodies

School	
Chair of Governors	
Health and Safety Link Governor	
Members of the Health and Safety Committee.	

All local governing bodies shall ensure that all the decisions they make are in line with the Stour Vale policy and procedures for health and safety and any statutory provisions set out in legislation. This principle is to be borne in mind by all committees and during all contacts with employees and members of the public.

Health and safety will form part of the headteacher's report at each LGB meeting. Accident statistics and any other items of statutory or legislative importance are to be reported. A full health and safety report to the Board will be made in Summer 2 each year. The school should develop a H&S committee comprising the School Business and Site Managers and one member of SLT. This committee should aim to meet termly. They may wish to invite the link governor for H&S. Appendix 1, 2 and 3 for LGB H&S templates.

3.5. Headteachers

All headteachers take overall responsibility for the management of health and safety within their school and sphere of influence. In particular headteachers are required to:

- ensure adequate resources are available to successfully manage health and safety within their school;
- ensure implementation of the Stour Vale health and safety policy and procedures;

- ensure the development and implementation of a school health and safety action plan for continuous improvement in health and safety;
- ensure development, implementation and review of a school specific health and safety policies, organisation and arrangements in line with Stour Vale's health and safety policy and procedures;
- uphold the guiding principles for health and safety and require the same from all staff;
- ensure development, implementation and review of structures and systems within the school to promote management control, co-operation, communication and competence on health and safety matters;
- ensure effective proactive and reactive monitoring of health and safety at all management levels;
- measure and review school performance against key performance indicators, targets and school health and safety action plans;
- ensure implementation of a school health and safety audit programme and monitor progress of remedial actions.

3.6. School Leaders, Line Managers and Supervisors (Site Managers, Business Managers and SLT)

School	
Head Teacher	
Deputy Head Teacher(s)	
Senior Leadership Team	
Site Manager	
Business Manager	
Named First Aider	
Educational Visit Coordinator	

School leaders, line managers and supervisors (site managers, business managers and SLT) are required to:

- be accountable for the implementation of the Policy, health and safety and risk control within their management area;
- ensure that responsibilities for safety, health and welfare are properly assigned and understood by employees, and where appropriate develop local procedure specific to their area;
- ensure that hazards are identified, and that written Risk Assessments are up to date and reviewed regularly;
- make sure that there is communication and participation at all levels in health and safety activities;

- supervise work activities adequately to ensure good health and safety standards are maintained;
- make sure that employees new to school successfully complete a health and safety induction programme;
- ensure active monitoring of health and safety to ensure compliance with health, safety and welfare legislation;
- seek advice and liaise with the competent person, the Trust Central Team where necessary;
- inform the Central Team of issues which are beyond their control, or where standards fall below legal requirements or do not enable compliance with the Health and Safety Policy;
- within their individual academy ensure that all site related health and safety tasks including statutory maintenance checks are undertaken at appropriate frequencies to ensure that site related H&S issues are managed.

3.7. Trade Union Safety Representatives

School	
Trade Union Representative for H&S	

Trade Union Safety Representatives are fully consulted on matters affecting the health and safety of employees they represent, in compliance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

Where schools have been advised of the name and contact details of Health and Safety Union representatives, they should notify them of scheduled H&S committee meetings and invite them to attend.

3.8. Employees

All employees have an important part to play in protecting themselves and others. Health and safety responsibilities are based on legal obligations and are subject to Stour Vale's disciplinary procedures.

All employees are required to read and sign to agree to adhere to the Trusts health and safety rules at the start of each academic year or upon employment:

Report Concerns

1. Look after each other, health and safety is a team game.

Health and safety is about people; it's about practical steps to protect staff and pupils from real harm and suffering and it's about developing a culture whereby, at Stour Vale, we look after each other. Health and safety is everyone's responsibility.

2. Think before you start work – know the risks.

Understand what can harm you. You should know the risks of any activities before you start and understand the measures put in place to reduce them. Ensure you have read a risk assessment before starting an activity you think may require one. Circumstances can change so always think about potential risks before you start work. It's important to remember that health and safety is about risk management not risk aversion; it's about taking sensible precautions to stop people coming to harm.

3. Act safely – follow safe working procedures.

Always follow the school's safety rules. For example, do not stand on chairs or tables to put up displays, only use an appropriate ladder that you have been trained to use. Do not lift heavy loads, use a trolley.

4. Keep your workplace clear and tidy.

Good housekeeping is important; keeping workplaces and classrooms clear and tidy can prevent many of the more common hazards such as slip, trips fall accidents, fires etc. Check floors regularly for trip hazards and clear up spillages immediately. Keep the coat lockers tidy and closed.

5. Report ALL accidents and near misses.

Research has shown that, on average, for every major injury at work there are up to 200 non-injury accidents (near misses). Report all accidents, if an adult is involved in an accident this must go in the workplace accident book, if it is a child then follow your school's local procedures and for more serious incidents the Stour Vale Accident form is completed. Always see a first aider if you or a child has an accident.

All near misses or concerns can be reported following your school's local procedures. Please remember that if you are ever involved in an accident or near miss you could prevent a more serious accident to a friend, colleague or anyone else by spending the few minutes it takes to report.

Please seek advice from Laura Braznell, the Trust Business Leader, about serious accidents to determine if they are RIDDOR reportable.

6. Only undertake work for which you are trained and competent.

Always ensure you are competent and have the correct training before undertaking work. If you are in any doubt stop work and speak with your manager. Risk assessment should identify tasks for which training or instruction is required.

7. Use the correct equipment for the task.

Never be tempted to use the wrong equipment for the job. Many accidents happen because people have not chosen the right equipment for the work to be done. Controlling the risk often means planning ahead and ensuring that suitable equipment or machinery is available. You should check the machinery is suitable for the work – think about how and where it will be used. Ensure that any required checks and maintenance have been carried out and that you are competent to use the equipment.

8. Stop any work that becomes unsafe.

If you have any doubts on whether the work you are doing or your workplace is safe, stop work and inform your line manager. You have the legal right to stop work if you feel you are in serious and imminent danger.

4. Arrangements for the Health and Safety Management System

The arrangements for the health and safety management system (HSMS) are systematically applied in all activities throughout Stour Vale Academy Trust.

4.1. Health and Safety Policy

School Health and Safety Policy – All schools are required to establish school specific health and safety policy statements and organisational arrangements to implement the Stour Vale policy and HSMS which include school needs and responsibilities.

4.2. Statutory Compliance

All schools within Stour Vale Academy Trust have a legal obligation to ensure that the premises are maintained to a required level as set out in the DFE Standards for School Premises documentation and that statutory compliance checks are carried in accordance with HSE guidelines in relation to Fire, Asbestos, Legionella and electrical issues. All schools must as a

minimum have the following documentation in place and be able to demonstrate that up-to-date checks have been carried out by a competent person:

Fire Safety:

Fire Risk Assessment

Maintenance of firefighting equipment to include extinguishers, fire doors, alarms and emergency lighting

Legionella:

Legionella Risk Assessment

Regime of monthly monitoring and testing of water outlets, TMV's, cold water storage and shower heads

Asbestos:

Asbestos Register

Asbestos Management plan

Risk Assessment for all ACM's

Electrical Testing:

5 year fixed wire inspection

PAT testing records

Stour Vale Academy Trust utilises a cloud-based health and safety software package to manage, maintain and monitor statutory compliance, risk assessment and accident reporting across all member schools. Headteachers must ensure persons with delegated responsibility for these areas are accurately recording all of the required information in a timely manner into the system.

4.3. Organising

Responsibilities

The senior management team of *insert school name* are committed to ensuring the highest standards of care for their staff, pupils, visitors and others who work on behalf of *insert school name*.

We believe that an excellent school is by definition a safe school. Since we are committed to excellence, it follows that minimising the risks posed by our activities is inseparable from all our other objectives. We plan to achieve

our goals by developing, implementing and maintaining our school's health and safety management system.

Our senior management team are committed to:

- the continual improvement of our health and safety performance;
- complying with all our legal and other regulatory requirements.

We will achieve these key objectives through:

- hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control – ensuring that our current and future health and safety issues that impact on our school are managed effectively;
- involvement of people – ensuring the involvement of all staff in the success of the school is achieved, and that people's knowledge and skills are developed to meet their own needs and the needs of *insert school name*;
- effective school management – ensuring that all key activities and associated resources are managed and maintained;
- supplier relationships – ensuring that we manage the selection and performance of all our service providers.

This policy is communicated to all persons working on behalf of this school and is subject to regular review.

Consultation

Consultation is achieved through standard health and safety agenda items on all local governing body meetings, through regular health and safety agenda items on senior leadership meetings and staff meetings/briefings and through recognised Trade Union representation.

Professional Development / Training

Health and safety competencies are core skills vital to the effective conduct of employee duties. Competencies are developed through induction and professional development at both trust and school levels. Stour Vale Academy Trust has developed a health and safety training matrix detailing mandatory training that all staff and those staff specific roles must complete. The Trust also offers guidance on suggested training for best practice. The Trust has made a training platform available to all schools to access these courses (Appendix 4).

Job Descriptions/Employee Contracts

Suitable clauses to highlight health and safety responsibilities are included in employee contracts and job descriptions appropriate to individual roles.

Communication

Health and safety information is communicated through line management with health and safety as a regular agenda item at all levels of team meetings. Trust health and safety documentation is developed and made available in electronic and hard copy format. The Intranet, briefings, notice boards and signage are all methods for health and safety communication.

4.4. Planning and Implementing

Health and Safety Action Plans

Headteachers are required to monitor and review action plans, including those produced by external compliance agencies to ensure continuous improvement in health and safety performance.

Risk Assessments

Line managers with health and safety responsibilities conduct and record risk assessments for activities and ensure the findings are brought to the attention of employees. Risk assessments are reviewed and updated periodically and following any significant changes, to ensure they remain adequate and relevant. The Trust has made a bank of risk assessments and a standard template (appendix 5) available through the cloud-based platform, school staff should use this system to support the writing of local level risk assessments. Schools should have as a minimum a risk register that includes the activities set out in appendix 6.

Accident Reporting

Schools must record all accidents and incidents that occur to pupils, staff or other visitors whilst on school site.

Accidents involving employees must be recorded in a staff accident book compliant with HSE legislation and retained for 3 years from the date of the accident. All accidents that require a member of staff to leave work before the end of their normal working day and or lead to 7 or more days of sickness, that require medical attention or where a member of staff is taken straight to hospital must be reported at Trust level.

For minor pupil accidents schools may determine their own local reporting arrangements if a written record is kept in school (and retained for 25 years from the date of the accident) and communicated with parents. Where a pupil has had an accident and requires a medical attention from a GP or hospital, is collected by parents / carers before the end of the normal school day and /or is taken straight to hospital, this is reportable at Trust level.

Member schools must record the above accidents on the Trust cloud-based system and headteachers must ensure that this is updated accurately and in a timely fashion.

Contractors

Line managers with health and safety responsibilities must manage all contractors brought onto member school premises to ensure that all work carried out is in accordance with this and other H&S policies, that the safety of all pupils, staff and visitors is maintained at all times and that the safety and security of the premises is upheld.

Contractors should be selected through a robust procurement process that takes into account the reputation of the contractor and their history working for the Trust. Schools are expected to seek trade references prior to engagement in any work. Schools should ask for evidence of liability and other required insurance along with risk assessments and method statements for programmes of work.

The school has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all contractors whilst on Stour Vale sites and will share the register of Asbestos containing materials (ACM's) with all contractors at the point of engagement. If work is disturbing areas of limitation on any survey a targeted refurbishment survey must be done by a competent person before any work takes place.

Policy and Procedures – Trust and school health and safety procedures are produced following policy review. Policy is the standards, systems and guidelines for the implementation of control measures for specific health and safety risks. Procedures are developed and implemented in accordance with the risk profile of Stour Vale Academy Trust and individual schools. Trust policy applies to all schools. However, procedure may differ between schools to ensure that it meets local needs and requirements. All health and safety policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated when appropriate.

4.5. Measuring Performance

Proactive health and safety monitoring is a line management function. Health and safety performance is formally measured during line manager and supervisor inspection in accordance with trust health and safety policies.

Reactive measurement is by line managers and supervisors implementing the health and safety policies for accident/incident reporting and investigation.

In addition Stour Vale Academy Trust measures performance by audit, inspection and through accident/incident reporting and investigation.

4.6. Reviewing Performance

Performance on compliance to the policy is reviewed and reported at Local Governing Body meetings, the Central Team and the Board of Trustees on a formal and regular basis. Performance is measured against health and safety performance indicators and targets, and in terms of the achievement of health and safety action plans. Opportunities are sought for credible and suitable benchmarking.

4.7. Auditing

In addition to any health and safety audit and review process carried out by or commissioned by the trust, the headteacher within each school ensures that suitable audit programmes are in place and audit action plans are fully implemented. Stour Vale Academy Trust routinely review the audits across academies to ensure compliance.