

Health and Safety Policy December 2023

Where there is reference to Ambitious about Autism (AaA) in this policy, it is referring to both Ambitious about Autism (AaA) and Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST).

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline AaA's commitment and approach to the management of health and safety across the organisation.

2. The Statutory guidance

The following statutory guidance shall be followed by AaA:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Health and safety) Order 2005.

3. Policy statement

This policy makes clear the organisation's commitment to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe working and learning environment for all its staff, learners, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

4. Key principles

This policy must be shared with all employees and made available to volunteers, visitors and contractors. Each employee's Terms and Conditions of Employment must include a statement reminding them of their duties in relation to health and safety in the workplace. Roles with specific health and safety duties will be clearly outlined in the job description. Managers must communicate the content of this policy to all new employees during induction. All staff will be required to review this policy annually.

It is the policy of AaA that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out in respect to all activities, processes, and substances and that it is regularly reviewed and documented. Risk assessments are shared with relevant staff.

The following key principles should be followed to support the policy statement above:

a. Inspection, Audits and Compliance

Regular inspections will be carried out by managers of all the equipment, workplaces and work procedures. Statutory inspections of plant and equipment will be arranged by the Competent Person. The organisation uses iAuditor to record routine inspections of plant, buildings and equipment carried out by estates teams. Half-terminally detailed inspections are carried out at each setting by the Health & Safety Manager. Annual audits are carried out at each setting using an external consultant.

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b. Provision and Use of Work Equipment

The organisation will ensure that all equipment meets the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998. Routine maintenance will be carried out by qualified and competent contractors or professional bodies and records will be kept. Anyone using work equipment will receive information, instruction and appropriate training.

c. Working at Height

Staff should only work at height if they feel comfortable doing so. Appropriate PPE (including hi-vis vests and hard hats/bump-caps) should be worn. Short activities which require working at height should be dynamically risk assessed and signage used. Ladders are regularly inspected via iAuditor. Contractors working at height at our sites must only do so under instruction and with an appropriate permits in place. PPE must also be worn.

d. Training

The organisation ensures that all employees receive adequate induction, instruction and training when onboarded, introduced to new systems and equipment, or on being exposed to new or increased risk. The organisation’s Learning Management System (LMS) keeps records of all staff induction, compliance and refresher training. This includes first aid, fire safety, manual handling and general H&S awareness training. More specialised training is available as necessary. Staff responsible for site inductions will ensure staff are aware of evacuation routes, fire and first aid arrangements.

e. Electricity

Only trained and competent persons will be authorised to work on electrical equipment and distributions systems. The organisation will endeavour to ensure that those responsible have appropriate knowledge of the regulations in order to carry out their duties. PAT testing of all eligible equipment is undertaken in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and HSG107 (3rd Edition) maintaining portable electrical equipment. Routine visual inspections will be carried out by Estates Teams using iAuditor.

f. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

All substances (solvents, paint, oils, chemicals, cleaning agents etc.) will be risk assessed before being used. Health and safety requirements will be identified from the manufacturers’ safety data sheets. All necessary information concerning the hazards and precautions relating to chemical use will be given to the relevant employees. All COSHH assessments and data sheets will be reviewed annually or when new substances are introduced.

g. Manual Handling

Manual handling operations will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable, if they are shown to be a hazard. The organisation will ensure that employees are trained and informed of their own responsibility to make use of any equipment and PPE provided. Manual handling training is available to all on the organisation’s Learning Management System.

h. Noise

All reasonable steps to ensure the hearing of people working in settings is protected in accordance with the Noise at Work Regulations 2005. Where required, noise assessments will be conducted by a competent person to verify noise levels and assist in selecting the most appropriate means of reducing noise levels.

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i. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The organisation uses Cardinus Healthy Working Programme – an online self-assessment tool for DSE and healthy working practices. All staff who use display screen equipment (in settings and remotely) are required to do a self-assessment. Any high-scoring assessments will be reviewed and reasonable adjustments provided if necessary. Assessments are reviewed annually or in the event of changes to user’s work environment. Staff who work across sites or who do not have a fixed workstation are expected to dynamically self-assess in each instance. Staff who work from home must undertake an online self-assessment. The organisation will provide equipment for home working. Please see Hybrid Working Policy. The organisation provides contributions towards regular eye tests and glasses. More information is available on the [MyBenefitsatwork](#) portal. Employees should advise their line manager of any changes to their health or working environment which may negatively impact them.

j. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The organisation will ensure appropriate PPE is provided for any work activity exposing staff to risk. Staff who are issued with PPE will be informed of its use and limitations and should report any loss, damage or defect. PPE should be used appropriately for the activity for which it is intended.

k. Welfare Provisions

The organisation will provide appropriate and well-maintained facilities such as toilets, washing facilities, security lockers, drinking water and staff rooms.

l. Fire and Emergency Evacuation

The organisation will ensure adequate means are provided for fire prevention and protection. In the event of a fire, the saving of life will take precedence over the salvaging of property. Safe evacuation of learners is the priority of all staff working in education settings. No attempt should be made to fight fire unless you have been trained to do so. Fire risk assessments are carried out at all settings and reviewed annually. An emergency evacuation procedure has been created for each setting, with processes for calling fire service, incident controllers etc. Formal fire drills are carried out twice annually and will be arranged with co-located partners.

Management strategies for fire prevention include:

- vigilance by staff to ensure that potential hazards are kept under control
- training of staff, including incident controllers and fire wardens
- instruction to pupils, learners, staff, contractors and visitors
- control of fire risks e.g. tidiness and cleanliness, storage of chemicals, gas, electricity and electrical appliances, contractors on site, vandalism

Management strategies for fire protection include:

- provision of fire alarms, emergency exits, fire doors, fire extinguishers and blankets
- fire alarm, evacuation and emergency plans backed up by notices, drills and practice
- regular testing of fire alarms
- regular testing of emergency lighting and regular review of emergency exits
- display of appropriate fire instruction notices
- training of staff, including incident controllers and fire wardens
- instruction to pupils, learners, staff, contractors and visitors
- monitoring the effectiveness of fire precautions and processes

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Learners should be instructed to:

- identify the fire alarm
- know the action to take on hearing the alarm
- know the location of muster points

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) should be in place for those who require assistance or special arrangements to safely evacuate.

The following fire records are to be maintained:

- list of fire wardens and incident controllers
- fire alarm call point locations and checks
- weekly fire alarm tests
- fire alarm fault records
- fire alarm maintenance inspection
- emergency lighting maintenance inspection
- fire-fighting equipment routine monthly checks
- fire drills
- fire-fighting equipment tests and maintenance by contractors
- staff training records
- Fire risk assessment for each setting (updated annually)

m. Smoking & Vaping

Smoking and vaping is prohibited on all AaA premises.

n. Asbestos

All known and identified locations of asbestos are recorded. If works involve a likelihood of encountering asbestos a specific risk assessment will be carried out and works will be undertaken in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012. Where works are being carried out at co-located partner premises, asbestos records will be checked in advance of any works commencing.

o. Driving

The organisation requires staff to drive safely and legally whilst carrying out our business. Staff are expected to read, follow and sign the [Fleet Driving Policy](#).

p. Alcohol and Drugs

The use of illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while at work is strictly forbidden. Staff members must advise their line managers of any adverse effects of prescription medication so that a risk assessment may be carried out.

q. Wellbeing

The organisation promotes a good life-work balance and positive stress management to ensure the wellbeing of staff and volunteers. The organisation has a [Wellbeing Policy](#) and additional resources can be found on the Wellbeing Hub. Stress will be considered when carrying out risk assessments.

r. Lone Working

Lone working should be avoided if possible and a risk assessment must be put in place if staff are required to do so. For further information, please see Lone Working Policy.

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s. Pregnancy

A pregnancy risk assessment will be undertaken in line with organisation’s risk assessment procedures to ensure that no unnecessary risks arise from the nature of the role or work environment. Reasonable adjustments will be facilitated where possible and appropriate.

t. Young People at Work

The organisation has additional health and safety responsibilities for any young person doing work experience or volunteering. All work involving young people must be risk assessed and supervised by a competent person at all times.

Anyone under 18 years old must not be allowed to do work which:

- cannot be adapted to meet any physical limitations they may have
- exposes them to toxic substances or radiation
- involves extreme heat, noise or vibration

Young people over 16 years old can do work with attached risk under very special circumstances:

- The work is necessary for their training;
- The work is properly supervised by a competent person at all times;
- All risks are reduced to the lowest level, so far as is reasonably practicable.

u. Animals

No pets may be taken to any setting or offsite meeting unless they are Guide or Assistance dogs. Risk assessments must be issued before introducing animals into the educational environment or participating in any community visits involving animals. No member of staff or visitor is permitted to bring an animal into any setting without prior authorisation. Guide and Assistance dogs are permitted under the Equality Act 2010. Dog users should be made aware of the needs of our learners so that any potential risk can be avoided or reduced as much as possible.

v. Administration of Medication

The administration of medication to learners should be carried out in accordance with the First Aid and Health Care Policy and the Administration of Medication Policy.

w. Accident Reporting and Investigation

All accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported. If you are unaware what to do or how to report an incident, please contact the Head of Property or Health and Safety Manager.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR):

- Any reportable incidents must be submitted to the HSE by the responsible person at each setting.
- Post-incident investigations of all RIDDOR and other serious incidents will take place according to the Serious Incident Investigation Procedure. Outcomes and lessons learnt will be shared.
- The Head of Property will routinely provide compliance reports to Board, governing bodies, ELT and others.

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x. First Aid

The organisation will provide suitable and sufficient first aid at each setting. First aiders will be identified and appropriately trained. Where a site does not have a trained first aider (due to holidays, sickness etc.) an appointed person will be responsible for summoning help from medical professionals. An appointed person must not administer first aid. After First Aid is administered an incident report must be completed. Where the accident is likely to be reportable the appropriate member of management must be informed without delay.

y. Risk Assessments

A risk assessment must be completed for any task or activity where there is the potential risk to health, safety and wellbeing. The risk assessment should be completed by a person involved in the task who has sufficient knowledge, understanding, training and experience. General property risk assessments managed by the Property Team are reviewed annually.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

a. All Staff

It is the responsibility of everyone who works for the organisation to ensure the health and safety of colleagues, learners and all others affected by our undertakings. Staff should adhere to all policies, procedures and safe systems of work which create a good health and safety culture. Staff should be aware of first aid and fire/emergency evacuation arrangements and of incident/accident reporting procedures.

b. Competent Person

The competent person has sufficient technical knowledge, experience and training to be able to provide services in accordance with all relevant statutory requirements and safe systems of work. The management of health and safety across the organisation is the responsibility of the Head of Property.

c. Health & Safety Manager and Officers

The Health & Safety Manager is responsible for advising the organisation on all Health & Safety matters and statutory requirements and for carrying out post-incident investigations. Health & Safety Officers are responsible for dealing with H&S matters and liaising with the relevant authorities on a local level.

d. Line Managers & Care Managers

Managers are responsible for understanding the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and ensuring that health and safety requirements receive adequate consideration within their teams, settings and activities they are undertaking. They should ensure teams are adequately trained, competent and have been advised of all procedures, risk, hazards and rules. All managers should be aware of first aid and fire/emergency evacuation arrangements and of incident/accident reporting procedures.

e. The Education Director, Heads of College and Heads of School

The Education Director, Heads of College and Heads of Schools are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments have been carried out on all potentially hazardous activities undertaken by our settings, both internally and in the community. They provide monthly health and safety reports to the competent person on management actions taken related to incident/accident reports and general site updates.

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f. The Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is responsible for ensuring that health and safety requirements receive adequate consideration and funding. They are responsible for ensuring that all activities are thoroughly monitored, reviewed and amended and that the most reasonably practicable corrective action implemented. ELT should appoint and support the nominated competent person and enable them to carry out their duties under the policy.

g. Governing Bodies

Governing Bodies have a responsibility for health and safety in our educational and residential settings. They ensure that effective health and safety policies and practices are in place. The Governing Bodies review policies and monitor and report on behalf of Ambitious College, The Rise School, Spring School, St John’s College and TreeHouse School.

h. Trustees

Overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the Board of Trustees. They ensure that effective health and safety policies and practices are in place and are responsible for approving this policy.

6. Other Key Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following other policies, which can be found on the AaA website, or requested:

- Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy
- Adults at Risk Safeguarding and Protection Policy
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards: Practice and Procedures Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Volunteering Policy and Procedure
- Lone Working
- Hybrid Working Policy
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Fleet Policy
- First Aid and Health Care Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Serious Incident Policy and Procedure

7. Further Details

The following additional details can be found in the appendices section:

Appendix A - Health & Safety Roles and Responsibilities Chart

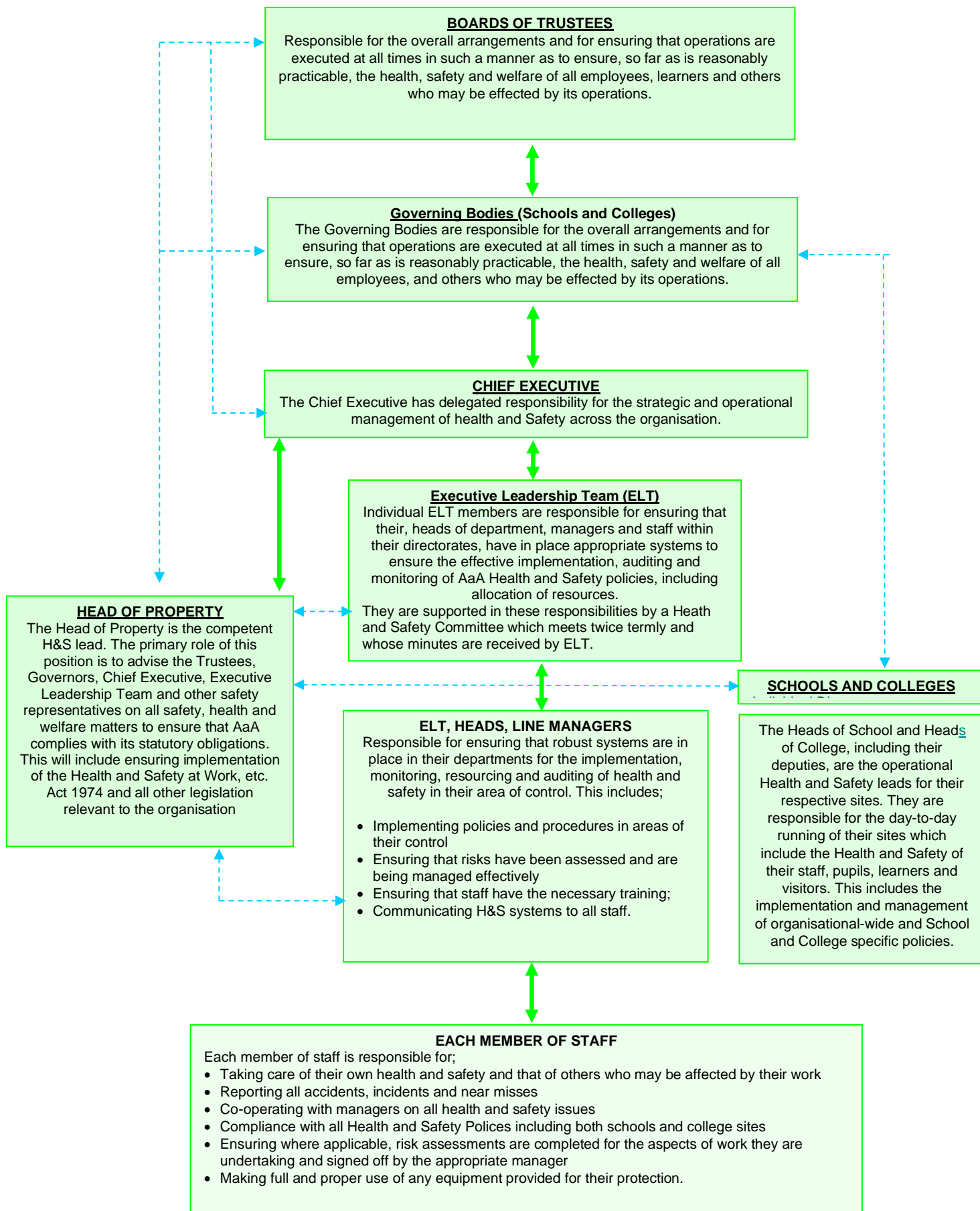
8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy shall be reviewed by the Deputy CEO and approved by the Joint Group Board Committee on an annual basis, or more frequently should there be any change in legislation or working practices.

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Appendix A

Health & Safety Roles and Responsibilities Chart



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