



The Circle Trust Document: **Health and Safety Policy**

Author:	Chief Executive Officer
Approver:	Trustees
Owner:	Human Resources Committee
Date:	December 2022
Next review:	September 2024
Category of policy:	Trust

Changes History:

Version	Date	Amended by:	Substantive changes:	Purpose
1.0	21.11.17	Exec Head	New Document	First release
1.1	26.9.18	Exec Head	Additional appendices for Stress Management	Update
1.2	6.5.20	Exec Head	Additional appendices for Covid19	Update
1.3	23.9.21	Exec Head	Change of Job Title from Chief Finance Officer to Chief Operating Officer	Review
1.4	15.12.22	Co Sec	Change of title from Executive Headteacher to CEO Addition of new section 9 (Amendments to this policy)	

1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1. The Circle Trust recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974) and gives its full commitment to doing everything reasonably practicable to protect the safety, health and welfare of all its employees and other persons whose health and safety may be affected by the Trust's activities. This policy explains The Circle Trust's underlying approach to health and safety management.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Health and safety is the responsibility of everyone who is part of The Circle Trust. This includes all Trustees, Local Advisors and employees at every level.
- 2.2. The Circle Trust recognises that schools are unique in that, unlike most other workplaces, the number of employees is small in comparison with the number of non-employees on a site and in that these non-employees are usually children or young people. Additionally students, including those with special needs, are engaged in a wide range of activities in classrooms, in practical rooms, in laboratories, in school halls and gymnasiums and outside, either in general play or organised games and sport.
- 2.3. High standards of health and safety are an integral part of our Trust's vision, values and performance standards; as such The Circle Trust is committed to the continuous improvement of our health and safety systems, building a positive health and safety culture for the benefit of our children and young people, employees and the efficiency of our operations.
- 2.4. The Circle Trust will employ up to date and competent source of health and safety advice to Headteachers and Local Advisory Boards and will supply such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to provide for the high standards of health and safety in our schools. Headteachers and Local Advisory Boards should not be anxious about responsibilities in reference to health and safety as long as they act in good faith and in accordance with this policy

3. The Aims and Objectives of Health and Safety Management

- 3.1. The Trust's overall health and safety approach is to:
 - 3.1.1. Protect children and young people, staff, assets and reputation from harm
 - 3.1.2. Have all Health and Safety responsibilities clearly defined, assigned and communicated
 - 3.1.3. Ensure that all employees are aware that they have a duty to work safely and to co-operate in all matters that affect their health and safety at work

- 3.1.4. Ensure compliance with the statutory requirements as a minimum standard of health, safety and welfare of employees at work and all others towards whom we have statutory health and safety obligations.
 - 3.1.5. Communicate the strategies for managing health and safety in the Trust
 - 3.1.6. Establish procedures which should be adopted in the health and safety management process
 - 3.1.7. Anticipate and respond to changing legislative requirements and adopting legal compliance as a minimum standard
 - 3.1.8. Recognise the link between efficiency and safety and health and aims to minimise the costs, losses and disruption which arise from work related accidents, ill health and dangerous occurrences.
 - 3.1.9. An effective health and safety policy leads to a healthy environment, which makes a school a pleasant place to work and study. Employees, children and young people perform better when they feel that their health and safety is looked after as part of the day-to-day management of the school. A safe school is more likely to be a successful school and an effective health and safety strategy is essential to enable the aim of a school
- 3.2. These aims and objectives will be achieved by:
- 3.2.1. Maintaining accurate, compliant documented procedures for health and safety control
 - 3.2.2. Providing suitable information, training and supervision
 - 3.2.3. Maintaining effective communication and the active involvement of all staff
 - 3.2.4. Maintaining an appropriate incident reporting and recording system, with investigation procedures to establish cause and prevent recurrence
 - 3.2.5. Monitoring arrangements

4. The management of Health and Safety

- 4.1. The Trustees have a fundamental role to:
- 4.1.1. Ensure this Health and Safety policy is compliant to Health and Safety legislation.
 - 4.1.2. Regularly review this policy to approve changes or improvements to key elements of its processes and procedures
 - 4.1.3. Be satisfied that health and safety arrangements are actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively

- 4.1.4. Review major health and safety issues or incidents affecting the Trust
- 4.2. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with the Chief Operating Officer will:
 - 4.2.1. Implement this policy
 - 4.2.2. Operationally lead, monitor and review all matters relating to health and safety
 - 4.2.3. Appoint a competent person(s) with appropriate qualifications and experience
 - 4.2.4. Provide Headteachers with guidance, interpretation and understanding of the risk management systems
 - 4.2.5. Provide a mechanism for health and safety management issues to be discussed and disseminated to all areas of the Trust
 - 4.2.6. Audit and review local school arrangements in relation to health and safety to ensure compliance
 - 4.2.7. Report serious incidents or infringement to Trustees
- 4.3. The Local Advisors have a fundamental role to:
 - 4.3.1. Be satisfied that health and safety arrangements are actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively in their school
 - 4.3.2. Receive a termly health and safety update
 - 4.3.3. Review major health and safety issues or incidents affecting their school
- 4.4. A Headteacher with the oversight of Local Advisors will:
 - 4.4.1. Have primary responsibility for managing health and safety in their school on a day-to-day basis
 - 4.4.2. Maintain, manage, monitor and review health and safety arrangements, ensuring specific school based roles and responsibilities are clear and adapt procedures as required in accordance to local circumstance
 - 4.4.3. Be responsible for reporting
 - 4.4.4. Have responsibility for promoting health and safety within day to day operations
 - 4.4.5. Ensure that health and safety management becomes a regular Local Advisor meeting item to allow consideration of exposure and to prioritise work in the light of effective risk analysis
 - 4.4.6. Ensure that health and safety management is incorporated at the conceptual stage of any project as well as throughout a project

4.4.7. Report early warning indicators and/or any serious incidents to their Local Advisors, the CEO and Chief Operating Officer

5. Risk assessment

- 5.1. Identifying health and safety risks is accomplished by carrying out a risk assessment
- 5.2. Some assessments are statutory requirements, or are covered by approved codes of practice. These assessments include those under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999. Assessments are also needed as part of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.
- 5.3. There are no fixed rules about how a risk assessment should be carried out. The nature of the risk assessment depends on the nature of the workplace and what is being done there. There is for Headteacher's use [The Circle Trust's Generic Risk Assessment Template](#) [here](#)
- 5.4. A risk assessment ought to conclude with actions for risk control. Some risk control measures might mean changes to the way activities are carried out and so will have an effect upon the organisation of the school.
- 5.5. Each risk control measure must be carefully assessed and its advantages and disadvantages should be weighed up against the risk it is intended to control. If the risk is great and the need for action urgent, it may be necessary to introduce less suitable risk control measures immediately as a short-term option while the optimum long-term solution is found.
- 5.6. Risk controls do not mean that all risks must or can be eliminated. To eliminate all risk is neither a legal requirement nor a practicable possibility. However, unnecessary danger should be eliminated. In other words, education requires controlled risk. For example the thought of a child or young person being hurt can encourage a "protect at all costs" attitude. However, this is neither possible nor good for the children or young people. Instead, Headteachers must establish and maintain safe practices and procedures, which prevent any foreseeable risk of injury or harm. [Please refer to The Circle Trust's Risk Management Policy](#) [here](#)

6. Emergency Plans

- 6.1. Plans to deal with emergencies are a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Most emergencies are related to health and safety and coping with them and their aftermath is part of an effective health and safety strategy.
- 6.2. Contingency or emergency planning is the ultimate risk control measure. Its primary purpose is to ensure personal safety in an emergency. Please refer to [The Circle Trust's Business Continuity Plan](#) [here](#)

6.3. An emergency might occur because:

6.3.1. Risk was not foreseen

6.3.2. State of knowledge at the time the risk assessment was carried out did not allow the risk to be identified

6.3.3. Risk assessment was inaccurate

6.3.4. Inappropriate risk control measure was selected

6.3.5. Risk control measure was poorly implemented

6.3.6. Mechanical failure

6.3.7. Malicious act

6.3.8. Act of God

6.4. Whatever the cause, when an incident that results in injury, harm or loss occurs or looks likely to occur, the immediate response must be to minimise its consequences. The priorities are as follows:

6.4.1. Save lives

6.4.2. Prevent or minimise injuries

6.4.3. Safeguard property. Safeguarding property comes a poor third unless it directly contributes to either of the first two priorities. For example, the first aim of a fire drill is to ensure that, in the event of a real fire, everyone is in a place of safety as quickly as possible and that arrangements are in place which allow the prompt treatment of any injuries. Only when this is in hand should attention turn to saving the property.

6.5. Each school in The Circle Trust is required to have an up to date and comprehensive Emergency Response Plan. This plan is colloquially known as the “Rainbow Plan” [Please see The Circle Trust’s Model Rainbow Plan here](#)

7. Health and safety specific advice and guidance

7.1. Accidents and Incidents

7.1.1. Whilst every reasonable effort can be made to reduce the likelihood of harm accidents or incidents can still happen in schools

7.1.2. [Please see The Circle Trust’s Health and Safety Policy: Accidents and Incidents here](#)

7.2. Art

7.2.1. Ceramics have the potential to be one of the most dangerous areas of a school curriculum. Headteachers need to be aware of the health and safety issues, and in particular, the hazards from silicon dust, so that appropriate control measures can be applied and adhered to

7.2.2. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Art here](#)

7.3. Asbestos Management

7.3.1. Although its use is now illegal, asbestos was widely used in buildings in the past and much of it is still in place.

7.3.2. The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 stipulate the duty to manage the risk from asbestos and that duty applies to people in control of non-domestic premises and those who have maintenance and repair responsibilities for premises.

7.3.3. The duty to manage the risk from asbestos is held by the Headteacher

7.3.4. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Asbestos Management here](#)

7.4. Bomb Threat

7.4.1. For a number of years now, the threat of terrorism is considered to be high.

7.4.2. Alongside this hoax calls and emails may be sent to schools detailing bomb threats and threats to students and school staff.

7.4.3. Headteachers must never disregard a threat even if they believe it not to be credible, even an obviously malicious threat should be reported to the police.

7.4.4. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy: Bomb Threat here](#)

7.5. Building work

7.5.1. All building work should ideally be arranged for holiday periods, but it is often necessary for work to be done when the premises are occupied. The work may be routine maintenance that takes a day, or less, or painting and decorating, major structural repairs or re-building.

7.5.2. The hazards on site may include dangerous equipment and machinery, vehicles, scaffolding, fencing, ladders or waste and debris.

7.5.3. There may be dangerous or noxious materials being used and the work may be noisy, messy and dusty. There may be significant risks, not just of damage to property but also of injury during building work.

7.5.4. Building work can be an attraction to children and it must be properly managed in order to ensure that the potentially significant risks are controlled.

7.5.5. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Building Works [here](#)

7.6. Covid 19

7.6.1. Headteachers must manage the schools response to Covid19 to ensure to the fullest extent the safety and well-being of all.

7.6.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Covid19 Policy [here](#)

7.7. Display screen equipment and work stations

7.7.1. Headteachers should identify members of staff who are "users" through the use of a self-assessment questionnaire. Those identified will have an assessment made by a trained workstation assessor who will make any recommendations necessary for improvement, to comply with the regulations.

7.7.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Display Screen Equipment and work stations [here](#)

7.8. Educational Trips and visits

7.8.1. The Circle Trust requires the use of the Evolve system [here](#) for trip and educational visit planning, risk assessment and documented approval system and follows DfE guidance [here](#)

7.8.2. All educational trips and visits may only take place with the express permission of the Headteacher.

7.8.3. All Headteachers will agree and publish an internal school system so that every member of staff understands their responsibility and duty of care in relation to trips and educational visit as well as the Evolve system for securing the Headteacher's approval.

7.9. Electrical checking

7.9.1. The Electricity at Work Regulations require that all systems shall be maintained to prevent danger so far as is reasonably practicable

7.9.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Electricity at Work [here](#)

7.10. Fire

7.10.1. The government produce a fire safety guide for Schools which is available online <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-in-new-and-existing-school-buildings/fire-safety-in-new-and-existing-school-buildings>

7.10.2. It is not the duty of the Fire Service to make sure a workplace is safe. This duty lies with the "Responsible person" who is accountable under legislation. If convicted of failing to comply with a Fire Safety order, the Responsible person may be subject to fine or term of imprisonment not exceeding two years.

7.10.3. The Headteacher in a school is the "Responsible Person".

7.10.4. As the "Responsible Person", the Headteacher must ensure the safety of all employees, children and young people and any person who may legally come onto the premises.

7.10.5. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy: Fire [here](#)

7.11. First Aid

7.11.1. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that an assessment of first aid needs is carried out for their school. Adequate levels of first aid provision must be available at all times while people are on the school premises and also off the premises whilst on school visits.

7.11.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy First Aid [here](#)

7.12. Food Safety

7.12.1. Schools must comply with the legal requirements under The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006. This may be achieved by following the three requirements of registration, training in food hygiene and food safety management

7.12.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Food Safety [here](#)

7.13. Home visits by staff

- 7.13.1. Headteachers must set out the safe arrangements for staff who conduct home visits
- 7.13.2. Members of staff who conduct home visits must be provided with advice regarding good safe working practice and the reduction of risk.
- 7.13.3. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Home Visits by Staff here](#)

7.14. Inflatables (Bouncy Castles)

- 7.14.1. Inflatable bouncers are often used at school fund-raising events and provide a popular attraction to young children.
- 7.14.2. Whilst The Circle Trust does not prevent their hire or use, Headteachers must satisfy themselves that all Health and Safety guidance is strictly adhered to by any provider
- 7.14.3. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Inflatables here](#)

7.15. Legionella

- 7.15.1. The Circle Trust will oversee the management of Legionellosis in all schools
- 7.15.2. All reasonable steps will be taken to identify potential Legionellosis hazards and to prevent or minimise the risk of exposure.
- 7.15.3. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing and managing the scheme/plan for preventing and controlling the risk of Legionella
- 7.15.4. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Legionella here](#)

7.16. Lone working

- 7.16.1. Lone Working covers a variety of situations: including staff working with students, parents or carers in their homes, without another person present. Staff transporting students, parents or carers on their own. Alternatively, Staff working alone at the workplace including work outside normal office hours or in settings such as schools where the public may have easy and unrestricted access.
- 7.16.2. In these situations, staff need to be aware of any hazards or emergencies, which may present in the workplace and how to deal with them.

7.16.3. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Lone Working](#) [here](#)

7.17. Management of medicines

7.17.1. Any member of school staff may be asked to provide support to children or young people with medical conditions, including the administering of medicines, although they cannot be required to do so.

7.17.2. Although administering medicines is not part of teachers' professional duties, they should take into account the needs of children or young people with medical conditions that they teach.

7.17.3. When supporting a child or young person with a medical condition Headteachers should ensure that if appropriate an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) is completed

7.17.4. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Management of Medicines](#) [here](#)

7.18. Manual handling and personal protective equipment

7.18.1. In the Regulations, "manual handling operations" means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling or carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force. "Load" includes any person and any animal.

7.18.2. Headteachers must ensure that all members of staff avoid manual handling operations where this is reasonably practicable. For any hazardous lifting operations, which cannot be avoided, there must be a risk assessment.

7.18.3. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Manual Handling and personal protective equipment](#) [here](#)

7.19. New and Expectant Mothers

7.19.1. Specific health and safety requirements relating to new and expectant mothers at work are mainly contained in Regulations 16 to 18 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242).

7.19.2. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy New and Expectant Mothers](#) [here](#)

7.20. Physical Education

7.20.1. The Headteacher's role with regard to health and safety in physical education is twofold.

- First, teachers must set an example to pupils so that they develop a sense of responsibility for their own safety and well-being and the safety and well-being of others.
- Second, teachers must establish and maintain safe practice and procedures, which will prevent any foreseeable risk of injury or harm. That is not to say that all risk must be eliminated. The elimination of risk is neither a legal requirement nor a practicable possibility. Vigorous physical activity is without risk and physical education is, by its nature, a challenge to children. However, unnecessary dangers should be eliminated.

7.20.2. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Physical Education](#) [here](#)

7.21. Premises management

7.21.1. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 apply to all workplaces, including schools, and replace 38 pieces of old legislation. The employer must ensure that any workplace within its control complies with the Regulations. On 1 February 1999 the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 came into force.

7.21.2. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Premises management](#) [here](#)

7.22. Science

7.22.1. Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislation and its application to the teaching of science is important, as are good practice and accurate record keeping. These are important for monitoring of practices and subsequent review.

7.22.2. Please see [The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Science](#) [here](#)

7.23. Severe Weather

7.23.1. Headteachers are responsible for planning their school's response to severe weather (snow, high levels of heat etc)

7.23.2. It is for individual Headteachers to make any decision to close as a result of severe weather. They know the local conditions and the contingency possibilities which may allow the school to stay open for some or all pupils. Such decisions should however be based on a common sense approach, having regard to the conditions at the school and the need to continue to provide an education to children whenever feasible.

7.23.3. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Severe Weather [here](#)

7.24. **Stress**

7.24.1. The Circle Trust committed to maintaining a healthy and safe workforce environment and to take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks from stress in the workplace.

7.24.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Stress [here](#)

7.25. **Technology**

7.25.1. Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislation and its application to the teaching of technology is important, as are good practice and accurate record keeping. These are important for monitoring of practices and subsequent review.

7.25.2. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Technology [here](#)

7.26. **Transport**

7.27. The subject of school transport is wide ranging and is considered in terms of the following categories:

- Home to school transport;
- Access to and from school;
- Transport on school premises;
- School trips/visits;
- Other transport.

7.27.1. Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Transport [here](#)

7.28. **Violence and Abuse**

7.28.1. Employees of The Circle Trust, like all those who deal directly with the public, may face aggressive or violent behaviour, sexist, racist or other forms of verbal abuse. This behaviour does not have to be tolerated and The Circle Trust will support staff in their dealings with violent, abusive, sexist or racist behaviour. Employees should take reasonable precautions to avoid putting themselves at risk, and should inform their manager of any incidents so that they can give appropriate guidance and support.

7.28.2. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Violence and Abuse here](#)

7.29. **Work Experience**

7.29.1. The Education (Work Experience) Act 1973 and subsequent amendments brought into statute by the Employment Act 1989 and the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 regulate work experience.

7.29.2. A young person is anyone who has not attained the age of 18.

7.29.3. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Work Experience here](#)

7.30. **Working at Heights**

7.30.1. Headteachers must take all reasonable steps to provide a safe working environment for all employees who may be affected by work at height activities

7.30.2. [Please see The Circle Trust's Health and Safety Policy Working at Height here](#)

8. **Audit of health and safety arrangements**

8.1. From time to time schools will need auditing. Whilst there will be necessary school level checks on health and safety arrangements this cannot replace the effectiveness of an audit carried out by a competent person independent from the establishments.

8.2. The Trust will engage a competent Health and Safety Officer to conduct such audits on a regular schedule

8.3. Schools will be provided with a minimum of 5 days' notice of such audits but the Trust reserves the right to hold unannounced audit visits should there be a significant concern in relation to health and safety and by which inaction would be dangerous.

8.4. The audit report will be presented to the following parties Trustees, CEO, Local Advisors and Headteacher for the specific school

9. Amendments to this policy

- 9.1. The CEO, Chief Operating Officer and/or any officer of the Trust nominated by the CEO is authorised to amend this policy to reflect changes in personnel or procedure or changes in legislation or Department for Education guidance.
- 9.2. Any such amendments must be reported to the next meeting of the Human Resources Committee (or whichever Committee has oversight of and authority to approve this policy).