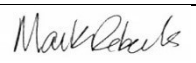
PENK VALLEY ACADEMY TRUST

Health and Safety

This policy sets out the Trust's approach to managing health and safety, defining governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities, and the framework for implementation across all Trust schools.

Adopted by Trustees:	
Signed:	
Date:	**Autumn 2026**
This policy is reviewed annually by the Audit Finance and Risk Committee.	
Next Review date:	**Autumn 2027**

COLLABORATION CHALLENGE CURIOSITY CARE

POLICY INFORMATION

Date of last review:	Autumn 2026	**Review period:**	Annually
Date ratified by Trustees:	Autumn 2026	**Trustee committee responsible:**	Audit Finance and Risk
Policy owner:	Chief Operations Officer	**Executive team member responsible:**	Chief Operations Officer

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
July 2024 July 2025 Autumn 2026	Policy brought into new format No changes Consolidated policy statement, responsibilities and high-level arrangements; reduced list-based drafting and adopted standard sequential numbering.	LMC LMC LMC

Equality and GDPR

All Penk Valley Academy Trust policies should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities and GDPR policies.

Statement of principle – Equality

We will take all possible steps to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against any individual or group of individuals. When compiling, monitoring and reviewing the policy we will consider the likely impact on the promotion of all aspects of equality as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Statement of principle – GDPR

Penk Valley Academy Trust recognises the serious issues that can occur as a consequence in failing to protect an individual adult's or child's personal and sensitive data. These include emotional distress, physical safety, child protection, loss of assets, fraud and other criminal acts.

Penk Valley Academy Trust is therefore committed to the protection of all personal and sensitive data for which it holds responsibility as the Data Controller and the handling of such data in line with the data protection principles and the Data Protection Act (DPA)/GDPR.

Penk Valley Academy Trust will be referred to as **PVAT** for the remainder of the document which includes all schools who are members of PVAT, business operations and centralised services.

Relationship to Other Trust Health & Safety Documents

This Health & Safety Policy forms part of the Trust's overall Health & Safety Management System and must be read in conjunction with the following Trust documents:

Specialist Trust policies, including but not limited to

- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Medication
- lone working
- severe weather
- lifts
- smoking
- intimate care
- medical conditions
- allergy safety
- physical intervention
- driving

Trust procedures, statutory compliance schedules and technical guidance with School-Specific Local Health and Safety Arrangements.

Supporting documents provide operational detail for particular hazards and activities and must be consistent with this policy.

Each school is additionally required to maintain a School-Specific Local Health & Safety Arrangements Document, detailing how Trust requirements are implemented at site level.

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1. Statement of intent

Penk Valley Academy Trust (the Trust) is committed, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees, pupils, visitors, volunteers, contractors and any other person who may be affected by its activities.

The Trust will manage health and safety as an integral part of leadership, governance, curriculum delivery, estates management and operational decision-making. Risks will be managed sensibly and proportionately so that pupils can learn, play, participate in educational visits and experience appropriate challenge without unnecessary restriction.

The Trust will:

- provide and maintain safe and healthy premises, plant, equipment and systems of work;
- identify significant hazards, assess risks and implement proportionate controls;
- provide appropriate information, instruction, training, supervision and competent advice;
- consult employees and recognised safety representatives on matters affecting their health and safety;
- maintain arrangements for emergency preparedness, first aid, fire safety and business continuity;
- provide adequate resources, including time, staffing, systems and finance, to implement this policy;
- monitor performance through inspections, audits, incident analysis, statutory compliance assurance and committee oversight;
- learn from accidents, incidents, near misses and emerging risks; and
- promote continuous improvement and a positive, open and proportionate safety culture.

The Chief Executive Officer retains overall executive accountability for implementation. The Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight and approval. Every employee and person working on behalf of the Trust is expected to cooperate with this policy and take reasonable care of themselves and others.

2. Purpose and scope

This policy establishes the Trust-wide framework for managing health and safety. It defines the principal accountabilities and responsibilities and the minimum arrangements that apply across all Trust schools, central services and activities.

It applies to all employees, pupils, agency and temporary workers, contractors, volunteers, visitors and partner organisations. It applies to Trust-controlled premises and to activities under Trust control whether conducted on or off site, including educational visits, transport and remote or lone working.

Where premises are shared or activities are delivered in partnership, the relevant parties will cooperate, coordinate arrangements and exchange information necessary to manage risk.

3. Management framework

The Trust uses the Plan, Do, Check, Act approach to health and safety management:

- **Plan:** set direction, identify legal and operational requirements, assess risk and allocate resources;
- **Do:** define responsibilities, develop competence, communicate expectations and implement controls;
- **Check:** measure performance through inspections, audits, reporting, investigation and consultation;

- **Act:** review performance, address weaknesses, share learning and improve arrangements.

Each school must maintain a School-Specific Local Health and Safety Arrangements Document. This records named local roles, emergency arrangements, site-specific risks and the practical implementation of Trust requirements. It must be available locally and held in the approved digital location.

4. Organisation and responsibilities

The Trust, as employer, retains its legal duties. Delegation assigns responsibility for delivery but does not remove accountability from the person or body delegating it. External advisers provide competent advice and assurance but do not assume the employer's responsibilities.

4.1 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees provides strategic governance and holds the Chief Executive Officer to account for the effective management of health and safety. It will approve this policy and review it at least annually, ensure that adequate resources and access to competent advice are available, and consider health and safety when making strategic decisions, approving capital programmes or overseeing organisational change.

Through the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, the Board will receive and scrutinise assurance relating to significant risks, statutory compliance, serious incidents, RIDDOR reports and overdue high-risk actions.

4.2 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer has overall executive accountability for implementing this policy across the Trust. They will provide visible leadership, establish expectations for a positive safety culture and ensure that responsibilities are appropriately delegated to competent people with sufficient authority, systems and resources.

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that significant risks and serious incidents are escalated and acted upon, review Trust-wide performance, provide appropriate assurance to trustees and ensure that suitable emergency and business continuity arrangements are maintained.

4.3 Chief Operating Officer

Under authority delegated by the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Operating Officer is the Trust strategic lead for health and safety, estates compliance and the associated management systems. The Chief Operating Officer will oversee the Trust framework and supporting procedures and will act as executive sponsor for the Health, Safety and Environment Committee.

The role includes ensuring effective arrangements for estates compliance, planned maintenance, contractor management and construction safety; commissioning competent internal and external advice and assurance; escalating significant risks and overdue actions; and reporting material concerns and performance information to the Executive Team and trustees.

4.4 Headteachers and Heads of School

Headteachers and Heads of School are accountable for local implementation and the day-to-day management of health and safety within their schools. They will maintain the school-specific local arrangements document and ensure that suitable risk assessments and controls are in place for premises, curriculum activities and school operations.

They will ensure that employees receive appropriate induction, information, training and supervision, and that suitable fire, first aid, emergency and incident-reporting arrangements are maintained. Actions arising from inspections, audits, assessments and investigations must be completed within appropriate timescales or escalated. Significant issues will be reported to the Trust, and health and safety will be considered in school planning, staffing and resource decisions.

4.5 Health and Safety Manager and competent advice

The Trust will maintain access to competent health and safety advice through in-house capability and, where required, an appointed external service. The Health and Safety Manager and other competent advisers will provide advice on legal requirements, risk control and proportionate practice, and will support the development and review of policies, procedures, guidance and training.

These functions will support significant incident investigations and RIDDOR assessment, coordinate assurance activity, analyse trends and report performance. They may also assist schools with complex risk assessments and emergency planning and liaise, where authorised, with enforcing authorities, insurers and specialist advisers. The provision of advice does not transfer the employer's accountability to the adviser.

4.6 Estates Manager

The Estates Manager coordinates the day-to-day delivery of estates compliance on behalf of the Chief Operating Officer. This includes maintaining the compliance schedule, asset information and supporting evidence; coordinating statutory inspection, testing, servicing and remedial work; and managing planned and reactive maintenance according to risk.

The Estates Manager will support contractor competence checks, induction, review of risk assessments and method statements and permit-to-work controls. The role will also support the Trust in fulfilling applicable construction and building safety duties, provide technical assistance to schools and escalate significant defects or compliance risks.

4.7 Human Resources

Human Resources will coordinate occupational health referrals and health surveillance where required by risk assessment, support individual risk assessments and reasonable adjustments, and ensure that confidential occupational health information is handled in accordance with data protection requirements.

Human Resources will also support managers in addressing work-related stress, wellbeing and attendance-related health matters and will advise on employee conduct where health and safety requirements have not been followed.

4.8 Managers, curriculum leaders and activity leaders

Managers, curriculum leaders and activity leaders are responsible for health and safety within the people, activities and areas they control. They must ensure that significant hazards are identified, suitable risk assessments are completed or arranged and the resulting controls are implemented and communicated.

They will ensure that staff are competent and appropriately supervised, inspect work areas and equipment, act on defects and report and investigate incidents within their area. Relevant Trust procedures and specialist guidance must be followed in curriculum, technical and higher-risk activities.

4.9 School operations staff, site teams and caretakers

School operations staff, site teams and caretakers will carry out delegated checks and tasks only where they are competent to do so. They will maintain required records, report defects promptly, support the

control of contractors, keep emergency routes clear and escalate work that requires specialist support or exceeds their competence or authority.

4.10 All employees

All employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions. They must cooperate with Trust arrangements, training and instructions, use equipment and protective measures correctly and must not interfere with anything provided for health or safety.

Employees are expected to report hazards, defects, incidents and near misses promptly, complete required training and participate in risk assessment where relevant. Where an activity presents an immediate or uncontrolled serious risk, they should stop the activity where it is safe to do so and seek appropriate advice.

4.11 Contractors, visitors, volunteers and pupils

Contractors must comply with Trust rules, safeguarding requirements, site induction, agreed risk controls and permit-to-work arrangements. Visitors and volunteers must follow local instructions and must not interfere with safety measures. Pupils are expected to follow school rules, staff instructions and age-appropriate safety expectations.

4.12 Specialist roles

Where the nature of the premises or activities requires it, the Trust or individual school will appoint competent people to specialist functions. These may include the Responsible Person for fire safety, Radiation Protection Supervisor, Educational Visits Coordinator, first aid coordinator, asbestos duty management and water hygiene roles. Specialist appointments support the management of particular risks but do not remove the accountability of senior leaders.

5. Risk assessment and risk control

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments will be undertaken where significant risks are foreseeable. Assessments must identify who may be harmed, existing controls, any further action required, the responsible person and target date. Controls should follow the hierarchy of elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls and personal protective equipment.

Risk assessments will be proportionate and reviewed when no longer valid, following significant change, after relevant incidents or where monitoring shows controls may be ineffective. Routine low-risk activity need not be over-bureaucratised. Dynamic assessment may supplement, but does not replace, planning for foreseeable significant risks.

6. Information, instruction, training and supervision

All new employees will receive health and safety induction. Further training will be based on role, risk, legal requirements and competence needs. Refresher training will be provided at appropriate intervals or following change. Training records will be maintained through approved systems.

Employees, pupils, contractors and volunteers will receive information and supervision appropriate to the activity and their experience. Higher-risk work and specialist curriculum activities must only be led or undertaken by persons who are competent and authorised.

7. Consultation and communication

The Trust will consult employees directly and, where applicable, through recognised safety representatives. Health and safety will be considered through appropriate school and Trust meetings. Employees are encouraged to raise concerns without fear of disadvantage. Significant information, learning and changes to arrangements will be communicated promptly.

8. Accident, incident, near-miss and RIDDOR reporting

Accidents, work-related ill health, dangerous occurrences, near misses and significant safety concerns must be reported promptly using the approved Trust reporting route. Schools may maintain local first-aid treatment records where required, but duplicate systems should be avoided.

Incidents will be investigated at a level proportionate to their actual and potential severity. Investigations will identify immediate and underlying causes, required actions and opportunities for shared learning. The Health and Safety Manager or appointed competent adviser will coordinate assessment and submission of reports required under RIDDOR. Statutory reports will be made only by authorised persons.

9. First aid and medical emergencies

Each school will complete and review a first-aid needs assessment and provide adequate equipment, facilities and suitably trained personnel. Arrangements must consider the age and needs of pupils, employees, visitors, off-site activities, out-of-hours occupancy and site layout. Automated external defibrillators will be accessible, checked and maintained in accordance with the approved schedule.

Detailed arrangements for pupils with medical conditions, medication, intimate care, allergies and emergency medicines are set out in the relevant specialist policies and individual healthcare plans.

10. Fire safety and emergency preparedness

The Trust will ensure suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are in place for each premises and are reviewed when necessary. Headteachers will ensure local actions are implemented and that evacuation procedures, personal emergency evacuation plans where required, drills, staff instruction and fire safety records are maintained.

Each school will maintain emergency and business continuity arrangements addressing foreseeable events such as fire, lockdown, severe weather, utility failure, hazardous substance release, structural concern and other critical incidents. Plans will identify decision-making authority, communication routes, responsibilities, alternative arrangements and recovery actions. Exercises will be proportionate to risk and learning will be recorded.

11. Premises, plant and statutory compliance

The Trust will maintain premises, access routes, welfare facilities, plant and building systems so far as is reasonably practicable in a safe condition. A risk-based compliance schedule will identify inspection, testing, servicing, examination and record-keeping requirements. This includes, where applicable, gas, electrical systems, fire protection, local exhaust ventilation, pressure systems, lifting equipment, playground equipment, work at height equipment and other safety-critical assets.

Defects will be prioritised according to risk. Where immediate repair is not possible, suitable interim controls, isolation or restriction of access will be implemented. Detailed programmes and frequencies will be controlled through the estates compliance system rather than fixed in this policy.

12. Asbestos, legionella and hazardous substances

Asbestos and legionella are managed under separate Trust policies and site-specific management arrangements. Relevant registers, surveys, control schemes, monitoring and contractor information must be available and kept current.

Hazardous substances will be avoided or substituted where reasonably practicable. Where use is necessary, an inventory and appropriate COSHH assessment will be maintained, with controls for storage, use, exposure, spill response, disposal and emergency action. Safety data sheets alone do not constitute a COSHH assessment.

13. Work equipment, lifting equipment and personal protective equipment

Work equipment must be suitable, maintained, guarded where necessary and used only by trained and authorised persons. Pre-use checks and formal inspections will be applied according to risk. Lifting equipment and accessories will be subject to appropriate examination and record keeping. Personal protective equipment will be provided where residual risk remains and must be suitable, maintained and used as instructed.

14. Contractor and construction management

Contractors will be selected using proportionate competence and assurance checks. Before work begins, responsibilities, safeguarding controls, site rules, access, emergency arrangements, asbestos information, isolation requirements, waste, risk assessments and method statements will be coordinated. Higher-risk activities will be controlled through permits where appropriate.

For construction work, the Trust will identify and fulfil the duties that apply to it under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. Project arrangements will be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the work and will include adequate time, resources, pre-construction information, competent appointments and coordination.

15. Curriculum and specialist activities

Curriculum and specialist-area leaders must ensure activities are appropriately planned, supervised and risk assessed, and that equipment, substances and facilities are suitable. Relevant specialist guidance, including CLEAPSS where applicable, must be followed in science, design and technology and related areas. PE, drama, art, food activities and performances must use competent supervision and activity-specific controls.

Where ionising radiation sources are held, the school will appoint a Radiation Protection Supervisor and maintain access to a suitable Radiation Protection Adviser. Local rules, source security, inventories, inspections, training and incident arrangements will be maintained.

16. Educational visits and activities away from school

Educational visits and learning outside the classroom will be planned, approved and managed under the Trust educational visits procedure. Risk management must be proportionate and consider leadership competence, supervision, transport, medical and additional needs, safeguarding, emergency arrangements and significant activity-specific risks. The approved electronic visit management system will be used where required by Trust procedure.

17. Occupational health, wellbeing and health surveillance

The Trust recognises that psychological health is as important as physical health. Managers will identify and address work-related stressors through proportionate organisational and individual measures. Employees will have access to occupational health and wellbeing support in accordance with Trust arrangements.

Health surveillance will be provided where required by risk assessment or legislation and where valid methods are available. Confidential records will be retained securely. Fitness-for-work advice and reasonable adjustments will be considered in consultation with the employee and appropriate professionals.

18. Lone working, violence and aggression

Lone working will be avoided where the risk cannot be adequately controlled. Where permitted, assessment and controls will address communication, check-in, emergency response, competence, travel, access, medical needs and foreseeable aggression. Detailed requirements are set out in the Lone Working Policy.

Violence, threatening behaviour and aggression towards employees, pupils, contractors or visitors will not be tolerated. Foreseeable risks will be assessed and managed through staffing, information sharing, environmental controls, training, communication and post-incident support. Physical intervention must be governed by the separate policy and used only by appropriately trained staff within an authorised framework.

19. Driving and work-related travel

Driving for work will be managed under the Driving Policy. Requirements will cover driver eligibility, licence and insurance checks, vehicle suitability and maintenance, journey planning, fatigue, distraction, medication or other impairment, passenger safety and incident reporting. Trust vehicles and minibuses may be driven only by authorised persons who meet the applicable competence requirements.

20. Smoking and vaping

Smoking and vaping are prohibited in Trust buildings, grounds and vehicles, subject to the detailed Smoking at Work Policy. The policy applies to employees, pupils, visitors and contractors.

21. Equality, accessibility and individual needs

Risk controls will be inclusive and will take account of disability, pregnancy, age, medical conditions, communication needs and other relevant individual factors. The Trust will make reasonable adjustments where required. Personal emergency evacuation arrangements will be established where a person may need assistance to evacuate safely.

22. School-specific local arrangements

Each school must maintain a current School-Specific Local Health and Safety Arrangements Document. It must identify named local roles and escalation routes and set out the school's first aid, fire, evacuation, lockdown and wider emergency arrangements. It must also describe the management of site-specific hazards, local risk assessments, curriculum and specialist-area controls, contractor arrival and supervision, incident reporting, communication, inspections, tests and drills.

The document should identify where key records, registers, plans and emergency information are held. It must be reviewed at least annually and whenever key personnel, premises, activities or arrangements change. Names and operational contact details should normally be recorded in the local document rather than in this Trust policy.

23. Supporting policies and procedures

This policy forms part of the Trust's wider health and safety management system. It is supported by specialist policies covering asbestos, legionella, medication at work, pupils with medical conditions, allergy and allergen management, lone working, severe weather, passenger lifts, smoking at work, intimate care and toileting, physical intervention and positive handling, and driving for work.

Operational requirements are further set out in the Trust's fire safety and emergency procedures, educational visits procedure, accident and near-miss reporting procedure, contractor management and permit-to-work procedures, risk assessment and COSHH procedures, estates statutory compliance schedules and technical guidance. Each school must also maintain its School-Specific Local Health and Safety Arrangements Document.

Current versions must be accessed through the approved policy or SharePoint location. Detailed procedures may be updated under delegated authority where this does not alter the policy's principles or governance framework. Material changes to accountability, scope or strategic commitment require approval through the Trust policy process.

24. Monitoring and performance reporting

Health and safety performance will be monitored using a balanced range of leading and lagging indicators. These will include accidents, incidents, near misses, work-related ill health and RIDDOR reports; the quality and completion of risk assessments and investigation actions; statutory inspection, testing and servicing compliance; overdue remedial actions and significant defects; and the completion of training and evidence of role competence.

Assurance will also draw upon fire drills, emergency exercises, first-aid needs reviews, school inspections, leadership safety tours, internal checks and external audits. Significant concerns relating to contractors, curriculum activities and educational visits will be considered alongside themes arising from consultation, complaints, insurance claims or enforcement contact.

Reports will distinguish urgent operational matters from longer-term strategic trends. Serious or potentially serious issues will be escalated promptly and will not be held over for routine reporting cycles.

25. Health, Safety and Environment Committee

The Trust Health, Safety and Environment Committee will meet at least termly under approved terms of reference. The Chief Operating Officer is the executive sponsor. The Health and Safety Manager will coordinate meetings and may chair them under delegated authority. Membership will include appropriate school, estates, operational and employee representation.

The Committee will review performance, significant incidents, risk themes, audits, statutory compliance, training, policy development and progress with actions. It will refer significant matters and assurance reports to the Executive Team and Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.

26. Inspections and audit

Schools will undertake proportionate workplace inspections and leadership safety tours. Internal assurance and independent audit will be scheduled according to risk, previous findings, organisational change and performance. Audit frequency will not be determined solely by a fixed interval. Findings will be risk rated, assigned to an owner and tracked to closure or formally accepted through the appropriate governance route.

27. Record keeping and document control

Health and safety records will be accurate, accessible to authorised persons, retained for appropriate periods and protected in accordance with legal and Trust requirements. Controlled policies and procedures will show ownership, approval, version, effective date and review date. Superseded versions will be archived or withdrawn to prevent unintended use.

28. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where there is significant legislative or organisational change, a serious incident, enforcement action, material audit finding or evidence that arrangements are no longer effective. The Chief Operating Officer will coordinate review and consultation. Approval rests with the Board of Trustees following scrutiny by the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.

Appendix 1: Reference framework

This policy should be applied in conjunction with current legislation and authoritative guidance. The principal statutory framework includes the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, together with requirements relating to accident reporting, hazardous substances, work equipment, lifting operations, workplace welfare, fire safety, construction, first aid and employee consultation.

Relevant equality and data protection legislation also applies. In the education context, the Trust will have regard to current Department for Education guidance on health and safety responsibilities and duties for schools, Health and Safety Executive guidance for education, and Department for Education statutory guidance on allergy safety in schools, together with the Trust's specialist policy arrangements.

The absence of a specific legal reference from this appendix does not remove any applicable duty. A more detailed legal register and associated technical standards may be maintained separately and updated without requiring amendment of this policy.