

Truro & Penwith Academy Trust

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Protecting people, strengthening culture, and sustaining safe schools.

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Aligned with the Department for Education's Good Estate Management for Schools (GEMS) guidance and School Estate Management Standards (2025)

Foreword

At Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT), the safety, wellbeing and dignity of every pupil, colleague, volunteer and visitor is fundamental to who we are. Excellent education can only thrive in an environment where people feel safe, included and supported — and where our systems, culture and behaviours reflect unwavering care for those we serve.

This Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy sets out our Trust-wide commitment to building a proactive, transparent and continuously improving safety culture. It strengthens the foundations on which our academies operate, providing a clear governance framework, robust operational standards, and an inclusive approach that recognises the diverse needs of our communities.

Our context is unique. As a largely rural Trust, responsible for a varied and ageing estate, we face challenges that demand thoughtful stewardship, strong risk management and the ability to plan strategically within financial constraints. Despite these pressures, our ambition remains high. We are committed to meeting — and exceeding — statutory requirements, applying national best practice, and ensuring that every school is supported to maintain safe, well-managed environments.

Central to this policy is our belief that health and safety is not just a set of procedures, but a shared responsibility and an expression of our values. It encompasses physical safety, psychological wellbeing, equity of access, and the duty to anticipate and remove barriers for disabled and neurodiverse members of our community. It requires leaders at every level to model safe behaviours, make evidence-based decisions, and foster a culture where people feel empowered to speak up and contribute to solutions.

I am particularly proud of the inclusive principles embedded throughout this policy — from accessible communication and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans, to trauma-informed practice and the recognition of psychosocial risks. These commitments strengthen our determination to become a Trust where every person can thrive.

As CEO, I expect all staff and partners to engage fully with the responsibilities set out here. Through clear expectations, strong accountability and sector-leading professional support, we will continue to build an estate and culture that keeps people safe today and prepares our organisation for the future.

By working together, we can create environments that inspire learning, nurture wellbeing, and reflect our shared commitment to the highest standards of care.

Dr J Blunden OBE

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1. Executive Summary

Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT) is committed to providing a safe, healthy and inclusive environment for all employees, pupils, visitors, contractors, and volunteers. This policy aligns with the Department for Education's Good Estate Management for Schools (GEMS) and the School Estate Management Standards (April 2025), providing a clear framework for statutory compliance and effective, risk-based estate management¹.

Our approach is based on:

- A proactive, risk-based safety culture
- Clear, modern governance and accountability
- Transparent reporting and assurance
- Inclusive practice and equity of access
- Evidence-based decision making
- Legal compliance and sector excellence

This policy establishes the overarching framework required for Trust leadership, school leaders, governors, employees and partners to fulfil their statutory duties and deliver exceptional standards of health, safety and wellbeing.

2. Vision & Principles

TPAT's Health & Safety vision is to create:

A safe, inclusive and resilient learning environment where every person thrives.

We commit to:

2.1 Safety Excellence

- TPAT applies a risk-based system in line with HSWA 1974 and MHSWR 1999 (suitable and sufficient risk assessment; appointment of competent persons) and meets premises standards under the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012².

2.2 Inclusive Practice

We embed *Equality Act 2010* expectations into every stage of our safety management system, ensuring:

¹ [Good estate management for schools - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

² [Managing risks and risk assessment at work: Overview - HSE](#)

- Reasonable adjustments for disabled and neurodiverse staff, pupils and visitors
- Trauma-informed and psychologically safe practices
- Accessibility in communication, training, environment and emergency planning
- Inclusive risk assessment for SEND and vulnerable individuals

2.3 Strong Governance

- Clear accountability from Trust Board to classroom
- High-quality oversight, assurance and transparent reporting
- Annual audits, independent verification and performance dashboards

2.4 Continuous Improvement

- Evidence-based learning from incidents
- Regular policy review
- Ongoing staff competency development

3. Governance & Accountability Framework

3.1 Trust Board

The Trust Board holds statutory accountability for ensuring legal compliance and effective management of health, safety and wellbeing.

It will:

- Set the strategic direction and approve the annual H&S report
- Monitor risk, assurance and compliance indicators
- Ensure adequate resourcing
- Oversee critical risks including fire safety, building safety, safeguarding and security

3.2 Chief Executive Officer

The CEO ensures implementation across all academies and:

- Embeds a strong safety culture across the Trust
- Ensures leaders are competent, trained and supported
- Escalates significant risks to the Board
- Commissions independent audits annually

3.3 Director of Operations

The Director of Operations will:

- Translate the CEO's strategic Health & Safety direction into operational practice across all academies and schools.
- Lead Trust-wide crisis management, emergency planning and organisational resilience arrangements, including preparation, continuity and recovery.
- Chair or direct the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) during major incidents or emergencies.
- Provide regular formal reporting to the CEO regarding safety performance, risks, incidents and compliance.
- Promote a positive safety culture, transparency in reporting and continual improvement

3.4 Head of Health & Safety

The Head of Health & Safety is appointed as a competent person under MHSWR 1999 Reg. 7, with delegated operational leads at school level³.

They will:

- Report to the Director of Operations
- Ensure that all schools are supported with timely, competent operational advice and resources.
- Lead the Trust's operational compliance framework including estates, safety, facilities, statutory testing and risk controls
- Ensure each academy has a compliant and tested:
 - Critical Incident Plan
 - Lockdown Procedure
 - Business Continuity Plan
 - Emergency Communication Structure
- Provide technical leadership, professional expertise and competent advice.
- Lead inspections, audits, risk assessments and incident investigations.
- Oversee the Health & Safety audit cycle and ensure timely completion of actions.
- Maintain operational oversight of statutory compliance (fire, asbestos, legionella, gas safety, lifting equipment, work equipment, etc.).

³ [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)

- Ensure Trust-wide use of consistent templates, processes and reporting frameworks.
- Monitor compliance and report significant emerging risks to the Director of Operations.
- Oversee the approved contractor list and ensure competence and safe working standards.
- Support schools with the implementation of policies, safe systems and training.

3.5 Headteachers

Headteachers ensure safe day-to-day leadership of each school/academy by:

- Embedding policy and safe systems of work
- Ensuring local staff induction, training and supervision
- Conducting risk assessment and implementing control measures
- Maintaining emergency preparedness
- Reporting KPIs and incidents to the Trust
- Ensuring inclusive provision for all pupils and staff

3.6 Facility Managers

Facility Managers provide local challenge, assurance and oversight by:

- Monitoring compliance
- Reviewing local risks and incident data
- Ensuring that safeguarding and H&S interdependencies are aligned
- Supporting inclusive and accessible provision

3.7 All Employees

Every employee must:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others
- Follow safe systems of work
- Report hazards and near misses
- Complete mandatory H&S training
- Support an inclusive culture that protects dignity and wellbeing

4. Inclusive Health, Safety & Wellbeing

TPAT is committed to ensuring every pupil, staff member and visitor can access our schools safely and without barriers⁴.

4.1 Accessible Environments

Each school must:

- Maintain an up-to-date Accessibility Plan
- Remove environmental, communication or procedural barriers
- Provide alternative formats for safety information (e.g. visual, easy-read, dyslexia-friendly, multilingual)

4.2 Neurodiversity Inclusive Practice

Risk assessments and systems must consider:

- Sensory-safe environments
- Quiet evacuation procedures
- Adjusted training methods
- Predictable and clearly communicated routines

4.3 Psychological Safety & Wellbeing

Leaders must:

- Promote respectful, supportive culture
- Minimise psychosocial risks such as workload, stress and conflict
- Provide early support and occupational health access
- Encourage speaking up and learning culture

5. Risk Management Framework

TPAT applies a five-stage risk management model⁵:

1. Identify hazards
2. Assess risks proportionately
3. Implement controls using the hierarchy of control

⁴ [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ “Approach aligned to HSE HSG65 (Plan-Do-Check-Act).” (HSE, 2013).

4. Record decisions and communicate clearly
5. Monitor, review, and continually improve

Risk assessments must be:

- Completed on approved Trust templates
- Reviewed at least annually, or sooner following an incident or change
- Accessible to all relevant persons
- Inclusive, considering SEND, disability, volunteers, visitors, pregnant workers and contractors

6. Core Safety Arrangements

6.1 Asbestos Management

Asbestos management will follow CAR 2012 and the latest DfE guidance for schools, including clear scope control for intrusive works and robust contractor briefing⁶.

- Each school must maintain an Asbestos Management Plan
- Only licensed contractors may disturb asbestos
- All contractors must sign the register before work starts
- Incidents must be reported immediately to the Trust H&S Lead

6.2 Fire & Building Safety

Where TPAT controls multi-occupied residential buildings (e.g., boarding/staff housing), the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 duties will be applied⁷.

- Annual fire risk assessment by a TPAT-approved competent assessor
- Legally compliant evacuation procedures including:
 - PEEPs for staff and pupils
 - Neurodiversity-sensitive alarms where necessary
- Fire drills every term, and at the start of each academic year
- Clear roles for Fire Marshals with competency checks

6.3 Legionella Management

- Monthly water checks
- Independent risk assessment every 2 years
- Immediate action on non-conformance

⁶ [Managing asbestos in your school or college - GOV.UK](#)

⁷ [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

6.4 Contractor Control

- All contractors must be Trust-approved
- Contractor RAMS must be reviewed before work starts
- Permit-to-work required for high-risk activities
- Contractors must be supervised on site

6.5 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)

- All hazardous substances must have updated COSHH assessments
- Staff must be trained and competent
- Safe storage and PPE must be provided

6.6 Working at Height

- All activities to be conducted in Accordance with Working at Height Regulations 2005
- Only trained staff may work at height
- Equipment must meet relevant British Standards
- Monthly ladder inspections

6.7 Manual Handling

- Activities to be conducted in accordance with Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Training for all relevant staff⁸
- Redesign tasks to eliminate avoidable lifting
- Specialist assessments for staff with additional needs

6.8 Driving, Minibus & Transport

- Licence, medical and insurance checks
- MIDAS training for relevant drivers
- Journey-planning to minimise fatigue
- Clear incident, breakdown and supervision procedures

⁸ HSE INDG143 – Getting to grips with manual handling

6.9 First Aid

- First Aid Needs Assessment for every site
- Adequate first aiders, including paediatric coverage
- Fully stocked kits monitored monthly
- Reporting through incident management system

6.10 Infectious Disease Control

- Follow UKHSA standards
- Prompt reporting for notifiable diseases
- Outbreak management plans
- Biohazard spill kits maintained

6.11 Emergencies & Critical Incidents

Each school must have:

- A Critical Incident & Lockdown Plan
- A Business Continuity Plan
- Trained Incident Response Team
- Clear communication arrangements

7. Incident Reporting & Investigation

7.1 Reporting

All accidents, incidents, near misses and unsafe conditions must be reported immediately.

7.2 Investigation

The Trust will use a root cause analysis approach to:

- Understand contributory factors
- Identify systemic improvements
- Share learning across all schools

7.3 RIDDOR

The Trust H&S Lead will complete all RIDDOR submissions.

7.4 Learning & Continuous Improvement

- After-action reviews for significant events
- Lessons shared Trust-wide
- KPIs fed into the annual Trust Board report

8. Training & Competence Framework

TPAT commits to:

- Statutory training for all staff
- Role-specific training for leaders, site teams and specialist staff
- Inclusive training approaches, including:
 - Visual, easy-read options
 - Flexible timings
 - Additional support for neurodiverse colleagues

Minimum training includes:

- Safeguarding
- Fire Safety
- First Aid (as identified)
- Manual Handling
- COSHH
- Working at Height
- DSE
- Educational Visits Leadership (EVC) – *nominated teaching staff*

9. Monitoring, Assurance & Audit

We use a three-tier assurance model:

Tier 1 — School-level monitoring

- Site checks
- Local inspections
- Facility Manager oversight

Tier 2 — Trust assurance

The annual H&S report to Trustees includes progress against DfE School Estate Management Standards levels by school⁹

- Compliance dashboards
- Incident trend analysis
- Competency and training completion reports

Tier 3 — Independent audit

- Annual external H&S audit
- Thematic reviews (e.g., fire, asbestos, safeguarding interface)

A comprehensive report goes to the Trust Board annually.

10. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- After significant incidents
- When legislation or guidance changes
- When organisational change requires it

All changes will be communicated to staff and stakeholders.

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