Risk Assessment Policy

Compiled by:

CEAT

Approval Date	**July 2025**
Review Date	**Annual**
Board of Trustees	**Yes**
Governors' Sub Committee	**-**
Statutory Policy	**Yes**

The review of this policy will be as and when required in response to national requirements and in light of continuous school-based monitoring and evaluation data.

1. Overview

As an employer, Central England Academy Trust is required by law to protect our employees, and others, from harm. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the minimum you must do is:

- identify what could cause injury or illness in your business (hazards)
- decide how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how seriously (the risk)
- take action to eliminate the hazard, or if this isn't possible, control the risk

2. Arrangements for applying the policy

The appointed health and safety responsible person will undertake site specific assessments, these will be reviewed annually unless the conditions change. Fresh assessments are required when the risks change as conditions alter or new situations are encountered for the first time.

Staff will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out, recorded, and reviewed for all tasks, activities, locations, and activities that present a significant hazard while discharging their duties as a member of staff at Central England Academy Trust.

3. Steps needed to manage risk

Assessing risk is just one part of the overall process used to control risks. Risk is part of everyone's life, it cannot be avoided but steps can be put in place to manage risk effectively. Risk management is a step by step process for controlling health and safety risks caused by hazards in the workplace. In order to ensure a safe working environment, it is essential to:

- Identify hazards
- Assess the risks
- Control the risks
- Record findings
- Review the controls

A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm. This could be something specialised such as a piece of machinery or as commonplace as a hot drink. If it could be harmful in any way, then it's a hazard. Risk is the combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event occurring and the consequence of the event. Our Trust expects risk assessments to be undertaken to be responsible for reasonably foreseeable risks using common and industry knowledge.

To Identify hazards

Think about the area and activity and think about what may cause harm (these are called hazards). Think about:

- the general state of your area
- the environment
- how people work and how equipment is used
- what (if any) chemicals and substances are used
- what safe or unsafe practices exist
- hazards to health, such as manual handling

For each hazard, think about how employees, pupils, contractors, visitors or members of the public and people with disabilities might be harmed.

Involve others, your colleagues will usually have good ideas.

To Assess the risks

Once the hazards have been identified, estimate how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how serious it could be. This is assessing the level of risk. Use the risk matrix to help you evaluate.

Decide:

- who might be harmed and how
- what you're already doing to control the risks
- what further action you need to take to control the risks
- who needs to carry out the action
- when the action is needed by

Remember to involve others, if action is needed it is essential to allow good time for any recommendations to be put in place and for these to be communicated in advance of any activity taking place.

To Control the risks

Look at what you're already doing, and the controls you already have in place. Ask yourself:

- can I eliminate the hazard altogether?
- if not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

If you need further controls, consider:

- redesigning the task or activity (reducing the hazard, preventing contact)
- replacing the materials or process (reducing the hazard)
- organising your work to reduce exposure to the materials or process (preventing contact)
- identifying and implementing practical measures needed to undertake the activity safely (safe system of work)
- providing personal protective equipment and making sure it is used

Put the controls you have identified in place. You're not expected to eliminate all risks but you need to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of cost, time or trouble using common and industry knowledge.

To Record your findings

Complete the risk assessment template using your findings from the steps above. Once completed email your assessment to the appointed Responsible Person within your school setting. Once reviewed your assessment will be saved to the central file in I Am Compliant. Please provide an overview of who will be required to read and sign the document to confirm understanding.

To Review the controls

You must annually review the controls you have put in place to make sure they are working. You should also review them if:

- they may no longer be effective
- there are changes in the activity that could lead to new risks such as changes to:
  - staff
  - a process
  - the substances or equipment used

Also consider a review if your colleagues have spotted any problems or there have been any accidents or near misses. Update your risk assessment record with any changes you make and send to the appointed Responsible Person within your school setting.

Specialist Advice

It is important when completing risk assessments to be aware of individual limitations in terms of knowledge and competence. If further support is required staff should contact the health and safety responsible person in their school for advice. Staff involved in the creation of risk assessments can also access further training in the risk assessment process under the training section in I Am Compliant and via our health and safety subscription.

4. Common workplace risks

We have grouped together the most common causes of serious injury at work, such as slips and trips or working at height. Some health conditions can be caused or made worse by work and working environments. These include lung disease, stress and musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain.

Asbestos
Asbestos was used extensively as a building material in England from the 1950s through to the mid-1980s. The use of all asbestos types was banned in building construction in England in 1999, so any school built before the year 2000 may contain asbestos.

The HSE is the lead regulator on managing asbestos and advises that as long as asbestos is in good condition, well-managed and unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, it is not a significant risk to the health of teachers and pupils during their daily activities. When asbestos cannot be effectively managed in situ, it should be removed.

One of the key requirements under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 is for the duty holder to prepare a plan that sets out in detail how the risks from materials which have, or are presumed to have asbestos, will be managed. For schools within the Trust who have identified asbestos an Asbestos Management Plan should be held at school level and reviewed and additionally, an Asbestos register recording the location and condition of asbestos should be reviewed annually. Before starting any work that is likely to disturb asbestos, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must also be prepared. Precautions should also be in place to ensure that anyone in-house, or who comes to carry out any work on the premises does not start work before they are given the information about any asbestos present. This includes any invasive work and the requirement for a refurbishment and/or demolition survey.

Display Screen Equipment
Employees must be protected from the health risks associated with working with display screen equipment (DSE), such as PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones. The Health and Safety (DSE) Regulations apply to employees who use DSE daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more. We describe these employees as 'DSE users'. The regulations don't apply to employees who use DSE infrequently or only use it for a short time.

Some employees may experience fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache from overuse or improper use of DSE. These problems can also be experienced from poorly designed workstations or work environments. The causes may not always be obvious and can be due to a combination of factors. To control the risk to health and safety for these employees we:

- analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks;
- make sure controls are in place;
- provide information and training;
- provide eye and eyesight tests on request, and special spectacles if needed;
- review the assessment when the user or DSE changes.

Equipment and machinery
The aim of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) is to ensure that work equipment is safe to use, regardless of its age, condition or origin. PUWER places duties on employers and others who control how work equipment is used. Maintenance of plant and equipment is carried out to prevent problems arising, to put faults right, and to ensure equipment is working effectively. All people using work equipment or supervising/managing its use should be sufficiently competent to do so safely. Competence may include, in some cases, minimum medical fitness and either or both physical and mental aptitude, as well as knowledge and skill. To ensure competence any training needs are considered alongside the employee and according to the task and scope of the employees role.

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) apply to the safe use of lifting equipment. LOLER also requires people-carrying lifts and lifting equipment (such as hoists) to be thoroughly

examined every 6 months. Service and maintenance contracts are in place in the event of a lift or equipment breakdown. Training has also been provided to specified employees to undertake lift lowering and emergency door opening. There is a call button in the lift for raising the alarm (which is tested).

Equipment used for physical education must be safe to use (under section 3 of the HSWA). To ensure that equipment is maintained in a safe condition, it should be regularly inspected. Checks are undertaken by Sportsafe and remedial actions taken where identified. British Standard EN 1176 requires that playground equipment should be inspected at regular intervals reflecting its use, purpose and position. Termly play equipment inspections are purchased via Warwickshire County Council.

Oak Wood Schools have a shared hydrotherapy pool. The Site Team have received pool plant training. Hydrotherapy operating procedures are in place alongside the risk assessment and staff supporting pupils have been trained in resuscitation. Water treatment and pool maintenance is undertaken by WCS Group and inspection carried out via Warwickshire County Council.

It is a legal requirement for enclosed work areas to have a ventilation system. In our school meals kitchens ideally all cooking appliances should have a canopy hood over them, to thus ensure as much steam, grease and vapour is removed. These receive an annual deep clean to remove any build up of fat and grease that could be blocking any in or outlets. If this build up isn't regularly removed, it can lead to the ventilation system working less efficiently and in the long term could lead to a risk of fire.
Gas related testing and servicing is undertaken via Warwickshire Property Services who deploy a competent Gas Safe registered contractor.

Our schools use powered gates as a security and safeguarding measure for premises and pupils. Some of our sites also have roller shutters. Powered gates can give rise to a number of significant hazards, including those from being:

- hit by the moving gate
- crushed against fixed and/or other moving parts
- trapped between fixed, moving and other parts
- caught on moving parts, eg gears
- electrocuted, as most are powered by electric motors, or controlled electrically
- affected by hydraulic or pneumatic parts, where these are present

Hazards may also arise during work on them, eg:

- they may drop or move unexpectedly if not adequately restrained
- hydraulic and pneumatic components may have residual stored energy, and so move unexpectedly when disconnected
- the disconnection of safety devices while still 'live' may result in a significant uncontrolled crushing/trapping risks
- from being left in an unsafe condition, such as failing to properly set the safety features

Powered gates must be:

- properly designed, taking into account their location, weather conditions that may affect them, the possibility of vulnerable people being present, and foreseeable misuse
- manufactured to the safety standards required by law
- supplied with a complete set of documentation, including User Instructions for the complete product
- installed and maintained by competent contractors
- regularly checked (which may include inspection, testing, and adjustment for safety)

Like most machinery, powered doors and gates need to be maintained to remain safe.

Manual Handling
Manual handling means transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force. It includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving loads. A load can be an object, person or animal. Measures to control risk will vary depending on the task. When manual handling operations cannot be avoided, where possible, the risk of hazardous manual handling is reduced by providing mechanical help, for example a sack

trolley to move deliveries or a hoist for pupil handling along with an individual pupil handling plan. Where this is not reasonably practicable, changes to the task, the load and the working environment are explored for example:

- a large order for distribution may be broken up into smaller, lighter parts
- delivery point numbers are assigned to reduce the distance goods have to travel
- consideration is given to timetable commitments, events and therefore achievable deadlines
- the person doing the lifting has been trained to lift as safely as possible

Personal Protective Equipment

To stay safe, employees may have to wear PPE such as gloves and aprons for personal care, eye or hearing protection for Science and Technology lessons, high-visibility clothing for car park/staff duties and to signify they are a fire marshall.

PPE also includes respiratory protective equipment (RPE) to prevent employees breathing in dust, mist, gas or fumes. Our staff who are pool plant trained have been fitted for respiratory equipment.

Where PPE has been identified and provided for a task it is an expectation that it must be worn.

Radiation

Schools register to CLEAPSS annually and refer to Managing Ionising Radiations and Radioactive Substances in Schools and Colleges, for advice and guidance to support practical work. To support compliance and maintain good practice, subscription to the Radiation Protection Officer is also advised.

Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas given off by rocks and soils. It is a harmful gas that can enter buildings. Schools in a radon affected area and those in a non-radon area that have a basement that is occupied for more than an average of one hour per week (50 hours per year), should carry out measurements to determine potential radon levels in their premises. Action may need to be taken to restrict resulting exposures in accordance with the requirements of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017.

Workplace Transport

Our risk assessments outline supervision as a control measure. Before and after school a rota specifies staff who have an area to be on duty in order to keep traffic and pedestrian movements as safe as possible. It is key that staff are at their area on time and remain observant and do not become distracted. Other control measures for keeping pupils, staff, sites, vehicles and drivers safe include:

- A one way system where possible
- Separate routes for pedestrians and vehicles where possible
- Separation of parking and playground areas
- Appropriate crossing points where pedestrians and traffic meet
- Speed limits
- Pass system
- Adequate lighting
- Safe areas and times for loading and unloading
- Regular maintenance of minibuses
- MIDAS training
- Regular reminders to site users on safety

Electrical Safety

To comply with the requirements of the The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, the HSE recommends periodic inspections by a competent person, with a recommended maximum period of 5 years between inspections or tests of electrical installations. Fixed electrical system testing involves testing the electrical installations and systems that conduct electricity around the building. It covers all of the electrical wiring within the buildings and grounds and includes:

- external lighting and supplies
- main panels
- distribution boards

- lighting
- socket outlets
- air conditioning
- other fixed plant

All testing must be conducted by a suitably qualified electrician.

A portable or moveable electrical appliance can be defined as any item that can be moved, either connected or disconnected from an electrical supply. Portable or movable items generally have a cable and a plug. The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EAWR) state that electrical systems must be maintained to prevent danger. This includes any electrical equipment used by employees at work. Not all electrical equipment will need a portable appliance test (PAT test). In some cases, a simple user check and visual inspection is enough. We encourage all employees not to bring in items of equipment from home to use in school without being subjected to a PAT test to check safety. PAT testing of school equipment is undertaken in accordance with a specified schedule by a competent staff member who has received PAT test training. As a result of the testing any items deemed unsafe to operate will be immediately rendered incapable of use until repaired or replaced and must not be used, in most cases they will be removed from use.

Fire Safety
School premises, accommodation and facilities must be maintained to a standard that ensures, so far as is reasonable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff. Our schools undertake a Fire Risk Assessment to ensure procedures are in place to reduce the likelihood of fire, maintain fire detection and alarm systems, and familiarise staff and pupils with emergency evacuation procedures. FRA's are reviewed (and updated where appropriate) annually or earlier where significant changes to premises have taken place.

Fire detection and alarm systems have a weekly alarm test schedule in place, with different call points being tested each week, so that all are eventually included in the schedule of testing over a period of time. The system is also subject to quarterly and annual inspections and checks by a competent person.

All work on fire alarm systems, including routine testing, should be recorded and accessible to the fire service. Zone diagrams should be available at the main control panel to enable the fire services to determine the location of any incidents and devise the most appropriate methods of fighting the fire.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
The law requires employers to adequately control exposure to materials in the workplace that cause ill health. This is the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). As an example, these substances could be dusts, gases or fumes that you breathe in, or liquids, gels or powders that come into contact with your eyes or skin. There could also be harmful micro-organisms present that can cause infection, an allergic reaction or are toxic.

Harmful substances can be present in anything from paints and cleaners, flour dust in Food Tech or wood dust from sanding to blood or waste. Ill health caused by these substances used at work is preventable. Many substances can harm health but, used properly, they almost never do. Every product in school needs to be able to be traced back to its source, to identify if it is hazardous to health. *COSHH does not cover Asbestos or Radioactive substances.

Our schools undertake a COSHH stocktake and COSHH audit annually to record the substances used, where they are stored, the condition of the substance and the quantities stored. This process helps to identify if:
- Using a hazardous substance can be avoided
- If it can be substituted for something safer – e.g. swapping an irritant cleaning product for something milder, or using a vacuum cleaner rather than a brush
- A safer process can be identified when use cannot be avoided i.e. by preventing exposure. Some examples might be, through using a water-based substance instead of solvent-based, applying by brush rather than spraying, use a solid rather than liquid to avoid splashes, or a waxy solid instead of a dry powder to avoid dust.

To assist this process a COSHH register is kept by each school alongside COSHH Assessments and Material Data Safety Sheets.

Our schools also subscribe to CLEAPSS who have a dedicated team monitoring for amendments and updates on behalf of the paying members. For Science / Design and Technology all model risk assessments and COSHH assessments are from CLEAPSS, accessed via their website https://www.cleapss.org.uk/.

Slips and Trips

The most common cause of major injuries in any workplace are slips and trips. There are several factors that can contribute to a slip or trip:

- Flooring – needs to be suitable and maintained in a good condition
- Half of trip accidents are caused by bad housekeeping. Contamination such as spilt substances create a slippery floor hazard and obstacles create a trip hazard, such as poor storage of items
- Cleaning – whilst important to remove contamination and obstacles it can be a hazard in itself if the wet surface creates a slip hazard
- Environment – weather conditions can affect the risk of a slip as can poor lighting and maintenance
- Footwear – it is essential shoes worn are suitable for the school work environment
- Human behavior and attributes can also be a factor

The estate buildings are an important and valuable long-term asset. They may also be open to the public as community facilities. Poor or irregular maintenance of school buildings can result in:

- disruption of education
- closure or partial closure of buildings
- invalidation of insurance
- poor value for money
- unnecessary expenditure to rectify problems which could have been avoided
- shorter building life
- risks to the health, safety and welfare of building users
- legal claims
- non-compliance with regulations

These risks are reduced by having an effective maintenance regime in place. Our schools undertake planned preventative maintenance taking into account property condition data and to prolong the working life of equipment to prevent failure. The estate might include buildings of different ages and construction types. These will all have different requirements and challenges for undertaking maintenance and repairs. Our maintenance plans cover a 3 to 5 year period and schedule a list of works to be undertaken in each year.

Cyclical maintenance contributes to the condition of the school buildings and estate and fulfils our legal duties.

Our reactive maintenance works will be undertaken because of unexpected failure of a component, notified through our defect reporting system, or as a result of accidental damage or on account of vandalism. In addition any urgent health and safety works may also be considered as reactive maintenance.

All works are prioritised taking account of any legal duties and responsibilities, works which may impact health, safety or security, works impacting the building such as electrical or mechanical and available resources. The risk score on the condition surveys also indicates the likelihood of failure and the consequences of not addressing the need.

Additionally all employees have general duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions and comply with their employers arrangements for managing health and safety. As such employees must:

- inform the Headteacher of any work situation considered to be dangerous, or of any shortcoming in the schools protection arrangements for health and safety

- use all work items provided by your school correctly, in accordance with your training and the instructions you received to use them safely

Employees can help to prevent slips and trips by:
- Reporting near misses and accidents promptly
- Rectifying the slip and trip risk when spotted, or when not possible reporting it
- Helping to keep floors clean and dry and clearing up spillages straight away
- Avoiding causing trailing cables
- Keeping places of work clear of obstacles and areas tidy
- If there isn't adequate lighting, reporting it
- Asking your site team to mark slopes and changes of levels
- If you think of ways of preventing contamination (water, oils, cardboard, waste etc) from getting onto the floor, suggesting them to your site team
- Following all safety advice

Refresher training is provided for staff.

Working at Height
Work at height means work in any place where, if precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. You are working at height if you:
- work above ground/floor level
- could fall from an edge, through an opening or fragile surface or
- could fall from ground level into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground

Work at height does **not** include a slip or a trip on the same level, as a fall from height has to involve a fall from one level to a lower level, nor does it include walking up and down a permanent staircase in a building.

Our recruitment process helps to identify candidates with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience are employed to perform the task required, or, if they are to be trained, that they work under the supervision of somebody competent to do it.

In the case of low-risk, short duration tasks involving ladders, competence requirements may be no more than making sure employees receive instruction on how to use the equipment safely and/or have appropriate training. Training often takes place on the job, it does not always take place in a formal training session. When a more technical level of competence is required outside the scope of employee competence, for example drawing up a plan for assembling a complex scaffold, industry or expert knowledge will be sought

Before working at height employees must follow these simple steps:
- avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so
- where work at height cannot be easily avoided, prevent falls using either an existing place of work that is already safe or the right type of equipment
- minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, by using the right type of equipment where the risk cannot be eliminated

In addition they must:
- do as much work as possible from the ground
- ensure safety when getting to and from where the work at height is to be carried out
- ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly
- not overload or overreach when working at height
- take precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces
- provide protection from falling objects
- consider emergency evacuation and rescue procedures

Stress
Stress is an individual's reaction to excessive pressure and other demands placed upon them. We recognise pressure can be motivating but too much can cause stress. Non-work factors can also contribute to levels of stress and we recognise this can affect an employee's ability to bounce back leaving staff more vulnerable to work related stress. We recognise employees can feel stress when they can't cope with pressures and other

issues. It is important we match demands to employees skills and knowledge to try to prevent stress caused by staff feeling they don't have the skills or time to undertake a task successfully. Providing adequate planning, training and support can reduce pressure and bring stress levels down. There are six main areas which can effect stress levels. These are managed by:

- *demands*
  considering work load, work patterns and work environment
- *control*
  good communication and involvement of staff in decision making through consultation
- *support*
  regular staff meetings and briefings, celebrating successes, providing access to employee assistance programme and salary schemes such as gym membership and cycle to work scheme
- *relationships*
  role modelling positive ways to avoid conflict, conflict resolution and addressing any unacceptable behaviour and ensuring all employees and others share the Trust values of collaboration, equity, aspiration and trust
- *role*
  regular review of job roles through performance reviews and scheduled pattern of training and time spent within teams to evaluate tasks
- *change*
  involvement of staff in decision making through consultation