The New Walk School *Bespoke support. Brighter futures.*

Health and Safety Policy

The New Walk School policy framework

Policy	Health and Safety Policy	**Version**	V1
Issue date	08 May 2026	**Next review**	08 May 2027
Policy owner	Headteacher	**Approved by**	Directors of The New Walk School Ltd

1. About The New Walk School

The New Walk School is an independent specialist day school for pupils aged 7 to 19 who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, autism spectrum conditions, learning difficulties and communication difficulties. The school is located on New Walk in Leicester — a setting with a long-standing association with academic life — and is operated by The New Walk School Ltd, a Company Limited by Guarantee.

The majority of our pupils hold an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and many have experienced previous educational placements that did not meet their needs. Our offer combines a broad academic curriculum with an in-built therapeutic provision rooted in the PACE model — Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy — developed by Dr Dan Hughes. PACE is a relational approach designed to build trust, regulate distress and create the safety from which learning can take place. It informs how every adult in the school speaks to, listens to and works with our pupils.

2. The PACE therapeutic model in practice

Health and safety at The New Walk School is a relational matter as well as a regulatory one. PACE-informed practice means that supervision and risk management feel like care, not control:

- Playfulness — staff use a light, warm tone to reduce shame and de-escalate distress, using humour appropriate to the pupil and the moment.
- Acceptance — pupils' feelings and inner experiences are accepted unconditionally, even where specific behaviours are not. Acceptance is communicated before any limit is set.
- Curiosity — staff seek to understand the meaning behind a pupil's behaviour rather than reacting to its surface, asking 'what is this telling me?'
- Empathy — staff name and stay with the pupil's emotional experience, communicating that the pupil is not alone with what they feel.

PACE is not a behaviour-management tool layered on top of practice; it is the relational foundation from which all other aspects of the school operate.

3. Statutory framework

This policy meets the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Part 3.

4. Statement of intent

The New Walk School Ltd, as employer, is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and members of the public who may be affected by the school's activities. The school provides safe premises, safe systems of work, safe equipment, and the information, instruction and training needed for staff to work safely.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Directors of The New Walk School Ltd

The Directors carry overall legal responsibility for health and safety and are the duty-holder for premises. They review the policy annually, receive a termly health and safety report from the Headteacher, and ensure that adequate resources are allocated.

Headteacher

The Headteacher implements the policy day-to-day, ensures risk assessments are in place and reviewed, and reports incidents and trends to the Directors.

Health and Safety Lead

A named member of staff co-ordinates risk assessments, maintains the accident book, manages COSHH inventory, oversees fire and evacuation arrangements, and acts as the school's competent person.

All staff

All staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of themselves and others, complying with safe systems of work, reporting hazards, and co-operating with the school on health and safety matters.

6. Risk assessments

Generic and specific risk assessments are in place for: classrooms and specialist teaching spaces; outdoor areas and the route to/from the building on New Walk; lone working; physical intervention; manual handling; off-site visits; lettings and external use of premises; medical conditions; and individual pupils where indicated. Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually and after any significant incident or change.

7. Accidents, incidents and RIDDOR

All accidents and near misses are recorded in the school's accident book. Incidents that meet the RIDDOR threshold (specified injuries, over-7-day incapacitation, dangerous occurrences) are reported to the Health and Safety Executive within statutory timescales. The Headteacher reviews accident records monthly to identify trends.

8. Fire safety

Fire safety is detailed in the Fire Safety Policy. Termly fire drills are held; the fire risk assessment is reviewed at least annually; alarms, emergency lighting and extinguishers are tested on schedule by competent contractors.

9. Premises and equipment

Premises are inspected daily by the Health and Safety Lead or delegate. Statutory inspections (electrical fixed-wire, portable appliance testing, gas, asbestos, water hygiene, lifts, fire systems) are scheduled and held on file. Defects are logged on the maintenance system and prioritised by risk.

10. Contractors and visitors

Contractors are inducted to the school's health and safety arrangements, sign in, and provide their own risk assessments and method statements. Visitors sign in and are escorted while on site. DBS arrangements for contractors are detailed in the Recruitment, Selection and Vetting Policy.

11. First aid

First aid arrangements are detailed in the First Aid Policy. There is always at least one paediatric first-aider on site during the school day.

12. Training

Health and safety training is provided to all staff at induction and refreshed at intervals appropriate to role: fire warden training, first aid, manual handling, food hygiene for kitchen staff, COSHH for cleaning staff, and risk assessment training for staff who lead activities.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the Directors. It is reviewed earlier if there is a change in legislation, premises or operational arrangements.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher in consultation with the senior leadership team and the Directors of The New Walk School Ltd. It will be reviewed earlier where there is a material change in legislation, statutory guidance or the operational needs of the school. The most recent version is held on the school's policy register and is made available to parents, carers and staff on request.

Linked policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside the school's wider policy suite, including: Safeguarding and Child Protection; SEND; Behaviour and Relationships; Anti-Bullying; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Health and Safety; Curriculum; and Complaints.