THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GROUP LTD

Health and Safety Policy

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Introduction:

The Alternative School Group Limited is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all staff, pupils and visitors to our premises and aims to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation including:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRFSO) 2005
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 (amended January 2024)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (updated 2002)
- The Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998 (updated 2018)

This policy has been written with regard to the following guidance:

- Health and Safety: responsibilities and duties for schools (updated April 2022)
- HSE Sensible Health & Safety management in schools
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on children's play and leisure
- DfE Good estate management for schools: health and safety (updated July 2026)
- DfE School and college security guidance (updated July 2026)
- UKHSA Health protection in children and young people settings, including education (updated September 2026)
- The school follows national guidance published by UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) and government guidance on living with COVID-19 when responding to infection control issues.

Aim:

The Alternative School aims to:-

• Provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment.
• Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, pupils and all visitors to the school site.
• Have robust procedures in place in case of emergencies.
• Ensure that the premises and equipment are maintained safely and are regularly inspected.

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The main legislation in England, Scotland and Wales is contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The key parts of this legislation set out the legal obligations of both employers and employees. The Proprietor and Employer has the major responsibility for health and safety, but the day-to-day responsibility for managing health and safety risks effectively is delegated to: -

- The Headteacher / setting lead, supported by the caretaker at each TAS site for premises and maintenance matters;
- The Compliance and Health & Safety Consultant.
- All staff within TAS

Within this legislation **it is everyone's responsibility to understand** and have a duty of care to work safely, undertake all necessary training and to follow the company rules and regulations regarding health and safety.

Employers are obliged by the Health and Safety at Work Act to have a written Health and Safety Policy and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require that risk assessments are carried out for all activities so that suitable control measures can be put in place to safeguard the health and safety of all people who come in to contact with the company's activities.

Employees need training to do their work safely and they need to understand the hazards involved in their work and how these hazards can be controlled. All risk assessment information should be shared in a manner that can be understood and followed by all employees.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 refer to the general safety and welfare of employees. Housekeeping comes under this legislation and relates to all areas and activities within the school because keeping areas clean and tidy helps in the control of slips, trips and helps in the prevention of contamination from chemicals and other work-related materials.

Five steps to risk assessment: -

At TAS we follow the 5-steps to risk assessment as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive: -

- Step 1 - Identify the hazards.
- Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how.
- Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.
- Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them.
- Step 5 - Review your assessment and update if necessary.

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When thinking about risk assessment: -

- A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from heights, an open drawer etc.
- The **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Risk Assessments

- Risk assessments are completed for all areas within the school, outside areas, internal activities, day trips, residential trips, adventurous activities, all off site activities and for every individual pupil. For any outdoor activity, an additional dynamic daily risk assessment is completed on the morning of the activity to take into consideration any moving factors such as the weather, the mood of pupils, circumstances at the pupil's home and dynamic of the group on the morning.

Health and Safety Arrangements

The Health and Safety arrangements identified in this policy are based on the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated Health and Safety Legislation and aims, as far as is reasonably practicable to:

- Provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities.
- Provide and maintain equipment.
- Ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks and to ensure provision of adequate training.
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
- Consult with employees on matters affecting the health and safety.
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees.
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill-health.
- Review and revise this policy and arrangements as necessary and at regular intervals.

Risk assessments are reviewed annually or earlier if working methods or conditions change, or if they become invalid due to, for example, following an accident in the workplace, or if there are any significant changes to the hazards, such as new equipment or work activities.

Risk-management arrangements apply to work carried out away from TAS premises, including authorised home working and other remote work. Assessments and controls should be proportionate to the activity and individual circumstances.

HOME WORKING

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The following provisions apply where TAS authorises an employee to work from home. TAS recognises that its health and safety responsibilities extend to employees working from home and will take a proportionate, risk-based approach having regard to the work undertaken and the employee's circumstances.

Under the TAS Work from Home Policy, home working is ordinarily authorised only following individual consideration of a medical condition or disability-related need. Any such arrangement must be risk-assessed as appropriate; consideration of reasonable adjustments and occupational health advice may be necessary. The same health and safety duties apply once home working is authorised. This does not restrict the separate statutory flexible-working process.

Home-working and DSE assessment

- Regular home workers may be required to complete the TAS Home Working & DSE Self-Assessment. The assessment must be reviewed where there is a significant change to the workstation, equipment, work activity, working pattern or location, or where the employee reports discomfort or another relevant concern.
- Employees must cooperate with TAS risk-assessment arrangements and promptly report hazards or concerns that they cannot reasonably resolve themselves.
- Where an assessment identifies a work-related risk requiring equipment or another control measure, TAS will consider and implement reasonably practicable measures in accordance with its legal duties.

Display screen equipment (DSE)

- Home workers who use display screen equipment must set up their workstation to support a comfortable working posture, with a suitable work surface, seating, screen position, lighting and sufficient space.
- Employees should vary tasks and position and take appropriate breaks from prolonged screen work. Aches, pains, discomfort, visual problems or other concerns associated with DSE must be reported promptly.
- Where appropriate, TAS may provide information, training, advice or equipment following the assessment.

Electrical safety and the working environment

- Employees must visually check TAS electrical equipment, plugs, leads and cables for obvious damage and must stop using and report equipment they believe to be unsafe.
- Home-working areas should, so far as reasonably practicable, have suitable lighting, ventilation and temperature and be kept free from avoidable slip, trip and other hazards. Sockets and extension leads must not be overloaded.

Lone working, communication and wellbeing

- Managers must maintain appropriate contact with home workers. Any specific lone-working risks associated with a role must be identified and managed through the risk-assessment process.
- TAS recognises that home working may create risks associated with isolation, workload and work-related stress. Employees should raise concerns at an early stage and managers should maintain reasonable contact and oversight.

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Accidents and incidents

- Work-related accidents, injuries, near misses and health and safety incidents occurring while working from home must be reported in accordance with TAS normal reporting arrangements. TAS will investigate and make any statutory report where required.

Cross-reference: TAS Work from Home Policy and TAS Home Working & DSE Self-Assessment.

External Contractors

The Health & Safety policy is also linked to and should be included as part of the Contractors Pack, which is separate to this policy.

This applies to external contractors operating in or around any site owned, occupied or managed by The Alternative School Group Ltd, including future temporary or permanent sites.

Contractors, where possible should come from a TAS approved list and they should provide a Risk Assessment & Method Statement (R.A.M.S.) along with a completed, signed questionnaire, induction form and contractors' pack.

These requirements should form part of the contractor arrangements. TAS reserves the right to refuse or stop contractor work where required risk assessments, method statements, competence information or other necessary safety documentation has not been provided.

Health and Safety Schedule and Responsibilities:

Founder / Proprietor – Retains overall accountability for health and safety on behalf of TAS as employer/proprietor, including oversight across all TAS sites.

To review in September of each year and ensure adequate management and training for Health & Safety for the group.

TBP Group – TAS appointed competent health and safety adviser, providing specialist advice and carrying out regular health and safety audits at all TAS sites. Audit frequency and follow-up actions are managed under TAS arrangements.

All staff undertake appropriate yearly staff induction training and continuous CPD.

Site caretakers – Each TAS site has a caretaker who supports the Headteacher / setting lead with premises checks, reporting defects and coordinating maintenance and repairs within their assigned duties.

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Founder / Proprietor – Provides group-wide leadership and oversight of health and safety, supports Headteachers / setting leads and ensures that significant issues are escalated and addressed.

Headteachers / setting leads - Responsible for day-to-day implementation of this policy within their setting, including local risk management, staff communication, monitoring and escalation of concerns.

All staff – Share responsibility for working safely: take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, cooperate with TAS procedures, follow training and instructions, and report hazards and incidents promptly. This shared duty does not replace the employer/proprietor's overall legal responsibility.

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This is the statement of general policy and arrangements for:	The Alternative School Group Ltd Health and Safety Policy
Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of:	Founder & Proprietor Kirsty-Anne Pugh
Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to:	Headteachers

Statement of general policy	**Responsibility of**	**Action / Arrangements**
To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from work activities.	Proprietor Headteacher Compliance & Health & Safety Consultant SchoolCaretakers	Relevant risk assessments for all classrooms, office, toilets, corridor and refreshment rooms. Risk assessments are reviewed every year or earlier if working habits or conditions change. All injuries and near misses should be accurately recorded and risk assessments reviewed in response
To provide adequate training to ensure employees are competent to do their work	Proprietor Compliance & Health & Safety Consultant	Staff and volunteers are given the necessary health and safety induction and are provided with appropriate training including safe working practices and assessment of risk, emergency evacuation procedures and electrical safety. We will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to cover employees engaged in work remote from the main company site including individual risk assessments.
To provide Individual Risk Assessments (including medical care plans) for identified pupils/staff and Daily Risk Assessments for off-site activities.	Headteachers & Teachers	Relevant individual risk assessments are completed (and regularly reviewed) for 'at risk' pupils and staff, including medical care plans for pupils/staff with medical issues requiring such a plan. Individual risk assessments are completed for staff/pupils working remotely away from the main site, e.g. during 1:1 teaching situations. Daily Risk Assessments are completed for all off site activities involving pupils.
To engage and consult with employees on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on	Headteacher All staff	Staff are routinely consulted on health and safety matters as they arise but also formally consulted at regular health and safety performance review meetings or sooner if required.

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occupational health.		
To implement emergency procedures - evacuation in case of fire or other significant incident.	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher School Caretakers	Escape routes are well sign posted and kept clear at all times. Evacuation plans are tested from time to time and updated as necessary. Fire alarms are tested weekly to ensure that they are in full working order. www.communities.gov.uk/firesafety.)
To maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain equipment and ensure safe storage/use of substances.	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher School Caretakers	Toilets, washing facilities and drinking water are provided. System in place for routine inspections and testing of equipment and for ensuring that action is promptly taken to address any defects. PAT testing is carried out annually. Staff trained in safe handling/use of substances. See www.coshhessentials.org.uk.)
Health and safety law poster is displayed.	Headteacher/School Business Manager	Displayed in a visible manner in school.
Employer's Insurance Schedule displayed.	Headteacher/School Business Manager	Displayed in a visible manner in school.

Signed (Employer):	Founder/Proprietor	Date:	
Subject to review, monitoring and revision by:	Management Board	Every:	6 months or sooner if working methods or conditions change.

Note 1: https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities
Note 2: www.hse.gov.uk/riddor

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Risk assessment

Employers must assess health and safety risks. Where an employer has five or more employees, the significant findings must be recorded. The example risk assessment below should be reviewed so that action owners and controls reflect current TAS arrangements.

Organisation name: The Alternative School Group Limited - risk assessment for general room cleaning/housekeeping

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Spillages and loose cables	Staff, pupils and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	We carry out general good housekeeping. Most areas are well lit. There are no trailing leads or cables. Staff keep work areas clear, e.g., no boxes left in walkways, deliveries stored immediately, rooms cleaned each morning or evening (according to the cleaner's schedule within each campus)	Produce clear cleaning schedule for cleaners. Ensure catering staff are keeping the kitchen area clean at the end of each day.	Headteacher All Staff	Immediate	Ongoing
Contact with cleaning chemicals e.g., bleach.	Staff risk skin irritation or eye damage from direct contact with cleaning chemicals. Vapour from cleaning chemicals may also cause breathing problems.	There is a clear colour coded cleaning equipment list, that all staff should be made aware of to prevent cross contamination New staff are asked if they suffer from skin problems when using cleaning products. Mops/brushes and protective gloves are provided and used. Products are used in accordance with instructions and PPE is used when appropriate. Staff are advised NOT to clean areas or use chemicals without liaising with the Compliance & Health & Safety Consultant and reading COSHH safety data. COSHH safety data sheets are available for all cleaning products on site. PPE is provided by the school for all staff including cleaners.	Chemicals and cleaning equipment locked away. Cleaning must be undertaken by trained/authorised staff and in accordance with TAS COSHH arrangements. Seek advice from the Headteacher where required.	All staff	Immediate	Ongoing

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Working at height e.g., lifting down resources.	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures	Appropriate equipment, e.g., a suitable ladder, is provided and staff are shown how to use it safely. All staff should undertake ladder training before using any step ladders for any purpose e.g. creating classroom displays. All school caretakers have undertaken training to allow them to work at height.	Sue Lea (TBP group) to ensure that staff undertake the necessary training, and holds training records. No further action required.	All staff	As required	Ongoing
Lone working	Staff could suffer injury or ill health while working alone.	Cleaning staff to use Blip to clock in and clock out. Cleaning staff sign in/out on the fire register in the office. Cleaners have direct contact with their own line manager, and also have a telephone contact for the school headteacher. Lone worker policy and contact telephone numbers in place.	No further action required.	All staff	As required	Ongoing
Electrical equipment and cleaning equipment	Staff could get shocks or burns from faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	Staff are trained in basic electrical safety and do pre-use visual checks. Any defective equipment, plugs, discoloured sockets, damaged cables and on/off switches are promptly reported Any faulty equipment is promptly taken out of use and reported. Annual PAT testing and safety checks of the electrical equipment are carried out to ensure that it continues to be safe. This is done by a competent electrician.	Not at this time	Maintenance Manager & Headteacher	As required.	Ongoing
Fire	If trapped, staff could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation or burns.	Responsible person completed a fire risk assessment and taken any necessary action. Fire and emergency evacuation procedures are on display and regular evacuation drills are carried out and monitored. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) must be considered and implemented where an individual requires assistance or specific arrangements to evacuate safely.	Advise new staff on emergency procedures, including location of the fire exits. Provide visitors with the 'information for visitors' leaflet.	Headteacher	As required.	Ongoing

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Inexperienced staff	New or temporary staff are at risk if they unaware of safe working practices.	Risk assessments are discussed with all new staff as part of the induction process.	No further action required.	Headteacher	As required.	Ongoing

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