



Health and Safety Policy

EmpowerEd North policy suite

This policy has been adopted for use from May 2026 and should be reviewed against current legal, safeguarding, commissioning and operational requirements at least annually and whenever guidance or operational arrangements change.

Policy information	Details
Date adopted	May 2026
Review date	May 2027, or sooner following any review trigger listed in this policy
Approved by	EmpowerEd North Founder/Director
Named lead	Health and Safety Lead - Janice March
Version	1.0 -
Owner/responsible person	EmpowerEd North Founder/Director
Completion status	CURRENT - adopted for use from May 2026.
Operational arrangements	Named health and safety lead, written insurance confirmation, venue risk assessment/sign-off, fire/emergency arrangements, first aid cover, accident reporting route, RIDDOR responsibility, equipment checks, COSHH arrangements and lone working/community activity controls must be confirmed before any learner starts.

Immediate health and safety action

Immediate danger	Stop the activity if safe, move people away from danger, call 999 if required, administer first aid within competence, and inform the senior lead.
Safeguarding overlap	If an incident suggests abuse, neglect, unsafe care, unexplained injury, inappropriate restraint or a child at risk, inform the DSL immediately.
Venue not signed off	Do not use a venue, room, kitchen, outdoor space or community location until risk assessment, emergency arrangements and insurance/permission requirements are confirmed.
Accident or near miss	Record accidents, incidents and near misses promptly. Serious incidents must be reviewed by leadership and reported externally where legally required.
Unsafe equipment	Remove unsafe equipment from use immediately, label it clearly and record action taken.



1. Purpose

EmpowerEd North is committed to providing safe, healthy and well-managed learning, working and community environments for learners, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and members of the public affected by its activities. This policy sets out how EmpowerEd North will manage health, safety and welfare across a small, specialist alternative provision model.

Health and safety is part of safeguarding. Accidents, unsafe environments, poor moving and handling, inappropriate restraint, missing risk assessments, infection risk, medication errors or unsafe community practice can all have safeguarding implications.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all EmpowerEd North activities, including any main base, hired/community venue, outdoor/community learning, educational visits, transition visits, home/community-based support, meetings, staff work, visitors and contractors. It applies to premises, equipment, activities, food, first aid, infection prevention, fire/emergency procedures, transport arrangements where EmpowerEd North has responsibility, lone working and record keeping.

3. Legal and guidance framework

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, where relevant to premises used;
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992;
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002;
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, where relevant to premises responsibilities;
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013;
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981;
- Equality Act 2010;
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 for health and safety records;

Alternative provision statutory guidance, Department for Education, last updated 5 February 2025, where relevant to commissioner and off-site arrangements;

DfE non-school alternative provision (AP) voluntary national standards, published August 2025, where relevant to health, safety, welfare and commissioner due diligence;

- DfE health and safety responsibilities and duties for schools, used as relevant good practice where applicable to EmpowerEd North's AP arrangements;
- DfE health and safety on educational visits guidance, used as relevant good practice for off-site and community learning;
- HSE guidance on risk assessment, first aid at work and RIDDOR.

4. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
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Directors / leadership team	Overall responsibility for health and safety governance, resourcing, competent advice where needed, policy implementation, insurance, risk assessment systems, incident review and statutory reporting.
Health and Safety Lead	Coordinates risk assessments, venue checks, equipment checks, training records, accident/near miss records, fire/emergency information and health and safety action tracking.
DSL	Reviews incidents with safeguarding implications and ensures safeguarding referrals or escalation where required.
Staff and volunteers	Follow risk assessments and procedures, take reasonable care, report hazards, accidents and near misses, use equipment safely and stop unsafe activity where necessary.
Learners and visitors	Follow safety instructions as far as they are able, supported by accessible communication, supervision and reasonable adjustments.

5. Pre-placement health and safety requirement

No learner will start in a venue, activity or community arrangement until the following are confirmed and recorded:

- venue risk assessment and permission/booking arrangements;
- fire evacuation and emergency procedures, including assembly point and accessibility needs;
- first aid needs assessment, named first aider/appointed person and first aid kit arrangements;
- insurance confirmation for the activity, venue and learner profile;
- individual learner risk assessments and reasonable adjustments;
- lone working/community working controls;
- safeguarding, incident, accident and emergency contact routes;
- equipment checks and COSHH arrangements where substances are used;
- staff briefing and training proportionate to the activity and risks.

6. Risk assessment

Risk assessments will be proportionate, practical and treated as living documents. They must identify significant hazards, who may be harmed, existing controls, further actions, responsible persons and review dates. They will be reviewed annually and sooner following incidents, near misses, new venues, new learners, new activities, staff changes, commissioner concerns or changes in guidance.

EmpowerEd North will use both planned risk assessments and dynamic risk assessment. Dynamic risk assessment does not replace written planning where risks are foreseeable.

7. Venues and premises

- A venue risk assessment will be completed before a venue is used with learners.
- Emergency exits, fire procedures, toilets, access, lighting, heating, noise, sensory factors, kitchen arrangements, security, public access and supervision points must be considered.



- Where a venue is hired, EmpowerEd North will confirm what is the venue provider's responsibility and what is EmpowerEd North's responsibility.
- Learners' accessibility, sensory and safety needs must be considered before deciding whether a venue is suitable.
- Any room or area that becomes unsafe must be taken out of use until resolved.

8. Fire and emergency procedures

Fire and emergency arrangements must be known before a venue is used. Staff must know evacuation routes, assembly points, emergency contacts, alarm arrangements, lockdown/shelter arrangements where relevant, and any individual support required by learners. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan or equivalent must be considered where a learner or staff member may need additional support to evacuate.

9. First aid and medical needs

First aid arrangements are set out in the First Aid Policy. The health and safety risk assessment must consider first aid cover, emergency communication, distance from emergency services, learner medical needs, medication arrangements, allergies, seizures, diabetes, asthma, mobility, personal care and any contraindications for physical intervention or manual handling.

10. Accident, incident and near miss reporting

All accidents, incidents and near misses must be recorded promptly. Records must include date, time, location, people involved, what happened, injury or potential injury, first aid, immediate actions, witnesses, parent/carer/commissioner notification where relevant, safeguarding consideration and follow-up actions.

The leadership team will review accident and near miss data to identify patterns and prevent recurrence. RIDDOR reporting will be completed where legally required. Most incidents involving learners on educational activities will not be reportable to HSE, but serious work-related incidents, specified injuries, dangerous occurrences or other reportable events must be checked against current HSE guidance.

11. Off-site, community and educational visits

Community learning and off-site activity are central to EmpowerEd North's model, but they require careful planning. Routine local activities may be covered by standing risk assessments where appropriate. Higher-risk, unfamiliar, distant, specialist or complex activities require specific planning, approval and staff competence.

- learner profile and individual risk;
- staffing ratio and supervision;
- transport and walking route risk;
- public interaction and vulnerability;
- toileting, food, medication and first aid;
- weather, clothing, sensory triggers and fatigue;
- emergency contacts and mobile phone signal;
- consent/notification arrangements agreed with parents/carers and commissioners.



12. Lone working and home/community-based support

Lone working must be avoided where risk assessment indicates that two staff are required. Where lone working is agreed, the lone working risk assessment must consider learner risk, safeguarding, staff safety, communication, check-in arrangements, emergency procedures, location, transport, personal care, allegations risk and whether the worker has the competence and authority to proceed.

13. Equipment, manual handling and moving/handling

Equipment must be suitable, checked and used only by people with appropriate competence. Manual handling and moving/handling risks must be assessed before staff lift, move, support or physically guide learners or equipment. Staff must not improvise unsafe moving and handling. Specialist advice or equipment must be sought where needed.

14. COSHH, cleaning and infection prevention

Cleaning materials and other substances must be stored securely and used according to instructions. COSHH assessments will be completed where substances present a significant risk. Infection prevention arrangements will include hand hygiene, cleaning routines, safe management of bodily fluids, PPE where required, waste disposal and public health guidance where relevant.

15. Food, kitchen use and allergies

Where food preparation, snacks, cooking or kitchen use are part of learning, risks must be assessed. This includes allergies, choking risk, burns, cuts, food hygiene, supervision, safe equipment, cleaning, storage, learner independence targets and emergency response. Food activities must be adapted to the learner's skills, sensory needs and risk profile.

16. Contractors, visitors and shared sites

Visitors and contractors must be signed in, supervised where required and made aware of relevant emergency and safeguarding expectations. On shared or hired sites, EmpowerEd North will clarify responsibilities for fire, security, cleaning, toilets, repairs, public access, first aid and incident reporting.

17. Training and information

Staff will receive health and safety induction before working with learners. Additional training or briefing will be provided according to role and risk, including first aid, fire procedures, manual handling, infection prevention, COSHH, food hygiene, educational visits, lone working, behaviour support, RPI/restrictive intervention, medication and specific learner needs where relevant.

18. Monitoring and review

Health and safety arrangements will be reviewed annually and sooner after any serious incident, near miss pattern, safeguarding concern, complaint, venue change, activity change, staffing change, learner risk change, new legal/guidance requirement or commissioner requirement. Actions will be recorded and tracked to completion.

19. Linked policies and templates

- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Safer Recruitment Policy
- First Aid Policy



- Behaviour Support and Restrictive Intervention Policy
- Educational Visits and Community Learning Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Risk Assessment Template
- Incident/Accident Report Form
- Venue Risk Assessment
- Fire/Emergency Procedure
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
- Supporting Learners with Medical Needs / Medication Policy where used



Appendix A: pre-placement health and safety checklist

Item	Status	Evidence / action required
Insurance confirmation received	Recorded in current operational record	
Venue risk assessment completed	Recorded in current operational record	
Fire/emergency information obtained	Recorded in current operational record	
First aid needs assessment completed	Recorded in current operational record	
Named first aider/appointed person confirmed	Recorded in current operational record	
Accident/incident forms available	Recorded in current operational record	
COSHH/cleaning arrangements confirmed	Recorded in current operational record	
Equipment checks completed	Recorded in current operational record	
Lone working/community controls confirmed	Recorded in current operational record	
Staff briefing completed	Recorded in current operational record	