

The Potteries School

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POLICY: Health and safety policy

COMPILED

IMPLEMENTED

COORDINATED

REVIEWED

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Andy Joynson

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The Potteries School: Our culture, ethos and mission

The Potteries School is one of the key elements in an integrated, tripartite model of care, education and therapy for learners experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties (S.E.M.H.) based in mid-Wales. All our learners are Looked After Children and present complex needs with regard to interpersonal, emotional and social issues.

The Potteries School provides a positive, supportive and child-centred educational environment for all its learners. Through a process of creating a safe learning space, building effective teacher-learner relationships and precision identification of individual learning need, the School supports learners to achieve and attain and prepare for the next steps on the educational ladder.

Many of the learners have a history of school exclusion or had limited access to learning prior to admission. Most have been unable to manage in a formal educational setting and often the risks their behaviours present has impacted on their ability to be educated alongside large peer groups.

The education offered at the Potteries School seeks to reengage learners in a creative and meaningful curriculum, assisting them to catch up on missed learning and an assessment programme that identifies their learning needs accurately. All learning is offered in an inclusive environment and delivered by education professionals with an understanding of the needs of the learners, working to build self-esteem and learning confidence, develop peer relationships and progress independent learning skills.

At the Potteries School we would like our learners to restart their educational experience with confidence and establish a pattern of learning so they can progress, attain and achieve.

Our aspirational aims are to ensure that every learner is able to:

- Experience bespoke learning in a safe and secure environment
- Access opportunities to compensate for missed school experiences
- Develop positive social interaction skills with their peers and adults
- Be supported in managing their behaviour to progress and achieve
- Establish patterns and routines of learning for their next step in education

The learners, teachers, therapists and education support staff believe that our school can and should provide:

- Sensitive but assertive care to prepare learners for school
- An integrated approach to care, therapy and education
- Excellent teaching and learning across the curriculum
- A framework that promotes reengagement and participation
- Strategies to assist learners with regulating their own behaviour
- Individual learning planning tailored to the needs of learners
- A learner-focussed approach to formative assessment
- Education activities that provide transferable skills
- Positive role-modelling to prepare learners for adult life

Health and safety policy

The Potteries School Health and Safety Policy is written to establish the specifics of the school's procedures and practices taking into account the overall responsibility of CareTech Children's Services for the Health and Safety of all employees and learners in its care.

The law states:

- The employer (the Local Authority, governing body or proprietor) is responsible for Health and Safety though tasks may be delegated to staff;
- Employees also have a duty to look after their own and others health and safety;
- Employers, school staff and others also have a duty under the common law to take care of learners in the same way that a prudent parent would do so.

CareTech expects that all staff in school will ensure that:

- Risk assessments are carried out to ensure that all curriculum activities are as far as possible free from risk;
- All risk assessments have been duly completed before any learner undertakes any additional/off-site activity and that as part of the risk analysis, all necessary written consents are obtained (where appropriate);
- They never knowingly place the safety and wellbeing of any learner in danger;
- They put the health and safety of themselves, colleagues and learners as their primary consideration and that this is not knowingly compromised.
- Encourage and support all learners to show appropriate personal concern for their own safety, for that of the people around them through the delivery of the curriculum and through pastoral care;
- Seek to ensure that all buildings, grounds, plant and equipment meet appropriate health and safety standards;
- Activities in which learners participate are, so far as reasonably practicable, free from avoidable risks;

- Avoidable risks to the health and safety of learners are identified and so far as possible eliminated;
- Staff trained in first aid are available throughout the school day both in school and on offsite activities.

The school commitment

In line with the expectations on the proprietors, The Potteries School:

- Will undertake rigorous and comprehensive risk assessments prior to admission of any learner so as to consider the potential risks they present and from the school environment and activities routinely undertaken during the school day;
- Will maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and learners, providing a clean and well maintained working environment with appropriate resources and equipment to ensure safe systems of work;
- Accepts the responsibility for providing staff within the school and learners with information, instruction and training to ensure safe working practices;
- Will ensure that others affected by the school's activities (e.g. visitors, contractors and members of the wider community) are provided with information and support to guarantee their safety when affected by the activities of the school.

Furthermore:

- Where risks to health and safety need to be assessed under a specific duty or regulation, CareTech carries out regular assessments and ensures that all actions shown to be necessary as a result of these assessments are implemented;
- CareTech carries out a regular programme of testing and risk assessment procedures. These include procedures for:
 - fire risk assessment
 - checks on fire extinguishers
 - Legionella testing
 - electrical equipment testing
 - asbestos surveys
- Where risks to the health and safety of staff and learners that are due to conditions within the school or on site, the Head Teacher will ensure that CareTech is notified as quickly as possible;
- The school will provide information regarding this health and safety policy as requested by parents, local authorities or inspection bodies.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Potteries School accepts overall responsibility for providing instruction and training in order to ensure that the responsibilities shown in this policy (and other related policies) are fully understood and complied with;
- The headteacher is the person to whom CareTech delegates day to day responsibility for health and safety procedures and practices within the school;
- All staff are required to read this policy and all teachers sign to say that they have received and understood it;
- The responsibilities placed on staff within this policy are intended to comply with legal requirements as well as reducing the likelihood of unsafe environments or practices persisting.

As a consequence of this intention all staff will:

- Comply with the school health and safety Policy;
- Observe any safety rules and advice issued by health and safety professionals;
- Report hazards within the school or off-site and any equipment malfunction to the health and safety officer as soon as possible and complete the health and safety log before leaving work;
- Conform to all written or verbal instructions contained in relevant risk assessment to ensure personal safety and the safety of others;
- Use all safety equipment and protective clothing provided for appropriate tasks;
- Avoid any improvisations that could create an unnecessary risk to personal safety or to the safety of others;
- Maintain all resources and equipment in good condition and report any defects to the health and safety officer as and when they occur;
- Report accidents to the headteacher and complete the accident log whether injury is sustained or not before leaving the school for the day;
- Complete training course designed to further the needs of health and safety;
- Observe appropriate procedures concerning processes and hazardous materials and substances used;
- Observe and comply with fire evacuation procedures, make themselves aware of all fire extinguishers and fire exits and keep fire doors closed at all times;
- Ensure that learners do not unnecessarily place themselves or others in danger;
- Ensure that learners do not misuse safety equipment (e.g. fire extinguishers).

The health and safety at work act 1974

Duties of the Employer:

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the employer in a school must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and learners are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off school premises.

Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 set out in detail what actions employers are required to undertake. For example, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to:

- assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify the health and safety measures that are necessary and to keep a record of the significant findings of that assessment;
- introduce measures to manage those risks (risk management);
- inform their employees about the risks and measures to be taken to manage the risks;
- ensure that adequate training is given to employees on health and safety matters.

Under Standard 3, Regulation 11 of The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014:

“The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.”

Therefore, schools must set out health and safety arrangements in a written health and safety policy.

Duties of the Employee:

- Take all reasonable steps to care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- Co-operate with management to enable the employer to carry out their legal duties or any requirements as may be imposed. To undertake and complete appropriate training if necessary.

Section 8 of the Act additionally requires that:

- No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse, any item provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

Regulation 12 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 further extends the duties of employees as follows:

- Every employee must use machines, equipment, dangerous substances, transport equipment, means of production or safety device provided by the employer, in accordance with the training and instructions received (whether this be written or verbal);

- Every employee must inform the employer or any other employee with specific health and safety responsibilities for fellow employees:
 - Of any work situation where it is considered that the training and instruction received by themselves or a fellow employee could represent a serious and imminent danger to their health and safety;
 - Of any matter where it is considered that the training and instruction received by themselves or a fellow employee, could present a failure in the employer's protection arrangements for their health and safety even where no immediate danger exists.

In addition, teachers and other staff in schools have a common law duty to act as any prudent parent would do when in charge of learners.

Health and safety rules

This section specifies the general rules laid down by CareTech for the attention of all employees and specific rules relevant to the school. These rules are to be complied with and intentional failure to observe this will be considered a breach of contract of employment and will result in disciplinary action being taken.

These rules are prepared taking into account of health and safety legislation and any intentional breach of the legislation by an employee is a criminal offence and may result in heavy penalties.

The school recognises that it is not possible to prepare rules covering every possible eventuality as circumstances may vary depending upon the nature of work. However, all staff are expected to act in a sensible manner and adhere to verbal or written instruction given by CareTech, the school's health and safety officer or the headteacher.

Every member of staff has a responsibility for themselves and others in the workplace. If there are any doubts of any aspect of their responsibilities they are required to ask senior staff or contact CareTech.

Working Practices:

- Staff must not operate specialist equipment unless they have been trained and authorised to do so;
- Learners must not operate any item of equipment unless they have received sufficient training from staff and are under adequate;
- Staff must make full use of equipment guarding or any other type of associated safety device and ensure that learners also comply with this requirement;
- Staff must not clean any item of equipment that is in motion or has uncovered moving parts;

- Staff must not leave any item of equipment in motion while it is unattended or when any young people are unsupervised;
- Staff must report any fault, defect or malfunction on any item of equipment;
- Staff must not carry out any repairs or maintenance work of any description unless authorised to do so;
- Staff must use all liquid substances and cleaning materials in accordance with written instructions and return them to their designated area;
- Staff using chemicals must take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safe use by other staff or learners at the school;
- All chemicals that could in any circumstances be considered dangerous must be stored appropriately within approved COSHH storage (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and must be locked when not in use;
- Staff must use safe, approved manual handling practices. In particular with reference to the use of physical intervention techniques with learners, staff must be trained to use MAYBO approved holds;
- Rigorous risk assessments must be carried out before any off-site activity or educational visit is undertaken to ensure that all foreseeable risks are planned for or eliminated. Staff must identify the educational benefits of visits and how they support learners (see Health and safety of learners on visits policy 2022).

School Transport

- Learners are regularly transported to offsite activities in company vehicles with nominated drivers as educational support;
- drivers of company vehicles **must** be registered with CareTech as a company driver;
- Learners must wear a seat belt at all times when transport is in motion and where appropriate, regulations regarding booster seats must be applied. Individual risk assessments must be adhered to. No learner is to sit behind the driver;
- Risk assessments must always be undertaken when learners are transported and this must have particular reference to learners whose behaviour is a cause for concern (see Health and safety of learners on visits policy 2022).

E-Safety

- Using the internet for online research is a valuable activity that learners benefit from understanding as they prepare for adult life;
- However, learners at The Potteries School have histories of behavioral difficulties often exacerbated by inappropriate online activities. Therefore, the home does not permit any internet access or mobile devices during placement;
- On occasion during the education programme, the headteacher will supervise access to the internet for school research;
- The use of private mobile phones by staff members is specifically prohibited in the home and school (see Online safety policy 2022).

Warning signs and notices

- Staff must comply with all warning signs and safety notices displayed on the premises, and are expected to read staff notice boards where any additional information is displayed;
- Staff must comply with specific safety instruction notices that are displayed in any area of the school premises;
- Staff must ensure that learners have seen, understand and comply with all warning signs and safety notices displayed on the premises.

Working conditions and environments

- Staff must keep stairways and passageways clear and work areas in a neat and tidy condition;
- Staff are expected to clear up all spillages promptly and provide warning signs or alert others to wet or slippery floor areas;
- The headteacher must ensure that the classroom is kept free from clutter and mess, floors are clear and exit points are not blocked. Staff must ensure that coats and school bags belonging to pupils are stored safely out of the way;
- The headteacher must ensure that a room-specific risk assessment is completed for the classroom. The headteacher will be responsible for completing a risk assessment of all communal areas in the school including outside spaces.

Fire precautions

- Both learning spaces have the correct extinguishers/fire blanket suitable for the purpose they are used for and both are connected to the central fire alarm;
- The **Fire Risk assessment** is reviewed annually by an external agency (Powys Fire) and the regulatory documentation is stored in a lockable cabinet in the certificates file in the Registered Manager's office;
- All fire equipment is tested annually and the regulatory documentation is stored in a lockable cabinet in the certificates file in the Registered Manager's office;
- All staff have mandatory training to use fire fighting equipment;
- Escape routes from the school in the event of fire are displayed around the school and staff must make themselves aware of the location of firefighting equipment and all escape routes from the premises;
- The classroom must display information on what to do in the event of a fire and a plan of escape routes;

- The headteacher must ensure that any obstruction to firefighting equipment or escape route are removed at the earliest possible opportunity;
- Staff must not use firefighting equipment for any other purpose from that which it is intended;
- Staff must not move or remove firefighting equipment from the classroom for storage elsewhere;
- Staff receive instruction on the actions to be taken in the event of a fire emergency, and must ensure that they know what actions they will be expected to take;
- Staff must consider the safety of learners as paramount in all instances of a fire and understand assembly and evacuation procedures and know who is responsible for registration procedures and giving instructions;
- The school will carry out unannounced fire evacuation drills **through the home** at least once per term and ensure that these are recorded. Any shortcomings noted during these drills will be acted on immediately by the headteacher;
- Fire alarms will be tested weekly out of school hours to ensure that they are working correctly and that they can be heard around the school premises;
- All activations of the fire alarm system will be recorded by the home. The fire service will be informed of all incidents of fire, even if small and extinguished.

First aid

- The number of first aiders meets recommendations and adequate cover is available to cover for annual leave and unexpected absences;
- All first aiders and appointed persons hold a valid certificate of competence. The school maintains a register displayed around school of all qualified staff and will arrange re-training as necessary;
- First Aid notices are clearly displayed around the school;
- Sufficient numbers of suitably stocked first aid boxes are available and checked monthly to ensure they are adequately stocked;
- A suitable area is available for provision of first aid;
- Where first aid has been administered this is recorded in the first aid treatment book.

Accidents and incidents

- Staff must seek attention or advice for any injury received whilst in the school. All accidents must be reported to the headteacher and recorded in the

Accident/Incident log before leaving the school at the end of the day. Additional entries must be made in Behaviour Watch.

- Any possible Health and Safety risks brought to light by an accident/incident will be investigated by the health and safety officer and where necessary reported to CareTech by the headteacher.
- Subject to Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR 2013), any work-related incident that leads to a death, inability of a member of staff to carry out normal duties for more than 7 days or which leads to 3 days or more work time being lost will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as will any accident to a member of the public whilst on the school site;
- Staff will be trained in emergency first aid. The school must always have at least one suitably trained staff member on site at all times;

Control of substances hazardous to health (CoSHH)

Regulations that cover the control and the safe use of all materials, chemicals and substances, are covered by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (CoSHH). The headteacher will ensure the following arrangements are followed:

- An inventory of all hazardous substances on site is kept and updated regularly;
- Wherever possible, non-hazardous substances are used and if this is not possible the least harmful substance is used;
- A COSHH risk assessment will be completed for all hazardous substances used and shared with relevant staff;
- Wherever possible, exposure to hazardous substances is prevented and where exposure cannot be prevented, a risk assessment will be carried out and controls measures implemented;
- Where identified as part of the risk assessment, appropriate PPE will be provided to staff;
- Any need for exposure monitoring or health surveillance will be carried out;
- Sufficient information, instruction and training is given to staff to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace and the importance of control measures provided;
- Training records are maintained for those who receive training;
- Substances are stored correctly and those that are no longer used disposed of properly;
- COSHH risk assessments are monitored regularly and reviewed annually.

Health

- Staff must report to the headteacher any medical condition or any other problem that they are suffering from which may affect the safety of themselves or others;
- Staff must co-operate with the headteacher where a medical condition may require further examination to safeguard the health of other staff, young people or visitors to the school;
- Staff must be vigilant to any medical conditions observed in learners, non-school staff or visitors to the school and report their concerns to the headteacher immediately.

Food hygiene – preparation and storage

- Staff must maintain high standards of personal hygiene at all times especially in food preparation areas;
- Staff preparing or handling food for public consumption in the school must have a basic level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate;
- Staff must follow all the prescribed rules for food hygiene, wear appropriate PPE is to be worn at all times when preparing or handling food;
- Staff must ensure that all food is stored correctly and take all precautions against it becoming contaminated. Daily temperature checks for the fridge and freezer are recorded;
- Staff must ensure that all utensils are properly cleaned after each use;
- Staff must dispose of all domestic and food wastes in the appropriate bins provided and not leave food on work surfaces overnight.

Storage of medicines

Controlled medications for use by the learners at the school are administered by the home. They are be stored in the locked medical cabinet/safe when not being used. Only medication trained staff are to administer any medication and record on a MARS sheet. The only exception to this is when learners are made responsible for their own medication as part of their personal development plan.

Staff who are taking medication for their own health-related conditions must ensure that all supplies are securely stored out of sight and not in areas accessible, or potentially accessible, to young people.

Application and monitoring of health and safety

Staff must report any breach or deficiency in any of these safety rules to the headteacher or Head of Education Services as soon as possible.

The headteacher will carry out a weekly check of the physical premises to ensure they are 'safe' and record any identified concerns to be reported for remedial action. As part of the Quality Framework, the headteacher will carry out an audit of risk assessments completed by the school.

Related policies

- Accessibility policy
- ALN policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour management policy
- Complaints policy
- First aid policy
- HASPEV policy
- Online safety policy
- Physical intervention policy
- Risk assessment policy
- Safeguarding policy

Review

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024 and relevant guidance issued by the DfE and Welsh Government.

This document will be next reviewed on 29/09/2026.