Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

General Policy Statement

Next Steps Education Ltd believe that the health and safety of persons within a home tutoring environment are paramount and we aim to prevent accidents and occupational ill health and, where possible, eliminate hazards in the workplace.

It is the intent of the Directors (Sarah Logan and Liz Fancourt) to ensure that a safe and healthy workplace is provided and maintained for all our employees and sub-contractors. We will ensure that adequate information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to ensure that staff can carry out their work safely.

Sarah Logan will ensure that others who are affected by our activities are not subjected to unacceptable risks to their health and safety including pupils, visitors, parents and volunteers. These responsibilities will be achieved by the establishment of an effective health and safety management system within the agency. This will involve the implementation of arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.

We believe that health and safety standards will be maintained only with the co-operation of all staff, parents, carers and pupils involved in the tutoring process. We expect all staff to co-operate fully with this policy.

In addition, we will ensure that all pupils, visitors and contractors are provided with the information they require to enable them to comply with this policy and remain safe. The effectiveness of the policy will be regularly monitored to ensure that health and safety arrangements are being implemented and that all with health and safety responsibilities are carrying out their duties.

The policy will be reviewed annually and revised where necessary.

Next Steps Education recognises its duties under relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, COSHH Regulations 2002, and Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure health and safety arrangements are inclusive and accessible to all, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Arrangements for Health and Safety

Sarah Logan will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of employees and others in accordance with Section 2,3 and 4 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

In order to discharge this responsibility, Sarah Logan will:

- ensure that procedures are kept up-to-date and that arrangements are in place to ensure that all staff and students are aware of and comply with them;
- ensure that the policy contains comprehensive systems for active monitoring (auditing health and safety management systems, inspections and risk assessments) and reactive monitoring (accident/incident investigation).

- ensure appropriate performance management processes are maintained to enable all staff to discharge the duties and arrangements set out through this policy
- consider information, statistics and reports relating to health, safety and welfare matters
- consider and make recommendations regarding individual health and safety issues which have not been resolved at management level
- implement where appropriate, recommendations made by regulatory bodies e.g. OfSTED and the Health and Safety Executive.
- ensure that lone working arrangements are in place, particularly for tutors working in home and community settings, including check-in procedures and escalation protocols (see our separate Lone Working Policy);
- ensure suitable safeguarding and health and safety information is shared appropriately between the organisation and commissioning bodies e.g. schools and local authorities (refer to our separate Safeguarding Policy));
- ensure that contractors and third parties are appropriately vetted and risk assessed prior to engagement (refer to our separate Safer Recruitment Policy).

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a key part of safety management arrangements and hazard control. Sarah Logan ensures risk assessments are undertaken and information on identified controls are brought to the attention of tutors and others who need to know.

Risk assessments will be dynamic where necessary, particularly in home and community environments where conditions may change. Tutors are

expected to reassess risk on arrival and during sessions and withdraw from unsafe situations where risks cannot be adequately controlled.

All Staff

Each tutor is responsible for their own health and safety and that of other persons in Next Steps Education by the proper observation of Next Steps Education's procedures. Staff are reminded of the general duty imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 at Sections 7 and 8: 'It shall be the duty of every employee while at work

a) to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work, and,

b) as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.'

'No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions,'

All staff shall:

- attend and act in accordance with any relevant health and safety training identified to discharge their duties
- ensure all accidents, incidents and near misses within their area of responsibility are recorded in line with our procedures
- follow safe working procedures;
- be familiar with the general, emergency and particular safety rules that apply to their area of work;
- undertake a visual inspection of equipment prior to use and ensure that any portable electrical equipment they use is tested;

- ensure that any safeguarding concerns identified during health and safety observations are reported in line with safeguarding procedures;

Directors of Next Steps Education Ltd

The Directors of Next Steps Education Ltd have overall responsibility for safety policy, organisation and arrangements and will:

provide liaison with Inspectors and outside bodies concerned with safety and health: Local Authorities, Department for Education (DfE) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) with regard to safety aspects;

- budget for safety and health matters;
- review the Safety Policy annually and when significant changes occur within the organisation of the school, and communicate these to all tutors;
- develop, introduce, maintain and review safety management procedures to ensure the Next Steps Education Ltd complies with legislative requirements and good industry practice;
- identify staff training requirements to allow the Next Steps Education Ltd to comply with legislative and good industry practice that relate to or affect health, safety and welfare.
- instigate appropriate disciplinary action where it is shown that staff have ignored or shown a disregard for health and safety matters outlined within our Policies, Codes of Practice or health and safety legislation.
- communicate and publicise safety matters as appropriate to staff, contractors, Students and parents (as appropriate)
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate health and safety training at induction which must include emergency arrangements (i.e. first aid, fire and accident reporting), any restricted tasks and activities; and an introduction to the Health and Safety Policy.

Tutors

Tutors are responsible to the Directors for the immediate safety of their students. It is their responsibility to ensure that any equipment used is maintained to a high standard with respect to health and safety issues.

Additionally, each tutor will:

- provide safety information regarding the activity being undertaken prior to the activity commencing and during the activity, as and when required;
- ensure that special working procedures, protective clothing and equipment are provided where necessary and are appropriate for use.
- ensure that clear instructions and warnings are given to students verbally and in writing as often as necessary, and as appropriate for the age and level of understanding of the students (i.e. taking special educational needs (SEN) into account);
- ensure they have attended any specific curriculum based/ health and safety training relevant to their role– especially science, DT/Technology and PE teachers.

Tutors are NOT responsible for:

- attending to and monitoring student or visitor illness/injury and referring pupils to their own GP/doctor or hospital as appropriate;
- administering pupil medication.

Tutors working in home or community environments must assess environmental risks including pets, smoking, substance use, unsafe furniture, poor hygiene, or presence of unknown individuals. Where risks are identified that cannot be controlled, tutors must withdraw and report immediately.

Given the nature of tutoring within homes and community settings, lone working arrangements are in place. Tutors must follow agreed check-in procedures, maintain access to communication devices, and report any concerns immediately. Tutors must not place themselves in situations where they feel unsafe and are authorised to leave any situation where risk cannot be controlled. Please refer to our Lone Working Policy for further information.

Students

Students will be supported to understand health and safety expectations in a way that is appropriate to their individual needs, including communication style, cognitive ability, and sensory profile. This includes sharing the Health and Safety leaflet with students when they first arrive at the Next Steps Education Home Rooms.

Each student is responsible for their personal safety and that of their peers by proper observation of policies and procedures. In particular, each student will:

- observe standards of dress and behaviour appropriate to the working situation.
- heed warnings and observe rules and ask for such warnings and rules where they are not made obvious.
- not willfully misuse, neglect or damage things provided for safety.

Next Steps Education Home Rooms (tuition centre)

Russell Waldron is appointed as Tutor and Premises Manager.

A risk assessment for the tuition centre has been undertaken, using the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) template for classrooms, and further advice from the HSE in the Workplace. Each room in the centre has a HSE checklist at or nearby the door.

Risk assessment walks are undertaken half termly and any changes or adaptations are logged and acted upon by Russell Waldron under the direction of Sarah Logan.

Appropriate ratios of staff to students will be maintained in the tuition centre to ensure safe supervision, particularly for students with additional needs or behaviours that may present risk. Entry and exit to the premises will be controlled and monitored to ensure the safety of all individuals on site.

Security and Visitor Management

All visitors must sign in and out. Unknown individuals should not be permitted access without verification. Staff must challenge unknown persons appropriately to maintain a safe environment. Further information can be found in our Safeguarding Policy.

Off-Site and Educational Visits

Any off-site activity must be risk assessed in advance and authorised, as detailed in our Educational Visits Policy. Consideration must be given to transport, supervision, medical needs, communication, and emergency arrangements.

Smoking and Vaping

We have a specific legal duty to protect staff, students and the general public from the dangers of smoking and second-hand smoke (breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes). In an effort to reduce the risk to health from passive smoking, smoking is not allowed by any tutors on any student's home premises.

Whilst the use of electronic or e-cigarettes, is not covered by the Health Act 2006, the manufacture of these devices is not regulated and there is

evidence that the nicotine they contain can also include small quantities of toxic substances, some of which are carcinogenic. Trace amounts of other hazardous compounds and toxic metals have also been found in the vapour produced by these devices.

In view of this, and the fact that more research is needed before the long-term health effects of e-cigarettes is known, the council considers it is prudent, as part of its general duty to protect the health and wellbeing of its employees, to adopt the same approach to e-cigarettes as it does to the smoking of conventional cigarettes and other tobacco products. Therefore vaping is not allowed on any student's home premises by the tutor.

Where smoking or vaping is present within a home environment, tutors should assess the impact on their health and student wellbeing and may request relocation or termination of the session if necessary.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Tutors attending work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs creates an unprofessional image of Next Steps Education Ltd and increases the risk of accidents both to themselves and to students. To minimise the probability of accidents from alcohol or drug abuse, staff whose judgement is impaired will be excluded from work and may not be allowed to continue working for Next Steps Education Ltd.

Some drugs prescribed for medical reasons are likely to impair judgement, induce fatigue and/or lower concentration. If tutors feel they are affected when on medication, they need to inform Liz Fancourt or Sarah Logan who will implement additional arrangements that safeguard both the individual and the staff/students they work with.

If substance misuse is identified within a home or learning environment, tutors must withdraw where safety is compromised and report concerns to the Directors in line with safeguarding and health and safety procedures.

Staff Wellbeing

Our health and safety at work is not only determined by the physical environment we work in, but also by the nature of our work, our emotional wellbeing, fitness, our relationships and issues from outside work that impact physical and mental wellbeing.

Next Steps Education Ltd consider staff wellbeing by ensuring staff are signposted accordingly if they disclose information to the Directors. Additional support and risk assessments are put in place dependent on the individual needs of the members of staff.

Work-related stress risk assessments may be undertaken where concerns are identified, and appropriate adjustments made to workload, environment, or duties.

New and Expectant Mothers

Pregnancy should not be equated with ill health. It should be regarded as part of everyday life and its health and safety implications can be adequately addressed by normal health and safety management procedures. Many women work while they are pregnant and many return to work while they are still breast feeding.

The following procedure is in place: Female staff are asked to inform the Directors as soon as possible and in writing when pregnancy has been confirmed. Liz Fancourt will undertake a risk assessment of the employee work activity to ensure no risk to the health of the employee or the unborn child. Copies of the Risk Assessment will be kept and will be reviewed throughout the pregnancy and if circumstances surrounding the pregnancy alter in any way.

Infection Control

From time-to-time infectious diseases will occur amongst pupils and tutors. Good personal and general hygiene precautions are crucial to prevent the spread of infections and handwashing is the most important intervention in cross-infection.

Next Steps Education will follow relevant UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance where applicable. Enhanced measures may be implemented during periods of increased infection risk (e.g. outbreaks or seasonal illness).

- Use of hand sanitiser and cleaning of high-touch surfaces between sessions where appropriate
- Clear expectations for non-attendance where individuals are unwell

Please refer to our Sickness and Absence policy and Bodily Fluids risk assessment for further information.

Electrical Equipment

Health and Safety legislation requires that employers take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of electrical appliances in the workplace.

Next Steps Education ensures that yearly PAT testing is undertaken and results are logged. Any damaged or unsuitable electrical items are removed from the tuition centre.

All tutors are responsible for ensuring that they carry out a pre-use visual check and handle electrical equipment sensibly and safely. Any pupil or volunteer who handles electrical appliances must do so under the supervision of a member of staff who will also direct them. Personal electrical equipment used by staff must be suitable for use and included within testing or verification processes where required.

Housekeeping

The risk of injury within the workplace is most likely to be caused by the more mundane hazards as a result of poor housekeeping. It is the responsibility of the tutor to ensure that their teaching areas have clear traffic routes and that exit routes are kept clear. This should be communicated to the parent, carer or school if this is not the case. It is the duty of all staff to be vigilant and aware of possible hazards.

Next Steps Education ensures that they provide a healthy and hygenic environment for staff, students and visitors through:

- a regular cleaning schedule
- provision and upkeep of sanitary bins by a dedicated external agency
- regular, logged monitoring and inspections of the tuition centre
- creating a culture of cleanliness and tidiness in our team
- prompt reporting and removal of trip hazards, spillages or unsafe conditions;

Fire and emergency evacuation

A Fire Risk assessment is in place for the premises and this has been shared with Devon & Cornwall Fire Brigade. Regular fire drills in our tuition centre take place and are logged. A digital sign-in screen for all staff, tutors, students and visitors keeps a record of who is in the building, and this is available to all members of the site management team. Fire procedures are in place and displayed at or near the entrance to every room in the tuition centre. Fire procedures are shared with new students (by tutors) when first accessing our premises. Personal Evacuation Plans (PEP) are considered when a referral is made to us and, where deemed necessary, are in place when the student starts at the tuition centre. Any relevant PEP is shared with the student as part of our onboarding process. Alternative evacuation routes and procedures will be considered for students with mobility, sensory or cognitive needs. Tutors must ensure students understand evacuation expectations in a way that is appropriate to their needs.

In the event of a fire or other event requiring evacuation, tutors must ensure that they reach safety through the main front doors if possible or exiting the property they are in through a back or side entrance. Tutors should ensure the safety of their students but must not put their own personal safety at risk to do so. Once the tutor is safely outside of the property, they should immediately contact the fire brigade, police, ambulance or any other agency that needs to be contacted. They should contact Sarah Logan or Liz Fancourt as soon as reasonably possible so that she can document any health and safety incidents.

Hazardous Substances

In home or community settings, tutors are advised to move away from any hazardous substances or spillages and report these to the child's carer. Where hazardous substances are present in home environments, tutors must not attempt to manage or clean these but should withdraw and

report appropriately. Any event should also be reported to Sarah Logan, who may take notes of the incident. In our own setting, tutors should refer to the COSHH section of this policy for further advice.

Personal Protective Equipment

To ensure that all staff, students and visitors are adequately protected from risks that cannot be controlled through other measures within alternative provision environments. PPE applies to all activities undertaken by the provision, including teaching sessions, off-site activities, vocational learning, and any practical or therapeutic interventions.

PPE is used as a last line of defence where risks cannot be eliminated or sufficiently controlled by other means. PPE identified for use includes (but not limited to):

- Protective gloves (e.g. for practical tasks or hygiene)
- Eye protection (e.g. goggles)
- Protective clothing (e.g. aprons, high-visibility vests)
- Masks or face coverings where risk assessments identify need
- Safety footwear for vocational activities

PPE must be appropriate to the identified risk, correctly fitted, and properly maintained. Sarah Logan will ensure risk assessments identify where PPE is required and Next Steps Education will provide suitable PPE that meets relevant UK safety standards. Next Steps Education will ensure staff are trained in correct use, storage, and limitations of PPE and monitor compliance, replacing equipment when necessary. Next Steps Education will provide PPE free of charge where it is required for safety.

Staff and visitors must wear PPE as required by risk assessments or site rules and ensure it is used correctly and consistently. Staff will receive

training in correct PPE use as part of induction and ongoing practice, including advice on supervising and supporting students to understand and correctly use PPE. Visitors will be briefed on relevant risks and provided with PPE as necessary.

Students will be instructed and supervised when using PPE, with reasonable adjustments made for additional needs to balance safety and accessibility. Students must follow staff instructions regarding PPE use and wear provided PPE when required for activities. Students should report any issues to staff, including triggering overwhelming sensory input, changes in focus, or causing physical discomfort.

PPE must be checked before use and kept in a clean, serviceable condition and any damaged or unsuitable PPE must not be used. Defects, damage, or shortages should be reported immediately to Sarah Logan. PPE will be stored appropriately when not in use and any reusable PPE must be cleaned by the user (or tutor) in line with hygiene procedures (demonstrated in training). PPE use will be monitored through supervision, audits, and incident reviews.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Next Steps Education recognises its duty under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations to prevent or adequately control exposure to hazardous substances for staff, students, and visitors. Within an alternative provision environment, this includes exposure to cleaning products, art materials, science-related substances, and any other materials that may present a risk through inhalation, contact, or ingestion.

All substances used on site will be subject to a COSHH assessment where required. These assessments will identify the nature of the hazard, routes of exposure, control measures, and emergency procedures. Wherever possible, safer alternatives will be used to reduce risk, particularly in environments accessed by young people with additional needs. Particular consideration is given to neurodivergent students, for whom strong or

unfamiliar chemical smells can cause distress, sensory overload, anxiety, or behavioural responses. As such, the organisation will:

- Avoid the use of strongly scented or irritant products wherever possible
- Use low-odour, non-toxic alternatives for cleaning, art, and science activities
- Ensure good ventilation in all areas where substances are used
- Plan activities to minimise cumulative sensory exposure

Staff will remain aware that sensitivity to smells may not always be communicated directly and will monitor student responses during activities involving chemicals or materials with noticeable odours.

A central register of hazardous substances (where applicable to the tuition centre) will be maintained, including COSHH assessments and safety data sheets. Substances will not be introduced into the setting without prior assessment and approval.

In science practicals (taught in a small tuition space, not a formal laboratory), only low-risk substances appropriate to the environment will be used. Higher-risk chemicals typically found in specialist school laboratories will not be stored or used unless appropriate facilities, controls, and staff competencies are in place. All science activities will:

- Be risk assessed in advance
- Be supervised by a competent adult
- Use minimal quantities of substances
- Follow safe storage and disposal procedures

For art and creative activities, materials such as paints, solvents, glues, and fixatives will be selected based on safety and suitability for the cohort. Preference will be given to water-based, non-toxic, and low-odour

products. Aerosol products and solvent-based materials will be restricted and only used where essential, under strict supervision and with appropriate ventilation.

Cleaning products will be securely stored and clearly labelled. Staff responsible for cleaning will be trained in their safe use, including dilution, handling, and storage. Cleaning will be scheduled to avoid exposure during sessions where possible, particularly for students with identified sensory sensitivities.

All hazardous substances will be:

- Clearly labelled and stored securely out of reach of students
- Used in accordance with manufacturer guidance and COSHH assessments
- Disposed of safely and appropriately

Training is provided to staff on COSHH awareness, including recognising risks, safe handling of substances, and responding to incidents. Safety data sheets (SDS) will be kept accessible where required.

Incidents involving exposure, misuse, or adverse reactions (including sensory distress linked to smells) will be recorded and reviewed to inform future risk management and adjustments to provision.

Safety Policy Review

Next Steps Education Ltd acknowledge that the Safety Policy is a working document that includes details of policy and procedures relating to health and safety issues. The Directors will monitor and update the Policy as appropriate and will undertake a formal review on an annual basis.

Last reviewed: June 2026

Next review: June 2027