



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Last Review Date	August 2025
Policy Reviewer	Director – Kane Wilson
Version	V2.16/09/25
Changes since last review	Updated COSHH training guidelines Staff health and safety training guidelines outlined Procedures for criminal activity, severe weather and local disasters implemented
Next Review Date	August 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

The following statement sets out the health and safety objectives for The Ark Smallholding Ltd ("The Ark").

We aim to ensure best practice in the management of Health & Safety by undertaking the following:

- We will take all reasonable steps to provide safe and healthy conditions for staff (including agency staff), pupils and others who may be affected by its activities.
- We will take all necessary steps to ensure compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation.
- We will provide adequate resources to implement this policy including access to support from health and safety competent persons. Where necessary external specialist advice and assistance will be obtained.
- We accept that health, safety and wellbeing are an integral part of all its activities and will take steps to manage these effectively.
- We expect all staff and pupils to co-operate in complying with all legal obligations and to take reasonable care of their own health, safety and wellbeing and have regard for the health, safety and wellbeing of others.
- We are committed to providing the necessary information, instruction and training to all staff and pupils where applicable.
- We acknowledge and actively support the role and responsibilities of employee representatives and will give full co-operation to elected safety representatives of recognised trade unions to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.
- We are committed to regular evaluation and review of our health and safety policy to ensure its objectives are met and, as necessary, to modifying the policy in light of new legislation and other changing circumstances.

- We will review this health and safety policy document periodically.
- We will set out full details for the organisation of, and arrangements for, the management of health, safety and wellbeing at The Ark.

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities for implementing and reviewing The Ark's Health and Safety Policy are detailed below:

The Governing Body ("The Directors") have collective responsibility for ensuring that the Leeds City Council Health and Safety Policy is adopted and that arrangements are in place for The Ark to implement it. It is responsible for strategic health and safety planning and for periodic review of health and safety performance.

Our Management Structure will consist of a Health & Safety Group made up of the following people:

Health & Safety Coordinator	Kane Wilson
Lead Coordinator	Helen McGloughlin

This team will meet annually

The Health & Safety Coordinator is responsible to the Governing Body for securing the full implementation of The Ark's Health and Safety Policy.

Members of the H&S Team are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy and all other legislative requirements are managed under the normal method of delegated powers.

'Competent person'

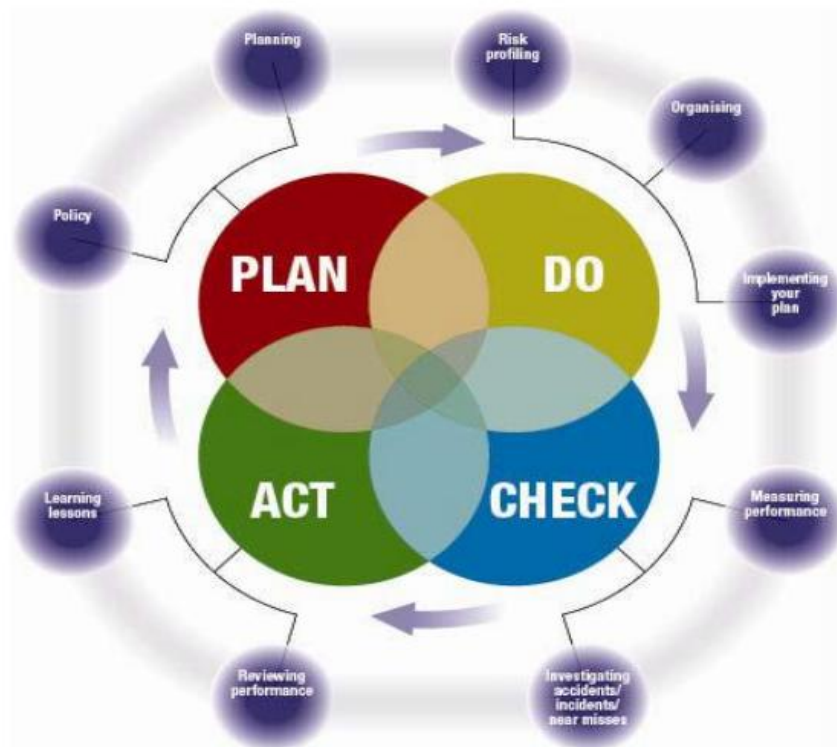
The H&S Team has responsibility as the competent person for:

1. advising The Ark staff the discharge of their legal duties and responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all regulations made there-under, and
2. for liaising with Leeds City Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisers and enforcement officers such as HM Inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Officers.

Leeds City Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisers are responsible for providing advice and support on all aspects of health and safety.

PROCESS

The Ark's process for managing health and safety follows the framework laid down in the Health and Safety Executive's HS(G)65 – Managing for Health and Safety. The framework is based around the plan, do, check, act cycle shown below.



This approach ensures that our procedures are systematic, consistent, and continually improved:

- **Plan:** We identify health and safety risks within our educational setting, set clear objectives, and allocate responsibilities to staff at all levels.
- **Do:** We implement practical measures, provide training, and ensure safe working practices to protect staff, pupils, and visitors.
- **Check:** We regularly monitor our performance, carry out inspections, and review incidents or near-misses to confirm that our controls are working effectively.
- **Act:** We take action to correct problems, make improvements, and update our policies to maintain high standards of safety and compliance.

By following this cycle, The Ark fosters a positive safety culture and ensures that health and safety considerations are embedded in all aspects of our operations.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Governing Body, Lead Coordinator, and H&S Team will implement The Ark's Health and Safety Policy by:

- Ensuring adequate resources, in terms of both personnel and finance, are allocated to secure implementation of the policy.
- Planning, organising and implementing arrangements to eliminate or control significant risks and to comply with relevant statutory provisions.
- Determining and documenting procedures, operational instructions, guidelines and codes of practice to implement The Ark's health and safety policy.
- Ensuring that responsible managers and staff are competent through recruitment, training or otherwise, to carry out their duties for health, safety and welfare.
- Setting health and safety performance standards to ensure effective management within their areas of control.
- Ensuring that all hazards are identified, significant findings of assessments are recorded, groups exposed to risks are identified and the actions taken to protect the health and safety of these groups are recorded.
- Ensuring that all staff (including agency staff) are familiar with, and comply with, the requirements of The Ark's health and safety policy and that all new staff are inducted into the requirements of the health and safety policy and any school and Leeds City Council guidelines and instructions.
- Ensuring that any contractors and sub-contractors who work on the premises have effective arrangements for health, safety and welfare.
- Establishing systems for monitoring all arrangements to ensure that they are working effectively.
- Reviewing information from monitoring systems to ensure continued and effective compliance with performance standards.
- Ensuring that the H&S Team report at least annually to the Directors on health and safety issues within The Ark.

Staff:

All staff are responsible for:

- Complying with The Ark's health and safety policy.
- Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operating with The Ark's Directors and Lead Coordinator in complying with all relevant statutory provisions.
- Using all work equipment and substances in accordance with the information, instruction and training received.
- Not intentionally misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Following all prescribed safe working practices and not working while unfit to do so.
- Reporting to The Ark's Directors or Lead Coordinator any health and safety problem they cannot deal with themselves or any shortcoming they find in the health, safety and welfare arrangements.

Children:

All children will be responsible for:

- Complying with The Ark's rules and procedures.
- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others.
- Co-operating with their staff.
- Using equipment and substances in the manner in which they are instructed.
- Not misusing anything provided for the purposes of health and safety.
- Reporting anything they believe to be hazardous or dangerous to their Lead Co-ordinator

Audit and Review

The principal means used for reviewing The Ark's health and safety policy will be:

- Annual audits of health and safety management.
- Annual reports to the Directors covering the management of health and safety within The Ark.
- Regular evaluation and review to ensure that new legislation or other changing circumstances are incorporated within the health and safety policy and that the policy remains effective.
- Evaluation of health and safety management against performance indicators to ensure that objectives are met and that best value provision is obtained

DUTY OF CARE TO LEARNERS

Staff at The Ark have a common law duty to take the same reasonable care of learners as a prudent parent would. This duty applies whenever staff are responsible for learners, including during lessons, breaks, and off-site activities. It requires staff to anticipate potential risks, provide appropriate supervision, follow safeguarding procedures, and take sensible steps to prevent foreseeable harm. This duty underpins all aspects of our health and safety practice and works alongside statutory obligations under education and health and safety law.

ARRANGEMENTS

ACCIDENTS

In reality very few accidents can be attributed exclusively to bad luck; most are preventable. By being vigilant over the occurrence of minor mishaps we can reduce the probability of major Injury.

A record is to be kept of all injuries to pupils and staff or visitors on the premises (the accident book). Details of the time of the incident, person involved, the nature of the accident, the injury sustained and the treatment given should be entered. All entries must be signed. These records will be periodically examined by the Lead Coordinator.

Relevant report forms should be completed in respect of all significant injuries and retained. Accident report forms are required for completion not only in the event of injury being sustained but also when a hazardous incident occurs or when a significant injury (eg one where a person is referred to hospital, even if specified injury is not diagnosed) is suspected. Parents

alerted to injuries that have happened at The Ark need to be asked to inform us if they subsequently take the child to hospital.

When considering the cause of an accident it is useless to rely on memory. Establish what happened by allowing witnesses and/or injured parties to tell the whole story. Questions should be asked to clarify areas of doubt. Beware of jumping to conclusions and bear in mind that some witnesses may be afraid of repercussions and will need reassurance. Careful notes should be taken, with sketches if possible. The effort and time put into an investigation should be proportional to the potential severity of consequences of future reoccurrence. An aide memoire is useful:

- Where and when did the accident happen?
- Who was injured and what was the injury?
- Who saw it happen?
- What was the injured person doing at the time? Was this normal behaviour?
- Were protective measures appropriate, understood and being used?
- Was the person adequately taught or trained to carry out the activity?
- Was there a defect in equipment or the premises?
- Was adequate supervision in operation?

HAZARDS

The following general points should be borne in mind:

- Working areas and exits should be kept tidy and clear. Children should be encouraged to store clothes or toys where others will not trip over them. Walking areas should be free from chairs, bags or other obstructions.
- Children should not be required to move or lift heavy objects.
- Any spillages should quickly be cleaned up to avoid dangers associated with wet floors.

FIRE SAFETY

Fire is indiscriminate and puts lives and jobs at risk.

Ensure you know the following:

- What sound the alarm makes
- Your nearest fire exit (and the location of **all** alternate exits. This will prevent panic should the fire be blocking the exit nearest to you - the one you would expect to use)
- Your assembly point

FIRE PROCEDURE

- In the event of a fire the building must be evacuated immediately, without panic
- Go to your assembly point to be accounted for

- Ensure you know what to do in the event of a fire. Your life and that of others may depend on it. Fire action notices are posted in prominent locations, take the time to read them
- Only attempt to extinguish a fire if it is safe to do so and you have received the appropriate training
- Treat all alarms as real unless you have been told specifically that they are not (e.g. system tests and maintenance).

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE:

- Raise the alarm by activating the nearest fire alarm call point
- If possible, tackle the fire with the correct type of extinguisher – but **only** if there is no risk to you and practical, 'hands on' training has previously been undertaken
- If circumstances dictate, or if ordered to do so, leave the building by the nearest available route
- Keep between the fire and your escape route
- If the fire is behind a closed door, do **not** open it
- Use the **correct** type of extinguisher. Do **not** use water on electrical equipment or hot fat
- If the fire is too big for a single extinguisher to put it out, then leave it for the fire brigade
- **Never leave fire doors wedged open**

FIRST AID AT WORK

- The Ark has trained first aiders who will attend to any first aid matters relating to injury sustained at work.
- Make sure you are aware of the name and location of your nearest first aider. They are displayed on signs within the main hut.
- You must **not** remove or tamper with any of the first aid supplies.

HOUSEKEEPING

Cleanliness of working areas is the responsibility of the employees working in that area. The area shall be kept clear of debris. The cleanliness of all sanitary areas, entrances and stairways shall be the responsibility of firstly the employee and users but ultimately the Senior Directorship Team. At all times stairways and entrances shall be free from obstruction.

Slips, trips and the resultant falls are the main cause of reported major injuries at work. These can be prevented by:

- Clearing up spillages as they occur
- Keeping your work area tidy, and clearing up tripping hazards
- Reporting any problems with the flooring
- Not rushing and remaining vigilant as you move around
- Not standing on anything other than approved steps or ladders.

MANUAL HANDLING

Many instances of lifting and handling take place every day and carry such a low risk that formal assessment is not required. However, there will be some occasions when lifting and handling tasks can present risks to the people who perform them.

These include:

- Carrying or lifting down of heavy boxes of equipment
- Lifting of children e.g. a disabled child for toileting
- Deliveries from suppliers e.g. heavy photocopier paper
- Lifting by individuals who have medical conditions which may be adversely affected
- Lifting /carrying in an area that may have obstacles or be wet

Wherever staff consider that there may be a risk of an accident or strain occurring as a result of a required manual handling operation, then the manoeuvre should not be attempted and advice sought from the Lead Coordinator.

To reduce the risks to staff, care needs to be exercised whenever heavy objects are stored. They should never be placed on shelving above waist height. When faced with higher level objects, rather than attempt to lift these by oneself, assistance should be sought from the Lead Coordinator or a colleague. Remember also that it is better to bend the knees than the back when lifting objects.

When retrieving objects from above waist height it is prudent to use stepladders. The sack trolley should be used for moving heavy loads around and in receiving deliveries. Wherever possible drivers should be encouraged to unload items and move them to a convenient storage place. The Lead Coordinator, as designated person, will then move the items to their intended destination.

Lifting children can be particularly risky. Children with specific needs should have a personal care plan. Everyone who is involved in the care of the child needs to be aware of the plan which will include details of equipment used to move or support the child, such as a wheel-chair, standing frame or mobile hoist. Where lifting equipment is provided e.g. a stair lift or hoist, then training will be provided on correct usage.

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES/MATERIALS

All substances which may be hazardous to health are to be locked away in the store room. They are covered by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations of 1988 (C O S H H). At The Ark the most obvious substances used which must be locked away are: certain Livestock medications.

All cleaning materials not in use should be locked away in the store room.

Staff who are responsible for handling, storing and accounting for potentially dangerous substances will undergo relevant COSHH training and complete a refresher course on a yearly basis.

ELECTRICITY

- Do not interfere with electrical apparatus. Mains voltage can kill
- Ensure that you know where to switch off the supply to any equipment you use. It may be at the socket or an isolator on the wall.
- Never attempt to repair electrical equipment yourself. Report faults to your Lead Coordinator
- Do not let water get into equipment, and do not touch equipment with wet hands

Before using any portable electrical equipment you shall ensure that:

- The plug is secure and free from damage
- The cable is sound and free from; with no coloured insulation showing through
- The cable is securely attached to the equipment
- The controls work properly
- The equipment's casing is in a sound condition

Report any damage to your Lead Coordinator

PUPIL ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

If a child becomes unwell during the course of the day our policy is to inform parents by telephone in order that the child may be taken home. This will be dependent upon the condition of the child and the known family circumstances. If the condition appears serious then the child must be accompanied to hospital or emergency aid summoned with the parents being informed at the earliest opportunity. If a child appears unwell at the end of the School day it is important that parents are informed so that the sick child may be collected from site/rather than finding his/her own way home.

Where it is suspected that a child at school is suffering from an infectious disease (eg appearance of rash etc) the Lead Coordinator should be consulted.

Where a child is sent to School suffering from illness the Lead Coordinator should be informed in order that a request may be made to parents to keep the child at home until better.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

You shall report to your Director any medical condition which could affect the health of yourself or others. You shall co-operate with the implementation of medical and occupational health provisions.

REPORTING UNDER RIDDOR

Reporting under RIDDOR

The Ark complies with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). This means we are legally required to report certain work-related incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Reportable events include:

- **Specified injuries** such as fractures (other than fingers, thumbs or toes), amputations, serious burns, loss of consciousness, or injuries resulting in more than seven days' absence from work.
- **Occupational diseases** such as certain musculoskeletal disorders, occupational asthma, or dermatitis when confirmed by a doctor as work-related.
- **Dangerous occurrences** such as equipment failure, electrical short circuits causing fire risk, or any event that could have caused serious harm.

The Health and Safety Coordinator (or a delegated competent person) is responsible for submitting RIDDOR reports and maintaining accurate records. All staff must promptly report any accidents, ill-health, or near misses so these can be assessed and, if necessary, reported within legal timescales.

PROVISION SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SECURITY

All visitors to The Ark are required to report to Reception and 'sign in' on arrival. They will be issued with badges to assist staff in identification. Staff should as a matter of course challenge visitors eg 'Can I help you?' or 'Have you signed in?' to ascertain the reasons for their visit. Visitors should also sign out on leaving.

Outside gates should be closed when children are in so that visitors are guided through the main entrance. Care should be taken to check the identity of any unfamiliar adults entering or collecting children. If in doubt about explanations or you are worried then contact the Lead Coordinator right away.

All external gates will be locked once the register has been taken to control access and prevent unauthorised entry.

UNAUTHORISED PERSONS IN THE GROUNDS

- Be polite in requests for them to leave
- Ensure you have colleagues present
- If individuals or groups refuse to leave, call police
- Do not put yourself in danger; summon assistance from police

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

- The safety of children, staff, and visitors is paramount. In the event of suspected or actual criminal activity on or near The Ark (including trespass, theft, vandalism, or threatening behaviour):
 - Children will be moved to a safe and secure area away from the risk.
 - The designated lead (or most senior member of staff present) will immediately contact the police via 999.
 - No member of staff or volunteer will attempt to confront or detain an intruder.
 - Site access points (gates, doors) will be secured where it is safe to do so.
 - If there is a risk from activity on the adjacent main road (e.g. suspicious vehicle, accident, or disturbance), staff will keep children within secure areas of the site until advised otherwise.
 - Parents/carers and the relevant school will be informed as soon as it is safe and appropriate.
 - An incident report will be completed and reviewed.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE (WHERE NECESSARY):

- Children and staff move indoors immediately.
- All doors and windows are locked or secured.
- Children are kept calm, away from windows, and supervised at all times.
- The site remains secured until police or emergency services confirm it is safe.

SEVERE WEATHER

- The Ark will follow Met Office warnings and local authority advice.
- In the event of severe weather (including high winds, heavy snow, lightning, or flooding):
 - Outdoor activities will be suspended if conditions pose a risk.
 - Children will be moved indoors or to designated shelter.
 - Tools, equipment, and animal enclosures will be secured.
 - Travel arrangements will be reviewed — sessions may be shortened or cancelled if return travel is unsafe. Parents/carers will be informed as early as possible.
 - A post-event safety inspection will be carried out before activities resume.

FLOOD RISK PROCEDURE:

- Staff will monitor Environment Agency flood alerts for Collingham and the surrounding area.
- If a flood warning is issued or river levels rise significantly, outdoor areas at risk will be closed.
- Children will be kept indoors and moved away from low-lying ground near the river.
- Evacuation will be arranged if required, following emergency services advice

DISASTER IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

In the event of a serious incident in the local area (such as a major road accident, large-scale fire, chemical spill, or community emergency):

- The Ark will follow the instructions of the emergency services and Leeds City Council emergency planning team.
- Depending on the situation, staff will initiate either an **evacuation** or **shelter-in-place procedure**.
- All children will be accounted for, supervised, and kept safe until the all-clear is given.
- Emergency contact details for all children will be accessible at all times.
- Parents/carers and the relevant school will be contacted as soon as it is safe.
- Following the incident, staff will take part in a debrief and procedures will be reviewed.

STAFF HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

The Ark is committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and regular helpers receive appropriate training and guidance to safeguard their own health, safety and welfare, as well as that of the children and young people in our care.

Training Provision

- All staff will receive health and safety induction training before undertaking their duties. This will include instruction on safe working practices, emergency procedures, safeguarding, and the control measures identified in relevant risk assessments.
- Refresher training will be provided at regular intervals, and whenever significant changes to the work environment, activities, or legislation occur.
- Training will be tailored to the nature of staff responsibilities, including the safe use of equipment, animal handling, hygiene practices, and supervision of children.
- Records of all training provided will be maintained and reviewed to ensure compliance and identify additional needs.

Managing Risks at Work

- Staff are required to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that of others who may be affected by their work, in line with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- All staff must follow the safe systems of work and procedures outlined during training and in the relevant risk assessments.
- Staff are expected to report hazards, unsafe practices, or incidents immediately to the designated Health and Safety Lead.
- Staff will also be supported to carry out *dynamic risk assessments* during activities, making appropriate adjustments to minimise risks as situations arise.

Risk Assessment Procedures

- The Ark will carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments in line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Risk assessments will be completed for all activities, including animal interaction, use of tools and machinery, vehicle movement, outdoor play, and supervision of children.
- Assessments will identify hazards, evaluate risks, and set out clear control measures to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
- Risk assessments will be recorded, communicated to staff, and regularly reviewed (at least annually, or sooner if significant changes occur).
- Staff will receive training on how to understand and apply risk assessments in their daily duties.

Monitoring and Review

- The effectiveness of staff training and risk management will be monitored through regular supervision, inspections, and feedback.
- The Health and Safety Policy, including staff training and risk assessment arrangements, will be reviewed annually or in response to incidents, near misses, or changes in legislation.

MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

PLAN

- Up to date H&S Policy on The Ark's website
- H&S policy in date and signed by Directors
- Development and maintenance of H&S policies and procedures
- Development and maintenance of SOPs
- Capture of health and safety risks via risk management process
- Development of annual Health and Safety work plan

DO

- Completion of risk assessments
- Compliance with Health and Safety Training
- Occurrence of Health and Safety Group meetings quarterly

CHECK

- Health and Safety work plan reviewed at each H&S Group meeting
- Risk Register reviewed at each strategic H&S Group
- Premise inspections complete annually
- Health surveillance completed in line with risk assessment
- Quarterly incident reports submitted to H&S Group

ACT

- Completion of Annual Health and Safety report for H&S Team.

LEGISLATION

This policy and all associated procedures are implemented in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and all other relevant health and safety legislation and guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).