

St Albans Mencap

Charity number: 210073

stalbansmencap.org.uk

Health and Safety Policy

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, agency workers, and trustees involved with St Albans Mencap charity

Document control:

Version:	Date approved:	By:	Review due:
1.0	April 2025	Board	April 2026

Summary of changes:

Version:	Changes:
1.0	This policy complies with the legal framework for charities in England and meets the requirements set by Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE).

Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

This Health and Safety Policy outlines the responsibilities and procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people with disabilities at St. Albans Mencap, operating within local authority managed schools and other premises. This policy complies with the legal framework for charities in England and meets the requirements set by Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE).

Policy Statement

St. Albans Mencap is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, young people, staff, volunteers, and visitors. We recognise our duty to ensure that all activities, equipment, and facilities we use are safe and that risks are managed effectively.

Responsibilities

1. **Board of Trustees:** The Board of Trustees holds overall responsibility for health and safety within the charity. They ensure compliance with legal requirements and oversee the implementation of this policy.
2. **Headteacher or the premises Management Team:** The headteacher and premises management teams are responsible for the day-to-day management of health and safety within the premises during operating hours.
3. **Health and Safety Trustee:** The designated Health and Safety Trustee will receive reports from the Scheme Manager, who is responsible for coordinating health and safety activities, conducting risk assessments, and ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained and informed about health and safety procedures whilst running schemes and projects in different locations.
4. **Staff and Volunteers:** All staff and volunteers are responsible for following health and safety procedures, reporting hazards, and participating in training and safety drills.

Leased Premises

During holiday and weekend activities, St. Albans Mencap leases the premises from Watling View and Hobbs Hill Primary Schools. During these times, school staff are not present, and the charity assumes responsibility for health and safety within the leased areas of the school as outlined in the contract. This duty is delegated by the Trustees to the Scheme Manager who has operational responsibility of the Scheme.

The Homewood Road URC facilities are managed by the Project Manager in accordance with the lease agreement.

Risk Assessment

Regular risk assessments by the Scheme/Project Managers and senior play leaders in school settings will be conducted to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate control measures before opening the scheme. These assessments will cover:

- **School Facilities:** Ensuring that all areas of the school used for the scheme, including playgrounds, and common areas, are safe and well-maintained.
- **Equipment:** Ensuring that all equipment, whether owned by the charity or the school, is safe to use and regularly inspected.
- **Activities:** Assessing the risks associated with all activities, including educational trips, physical activities, and outdoor activities, and implementing measures to minimise these risks.
- Homewood Road URC Project Manager will carry out equivalent duties in their location.

Fire Safety

- **Fire Risk Assessment:** A comprehensive fire risk assessment will be conducted by the school annually, and any identified risks will be addressed promptly. This will be shared with the scheme manager.
- **Fire Drills:** Regular fire drills will be conducted to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and children are familiar with evacuation procedures.
- **Fire Equipment:** All fire safety equipment, including alarms, extinguishers, and emergency lighting, will be regularly inspected and maintained by the school.
- Homewood Road URC Project Manager will carry out equivalent duties in their location.

Outdoor Activities

Outdoor areas, including playgrounds and sports fields, may be used during holiday and weekend activities subject to arrangements with the school. Risk assessments will be conducted to ensure these areas are safe and suitable for use. Staff will be trained to supervise outdoor activities and respond to any emergencies.

Training and Information in all settings

- **Induction Training:** All new staff and volunteers will receive health and safety induction training, including information on emergency procedures, risk assessments, and safe working practices.
- **Ongoing Training:** Regular training sessions will be provided to ensure that all staff and volunteers are up to date with health and safety procedures and best practices.
- **Information Sharing:** Health and safety information will be communicated regularly through meetings, newsletters, and noticeboards.

Incident Reporting Procedures

To ensure effective communication and resolution of incidents, the following procedures will be in place:

1. **Immediate Reporting:** Any incident occurring during holiday and weekend activities must be reported immediately to the scheme management and the Health and Safety Trustee.

2. **Documentation:** All incidents must be documented using the incident report form, detailing the nature of the incident, individuals involved, and actions taken.
3. **Notification to Facility Management:** The scheme management must notify the school management team of any incidents that occur during leased periods. This notification should include a copy of the incident report form and any relevant details.
4. **Joint Review:** The scheme management and facility management team will conduct a joint review of the incident to determine any necessary actions or changes to procedures.
5. **Follow-Up:** The Health and Safety Trustee will follow up on the incident to ensure that all actions have been completed and that any lessons learned are incorporated into future practices.

Business Continuity Plan

In the event of an incident during school time that may impact the charity's scheme, or vice versa, the following business continuity procedures will be implemented:

1. **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a thorough risk assessment to identify potential impacts on both the school and the charity's scheme.
2. **Communication Plan:** Establish clear communication channels between the school management and scheme management to ensure timely and accurate information sharing.
3. **Activation of Continuity Plan:** Activate the business continuity plan, detailing steps to maintain essential functions and minimize disruption.
4. **Alternative Arrangements:** Identify and implement alternative arrangements for activities, facilities, and equipment to ensure continuity of services.
5. **Review and Adaptation:** Regularly review and adapt the business continuity plan based on lessons learned from incidents and changing circumstances.
6. Homewood Road URC Project Manager will carry out equivalent duties in their location.

Monitoring and Review

- **Regular Inspections:** The Health and Safety Officer will conduct regular inspections of the school facilities and equipment to ensure compliance with health and safety standards.
- **Incident Reporting:** All accidents, incidents, and near-misses will be reported and investigated to prevent recurrence.
- **Policy Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently, if necessary, to ensure it remains up to date with current legislation and best practices.
- Homewood Road URC Project Manager will carry out equivalent duties in their location.

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Compliance with Legal Requirements

This policy complies with the following legal requirements and guidelines:

- **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**
- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**
- **Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice**
- **Ofsted and DfE Health and Safety Guidelines**