HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

2026–2027

Serenity School

Applies to	Serenity School Croydon (age 4–18)
Policy owner	Chief Operating Officer
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1. Policy statement and aims

Serenity School Croydon is committed to providing and maintaining, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy environment for pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and anyone else who may be affected by its activities.

Health and safety is an integral part of leadership, safeguarding, SEND practice and day-to-day school management. Risks will be managed sensibly and proportionately so that pupils can participate in an ambitious curriculum, therapeutic provision, enrichment, vocational learning, educational visits and Preparation for Adulthood without unnecessary restriction.

This policy sets the group framework. It is supported by school-specific risk assessments, emergency procedures and premises records.

- provide and maintain safe premises, equipment and systems of work;
- identify hazards and assess risks to staff, pupils and others affected by school activities;
- implement proportionate control measures and review their effectiveness;
- provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- ensure competent advice is available where specialist health and safety knowledge is required;
- take account of pupils' SEND, communication, sensory, medical, mobility and behavioural needs when assessing risk;
- learn from accidents, incidents, near misses, concerns and inspections; and
- promote a positive culture in which staff raise concerns promptly and health and safety is everyone's responsibility.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy is informed by current Department for Education and Health and Safety Executive guidance and the legislation applicable to Serenity School Croydon as an independent school employer and proprietor. Key requirements include, where relevant:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH);
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR);
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- Work at Height Regulations 2005;
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended;
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER);
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and 2022 requirements, as applicable;
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989;
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998;
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992;

- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 where construction work is undertaken;
- Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and staff; and
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including requirements relating to welfare, health and safety and premises.

Serenity School Croydon will also have regard to current DfE health and safety guidance, HSE guidance and UK Health Security Agency guidance for children and young people's settings.

3. Health and safety management arrangements

Serenity School Croydon follows a Plan–Do–Check–Act approach to health and safety management.

Stage	School approach
Plan	Set policy, responsibilities, priorities and risk controls; identify competent support and site-specific requirements.
Do	Implement procedures, risk assessments, training, supervision, maintenance and control measures.
Check	Inspect, monitor, investigate incidents, review records and assess whether controls are effective.
Act	Correct deficiencies, update risk assessments and procedures, share learning and improve practice.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Proprietary Board

The Proprietary Board, as proprietor/employer, is accountable for health and safety and will ensure that appropriate arrangements, resources and oversight are in place. It will:

- approve this policy and receive appropriate assurance on health and safety performance;
- ensure suitable arrangements exist for risk assessment, premises compliance, emergency planning and statutory inspections;
- ensure access to competent health and safety advice;
- seek assurance that significant risks and actions are being managed; and
- review serious incidents, significant trends or material non-compliance where escalation is required.

4.2 Chief Executive Officer

The CEO provides executive oversight of the school's health and safety arrangements and ensures that responsibilities are appropriately delegated and resourced at Serenity School Croydon.

4.3 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for day-to-day implementation of this policy at their school. This includes:

- ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed, implemented and reviewed;
- ensuring safe staffing and supervision arrangements;
- ensuring staff receive appropriate information, instruction and training;
- ensuring local emergency, evacuation and lockdown arrangements are current and practised;
- ensuring accidents, incidents and near misses are recorded, investigated and escalated where required;
- ensuring identified remedial actions are completed within appropriate timescales;
- reporting material health and safety matters through the appropriate group and Proprietary Board arrangements; and
- delegating day-to-day responsibilities to an appropriately senior member of staff during their absence.

4.4 Site Manager / appointed premises lead

The Site Manager or appointed premises lead manages local premises compliance and routine site safety arrangements, including inspections, maintenance records, contractor access, statutory checks and escalation of defects. They must work within their competence and obtain specialist support where required.

4.5 Competent health and safety advice

Serenity School Croydon will appoint or have access to a competent person with the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to advise on health and safety. Specialist competent contractors or advisers will be used for areas such as fire safety, asbestos, legionella, gas, electrical systems, lifting equipment and construction work.

4.6 Employees

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions;
- follow training, risk assessments, procedures and reasonable instructions;
- use equipment and personal protective equipment correctly;
- report hazards, defects, accidents, incidents and near misses promptly;
- not interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety; and
- raise concerns where they believe arrangements are unsafe or ineffective.

4.7 Pupils, parents and carers

Pupils are expected to follow safety instructions appropriate to their age, understanding and communication needs. Parents and carers are expected to provide relevant medical, mobility and risk information and to support reasonable safety arrangements communicated by the school.

5. Risk assessment and risk management

Risk assessment is central to Serenity School Croydon's health and safety arrangements. Assessments will be suitable, sufficient and proportionate to the activity and the people affected.

Risk assessments will consider:

- the hazard and who may be harmed;
- existing controls and any further action required;
- pupils' SEND, communication, sensory, mobility, health, behaviour and regulation needs;
- staff competence, supervision and staffing ratios;
- reasonable adjustments and accessibility;
- environmental and premises factors;
- emergency arrangements; and
- the balance between managing risk and enabling meaningful participation.

Risk assessments will be reviewed when there is reason to believe they are no longer valid, after a significant incident, following material changes to the activity or environment, or at the review frequency specified for the assessment.

5.1 Individual pupil risk assessments

Where a pupil's needs require an individual risk assessment, it will be informed by the EHCP, behaviour/positive handling plan, medical information, communication profile, specialist advice and relevant family input. Staff will recognise that behaviour may communicate pain, distress, sensory overload, fear or unmet need, particularly for pupils who are non-speaking or have limited functional communication.

6. Premises, site security and statutory compliance

The school will maintain local premises arrangements appropriate to its site. These will include routine inspections, defect reporting, security arrangements and statutory compliance records.

6.1 Site security

Access to school premises will be controlled to protect pupils, staff and visitors. Each site will maintain arrangements for visitor sign-in, identification, key/access control, intruder response and out-of-hours access.

6.2 Premises compliance

The school will maintain, as applicable, current records and control arrangements for:

- fixed electrical installations and portable electrical equipment;
- gas installations and appliances;
- water hygiene and legionella;
- asbestos management;
- fire systems and emergency lighting;
- lifts, hoists and lifting equipment;

- play, PE and specialist equipment;
- work equipment and machinery;
- ventilation and temperature;
- security and access systems; and
- building condition, maintenance and repairs.

Compliance frequencies will follow statutory requirements, manufacturer instructions, competent-person advice and risk assessment. Defects presenting an immediate or significant risk will be isolated or taken out of use until made safe.

7. Fire safety and emergency arrangements

Serenity School Croydon will maintain a current fire risk assessment and site-specific fire and evacuation procedures. This policy does not prescribe a single alarm tone, route or assembly point because these are set out in the school's site-specific procedures.

- fire alarm systems and emergency lighting will be tested and maintained at appropriate intervals;
- fire drills will normally be undertaken at least once each term and additionally where risk assessment indicates;
- staff and pupils will be made aware of local evacuation arrangements;
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) or equivalent arrangements will be used where an individual requires additional support;
- fire doors, escape routes and exits will be kept unobstructed and appropriately maintained;
- fire-fighting equipment will be maintained and used only by persons who are trained and can do so without unacceptable risk; and
- local procedures will provide for registers, visitors, contractors and emergency-service liaison.

7.1 Wider emergencies

The school will maintain emergency arrangements proportionate to foreseeable events such as serious injury, loss of utilities, flooding, severe weather, security incidents, bomb threats, public health incidents and significant damage to premises. These arrangements link to the Severe Weather, Safeguarding, Business Continuity and other relevant procedures.

8. First aid, medical needs and accidents

First aid arrangements are set out in Serenity School Croydon’s First Aid Policy. The school will ensure sufficient appropriately trained first aiders, suitable equipment, accessible first aid provision and arrangements for educational visits.

Pupils with medical needs will be supported in accordance with the school’s Medical Needs/Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions arrangements, individual healthcare plans where required and relevant professional advice.

8.1 Accident and incident recording

Accidents, injuries, significant incidents and near misses will be recorded promptly using Serenity School Croydon's approved systems. Serious or repeated incidents will be investigated to identify causes, required actions and organisational learning.

Accident and incident records will be retained in accordance with Serenity School Croydon's Records Retention Policy and applicable legal requirements.

8.2 RIDDOR

The Headteacher, supported by the appropriate competent adviser, will ensure that work-related deaths, specified injuries, occupational diseases, dangerous occurrences and other reportable events are notified to the Health and Safety Executive where required by RIDDOR. Current HSE guidance will be used when determining whether an event is reportable and the relevant reporting timeframe.

9. Hazardous substances, equipment and specialist areas

9.1 COSHH

Hazardous substances will be identified, assessed and controlled. Safety data, COSHH assessments, secure storage, appropriate labelling, spill arrangements and disposal procedures will be maintained where relevant. Access by pupils will be supervised and limited to safe, curriculum-appropriate use.

9.2 Work equipment

Equipment will be suitable for its intended use, maintained in a safe condition and inspected where necessary. Only appropriately trained or supervised persons may use higher-risk equipment.

9.3 Specialist curriculum areas

Science, design and technology, vocational learning, food technology, PE and other specialist areas will operate under suitable local procedures and competent guidance. Where relevant, Serenity School Croydon will use recognised sector guidance such as CLEAPSS, AfPE or equivalent competent advice.

9.4 Electrical, gas and pressure/lifting systems

Electrical, gas, lifting and other regulated systems will be inspected and maintained by competent persons at the required intervals. Records will be retained locally.

10. Manual handling, working at height and lone working

10.1 Manual handling

Manual handling will be avoided where reasonably practicable. Where it cannot be avoided, the task will be assessed and suitable controls, equipment and training provided. Pupil moving and handling will follow individual plans and competent professional advice where required.

10.2 Working at height

Work at height will be properly planned, risk assessed and undertaken by competent persons using suitable equipment. Staff and pupils must not use unsuitable furniture or improvised equipment to gain height.

10.3 Lone working

Lone working will only take place where authorised and appropriately risk assessed. Local arrangements will specify communication, check-in, access, emergency and escalation arrangements. Staff must notify an appropriate colleague or manager of their location and expected finish time where required. Lone working will not be permitted where the risk cannot be adequately controlled.

11. Educational visits and off-site activities

Educational visits, residential visits, work experience, vocational placements and other off-site activities will be planned and managed in accordance with Serenity School Croydon's Educational Visits Policy and relevant risk assessments.

- the needs of individual pupils, including communication, mobility, sensory, medical and regulation needs, will be considered;
- staffing and supervision will be proportionate to risk and pupil need;
- emergency contacts and medical arrangements will be available;
- reasonable adjustments will be made to maximise safe participation; and
- specialist or adventurous activities will only proceed where competent advice, appropriate insurance and suitable providers are in place.

12. Violence, challenging behaviour and restrictive intervention

Serenity School Croydon recognises that staff may face risks from distressed or dysregulated behaviour. Such risks will be managed through individual planning, staffing, de-escalation, communication support, environmental adaptations and training.

Where restrictive intervention or positive handling may be required, staff must follow Serenity School Croydon's Positive Handling Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy and individual Positive Handling Plans. Physical intervention must never be used as a substitute for appropriate staffing, planning or reasonable adjustments.

Incidents involving violence, aggression or restrictive intervention will be recorded and reviewed in accordance with the relevant policies, with staff and pupil welfare considered after the event.

13. Infection prevention and public health

Serenity School Croydon will follow current UK Health Security Agency guidance for children and young people's settings when managing infectious disease, outbreaks and public health incidents.

- good hand and respiratory hygiene;
- appropriate cleaning and waste arrangements;

- safe management of blood and body fluids;
- appropriate use of personal protective equipment;
- safe handling of laundry and clinical waste where relevant;
- ventilation and environmental controls where appropriate;
- additional precautions for individuals who are clinically vulnerable or at increased risk; and
- current UKHSA exclusion periods and health protection team advice.

Because national exclusion guidance can change, Serenity School Croydon will not rely on a fixed infection-exclusion table within this policy. Schools will refer to the current UKHSA guidance at the time of the incident.

13.1 Animals

Any animals kept or brought onto site will be managed so that hygiene, supervision, allergy, infection and welfare risks are appropriately controlled.

14. Staff health, wellbeing and occupational risks

14.1 New and expectant mothers

A specific workplace risk assessment will be completed where an employee notifies Serenity School Croydon that they are pregnant, have given birth within the previous six months or are breastfeeding. Controls will be reviewed as circumstances change.

14.2 Display screen equipment

Serenity School Croydon will identify display screen equipment users and complete appropriate assessments, provide information and training, and arrange eyesight tests in accordance with applicable requirements.

14.3 Occupational stress and wellbeing

Serenity School Croydon will seek to identify and manage work-related stressors through appropriate management, workload monitoring, risk assessment, supervision and access to occupational health or other support where needed.

14.4 Occupational health

Where an employee's health may affect, or be affected by, their work, Serenity School Croydon may seek occupational health advice and consider reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

15. Contractors, visitors and lettings

15.1 Contractors

Contractors must provide appropriate competence information, risk assessments/method statements and evidence of insurance where required. They will be informed of relevant site hazards and safeguarding/security arrangements before work begins.

Higher-risk works, including construction, asbestos-related activity, hot works, electrical work and work at height, will be subject to appropriate permit, isolation or competent-person controls where required.

15.2 Visitors

Visitors must comply with site security and safety instructions and remain appropriately supervised where necessary.

15.3 Lettings and shared use

Where premises are let or shared, responsibilities for health and safety, emergency arrangements, supervision, equipment and reporting will be made clear through the relevant agreement or local arrangements.

16. Training, consultation and information

Health and safety training will form part of staff induction and ongoing professional development. Training will be proportionate to role and risk.

- general health and safety responsibilities and hazard reporting;
- fire and emergency procedures;
- first aid where required;
- manual handling/moving and handling where applicable;
- COSHH and specialist equipment where relevant;
- positive handling/restrictive intervention where required;
- risk assessment;
- site-specific compliance duties; and
- other specialist training identified through risk assessment.

Staff will be consulted on health and safety matters that affect them, and may raise concerns through line management or other appropriate reporting routes.

17. Monitoring, audit and review

Health and safety performance will be monitored through a combination of:

- routine site inspections;
- statutory compliance checks and servicing;
- risk assessment review;
- accident, incident and near-miss analysis;
- fire drill and emergency exercise review;
- contractor and maintenance records;
- staff feedback and reported hazards;
- internal or external health and safety audits; and
- reporting to senior leadership and the Proprietary Board.

Significant actions will be assigned to a responsible person with a target completion date and followed through to closure.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following significant legislative or organisational change, a serious incident, material inspection findings or where monitoring indicates that arrangements require revision.

18. Related policies and local procedures

This policy should be read alongside, as applicable:

- First Aid Policy;
- Medical Needs / Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Student Risk Assessment Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Positive Handling Policy;
- Behaviour for Learning Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Severe Weather Policy;
- Food and Nutrition Policy;
- Records Retention Policy;
- Business Continuity / Emergency Planning arrangements; and
- school-specific fire, evacuation, security and premises procedures.

Appendix 1 – Minimum site-specific health and safety records

Serenity School Croydon will maintain, as applicable, current records or evidence for the following areas. The precise records will reflect the school's site, premises and activities.

Area	Examples of evidence
Fire	Fire risk assessment; alarm/emergency-lighting checks; extinguisher servicing; drill records; PEEPs; local evacuation plan.
Electrical	Fixed electrical inspection; PAT/portable equipment controls; defect records.
Gas	Gas Safety records and servicing where gas systems are present.
Water hygiene	Legionella risk assessment; monitoring/flushing/temperature records; remedial actions.
Asbestos	Asbestos management survey/register and contractor sign-off where applicable.
Lifts/hoists	Thorough examination, servicing and defect records where applicable.
Premises	Routine site inspections; repair logs; playground/PE equipment inspection.
COSHH	COSHH assessments, safety data sheets, secure-storage arrangements.
Risk assessment	General, activity-specific and individual pupil risk assessments.
Accidents/incidents	Accident, near-miss and investigation records; RIDDOR evidence where applicable.
Contractors	Competence/insurance checks; RAMS; permits to work where required.
Training	Induction and role-specific health and safety training records.

Key external guidance

- Department for Education: Health and safety – responsibilities and duties for schools.
- Health and Safety Executive: Managing for health and safety; education and RIDDOR guidance.
- Department for Education: Good estate management for schools.
- UK Health Security Agency: Health protection in children and young people’s settings, including current exclusion guidance.