

Health and Safety Policy

Reference Number	HS-0101
Version Number	4.5
Latest Revision	July 2026
Policy Owner	Assurance and Compliance
Policy Lead	National Lead for Health and Safety
Ratified	ELT, June 2026
Next Review	July 2027

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Statement of Intent

The National Autistic Society is committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone who works for us or may be affected by our activities.

We will meet our duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all relevant health, safety and environmental legislation.

We believe that good health and safety is everyone's responsibility. We expect strong and visible leadership from our senior managers and active involvement from employees, volunteers and representatives.

We will:

- Identify hazards and assess risks arising from our work activities
- Put in place sensible and proportionate controls to reduce risk
- Provide suitable information, instruction, training and supervision
- Consult with our workforce and their safety representatives
- Provide the resources needed to manage health and safety effectively
- Encourage reporting of accidents, near misses and concerns without fear of blame
- Learn from incidents and share lessons to prevent recurrence

Health and safety performance will be monitored, reviewed and improved as part of how we plan and deliver our services.

This policy applies to everyone working on behalf of the National Autistic Society.

Chief Executive Officer

The National Autistic Society

Purpose

The National Autistic Society (NAS) is committed to creating and maintaining safe, healthy and supportive working environments for everyone who works for us or may be affected by our activities.

Good health and safety management protects people from harm, supports high-quality services and helps the organisation meet its legal, moral and charitable responsibilities. It also supports staff wellbeing, reduces disruption caused by accidents or ill health and contributes to a positive organisational culture.

This policy sets out how NAS approaches health and safety at an organisational level and describes the responsibilities that apply throughout the organisation.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out NAS's commitment to managing health and safety effectively
- Describe how health and safety is led, governed and monitored
- Clarify roles, responsibilities and accountability
- Support compliance with health and safety legislation
- Provide a clear framework supported by detailed procedures, standards and guidance

This policy provides the direction for health and safety management. Detailed procedures, standards and tools explain how the policy is implemented in practice.

Scope

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by or on behalf of the National Autistic Society.

It applies to:

- Trustees and senior leaders
- Employees, volunteers and students
- Agency staff and sessional workers
- Contractors and others working on NAS premises or under NAS control

For the purposes of this policy, the term *workers* includes all the groups listed above.

Everyone working on behalf of NAS has a responsibility to follow this policy and any related health and safety procedures.

Legal framework

The NAS recognises its duties under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** and all other relevant health and safety legislation.

Key legal requirements include:

- Protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees and others
- Assessing and controlling risks arising from work activities
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision
- Consulting workers on health and safety matters
- Reporting and investigating certain accidents and incidents

This policy is informed by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance, including **HSG65 – Managing for Health and Safety**, and reflects the *Plan–Do–Check–Act* approach to continuous improvement.

Health and Safety Leadership and Governance

Leadership Commitment

The NAS believes that strong and visible leadership is essential to good health and safety performance.

Senior leaders are expected to:

- Set clear expectations that health and safety is a priority
- Lead by example
- Encourage open reporting of hazards, incidents and concerns
- Support learning and continuous improvement

Health and safety is considered an integral part of how services are planned, delivered and reviewed.

Governance and Oversight Arrangements

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for health and safety governance within NAS.

Assurance is provided through:

- Regular reports on health and safety performance
- Oversight through relevant committees

- Monitoring of serious incidents, risks and trends
- Review of compliance with this policy

Health and safety governance arrangements are designed to provide assurance that risks are being managed appropriately and that learning is acted upon.

Responsibilities

Health and safety responsibilities are shared across the organisation. Clear accountability is essential.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Providing strategic oversight of health and safety
- Ensuring adequate resources are available
- Seeking assurance that legal duties are being met
- Reviewing health and safety performance and risk

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for health and safety within NAS and will:

- Demonstrate visible leadership
- Approve and review this policy
- Ensure effective governance arrangements are in place
- Delegate responsibilities appropriately

Directors

Directors are responsible for health and safety within their areas of control and will:

- Embed this policy within their directorates
- Ensure significant risks are identified and managed
- Ensure managers are supported and held to account
- Include health and safety considerations in decision-making

Senior Managers and Line Managers

Managers are responsible for managing day-to-day health and safety within their areas by:

- Assessing and controlling risks
- Ensuring staff are competent and trained
- Implementing relevant procedures and standards
- Encouraging reporting of incidents and concerns
- Taking prompt action where risks are identified

Employees, Volunteers and Contractors

All workers are required to:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- Take care not to endanger others
- Follow health and safety policies and procedures
- Report hazards, incidents and near misses
- Co-operate with health and safety arrangements

Consultation and Worker Engagement

The NAS is committed to consulting with workers on matters affecting their health and safety.

This includes:

- Engagement through elected health and safety representatives
- Local, regional and directorate H&S agenda's and national committees
- Ongoing communication and shared learning
- Consultation arrangements support compliance with legal duties and help ensure that those closest to the work are involved in identifying risks and solutions.

Managing Health and Safety – Organisational Arrangements

The NAS manages health and safety through a structured management system aligned to the Plan–Do–Check–Act model.

Risk Management (Overview)

Risks arising from work activities are identified, assessed and controlled in a proportionate way.

Detailed requirements for risk assessment and risk control are set out in supporting management standards and procedures.

Competence, Information, Instruction and Training (Overview)

The NAS ensures that workers receive suitable information, instruction, training and supervision to carry out their roles safely.

Training needs are identified based on role, risk and competence requirements.

Incident, Near-Miss and Hazard Reporting (Overview)

The NAS encourages the reporting of accidents, incidents, hazards and near misses without fear of blame.

Reported information is used to:

- Investigate causes
- Identify learning
- Prevent recurrence
- Improve systems and controls

Detailed requirements for incident, near-miss and hazard reporting are set out in supporting management standards and procedures.

Use of Contractors and Third Parties (Overview)

The NAS works with contractors and partners to manage shared health and safety risks.

Arrangements are in place to ensure cooperation, coordination and communication where activities or premises are shared.

Detailed requirements for use of contractors and third parties are set out in supporting management standards and procedures.

Monitoring, Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Health and safety performance is monitored through:

- Audits and inspections
- Incident and accident data
- Risk reviews
- Committee oversight and reporting

Learning from incidents, audits and feedback is used to improve policies, procedures and systems.

Health and safety is reviewed as part of the charity's broader approach to risk management and organisational improvement.

Policy Review and Document Control

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There are significant organisational changes
- There are changes in legislation or guidance
- Monitoring identifies the need for review

The National Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and recommending updates.

Definitions

SGG: Schools Governance Group, a Board committee.

H&S Rep: Health and Safety Representative. Previously known as Representative of Employee Safety (RoES). A non-union health and safety rep acting on behalf of and representing staff.

H&S Team: National Health and Safety Team – Previously known as Safety, Quality and Environment (SQE) Team.

NHSWC: National Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee

ELT: Executive Leadership Team

QAC: Quality Assurance Committee (a Board committee)

CDM: Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 – Law that applies to the whole construction process on all construction projects from concept to completion.

Duty Holder: Also Known as Responsible Person, the designated person who, by virtue of the position they hold whether it be in a company, organisation or premises under their control, has statutory legal responsibilities and duties empowered upon them and the legal responsibility for any failings.

Appendices

Reference	Document
HS-0101A1	H&S Consultation and Engagement Framework
HS-0101A2	NHSWC Terms of Reference
HS-0101A3	Statement of Intent (for display)

Equality Impact Assessment

This document has been assessed to determine if any of the changes made have a positive or negative impact on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and how we will mitigate any adverse effects. It also supports duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations).

To be completed by the Governance Forum responsible for the document when ratified.

Document title:		
Does this document affect one group less or more favourably than another?		
Aspect assessed	Yes/No (please ✓)	Explain what the impact is and what action is being taken to mitigate the risk
Being married or in a civil partnership	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Personal circumstance related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Race: including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin (inc. Gypsy, Roma, and Traveler (GRT))	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Race related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Sex	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Gender related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Gender reassignment	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Gender related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.

Religion or belief	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Belief related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Sexual orientation	Yes ☐ No ☒	It is not anticipated that implementation of this policy will be an issue within the realm of this characteristic.
Age	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Age-related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Disability: learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and mental health problems	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. Ability related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes ☐ No ☒	General risk assessments must consider all persons to whom NAS owes a duty of care under health and safety law. New or expecting mother-related issues are an inclusive part of this process and require suitable and sufficient arrangements made to reduce the likelihood of any perceived harm so far as is reasonably practicable.
Is there any evidence that some groups may be affected differently?	Yes ☒ No ☐	Where an occupational requirement is evident some individuals with disabilities may not be able to perform those roles.
If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	Yes ☒ No ☐	A minority of roles have a minimum physical capability which excludes some individuals with disabilities.
Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	Yes ☐ No ☒	
If so, can the impact be avoided?	Yes ☐ No ☐	

	N/A ☒	
What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?		
Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒	If yes, an action plan must be developed and implemented
To be completed prior to sending to the Policy Officer		
Governance Forum	Executive Leadership Team	
Date Ratified	29/06/2026	
Name of Chair	Caroline Stevens	

Any actions identified through the assessment must be recorded on Radar, which will maintain an action log detailing the action owner, timescales, and supporting evidence to confirm completion.

Evaluation Measures

Findings from audits will be reviewed to identify systemic issues and inform updates to the Policy Framework. The audit criteria will be determined by the evaluation measures specific to each policy.

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Method of monitoring	Individual responsible for the monitoring	Monitoring frequency	Group or committee who receive the findings or report	Group or committee or individual responsible for completing any actions
Health and Safety Policy is reviewed within the required review period and remains aligned with legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements	Policy review and document control audit	National Lead for Health and Safety	Annually and following significant change	National Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (NHSWC)	National Lead for Health and Safety
Roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements defined within the Policy are understood and implemented across the organisation	Internal audit, compliance reviews and assurance reporting	Director of Assurance and Compliance	Annually	NHSWC and Executive Leadership Team	Relevant Directors and Senior Managers
Arrangements for consultation and worker engagement are operating effectively	Review of committee activity, consultation records and representative feedback	National Lead for Health and Safety	Annually	NHSWC	NHSWC and relevant managers
Health and Safety Policy requirements are supported by current procedures, standards and guidance documents	Document review and assurance audit	National Lead for Health and Safety	Annually	NHSWC	Policy and document owners
Significant findings from audits, inspections, incidents and investigations are used to inform improvements to the Policy Framework	Review of audit reports, incident trends and lessons learned	Director of Assurance and Compliance	Annually	NHSWC and Board Committees as appropriate	Relevant Directors and Action Owners
To ensure compliance with this policy, the audit will review evidence of the ratification process used for other policies.					
Any actions identified through the audit should be recorded on Radar, along with agreed completion dates. Actions will only be closed once evidence has been provided to confirm that the required work has been completed.					
Any training associated to this document will be monitored in accordance with the Mandatory Training Programme (where applicable).					