


# HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

## 2026–2027

| Policy owner | Managing Director – John Mc Gowan |
|---|---|
| **Operational lead** | Operations / Safety Officer - Francesca Giacomini |
| **Version** | 2026–2027 |
| **Effective date** | 14th October 2026, subject to approval |
| **Next planned review** | 14th October 2027, or earlier following significant change, incident, legal change or identified deficiency |
| **Premises** | North West Academy within the Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin Building |

## Document control and review history

| Version | Date | Summary | Approved by |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2022–2023** | 06/02/2023 | Previous policy reviewed and signed. | Francesca Giacomini |
| **2026–2027** | 06/10/2026 | Comprehensive legal/good-practice update; role, risk and emergency arrangements refreshed. | Francesca Giacomini |

## Basis of this update

The previous policy stated that it was based on the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, and set out the Academy's statement of intent, responsibilities and arrangements. It was last recorded as reviewed on 06/02/2023 with a planned review on 06/02/2024.

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## 1. Introduction and scope

North West Academy of English (NWA) recognises its duty to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and other people who may be affected by its activities. This includes students, visitors, contractors, work-placement participants and other people using or affected by the Academy's activities.

This policy applies to all Academy work activities and locations under the Academy's control, including teaching, administration, meetings, events, educational/social activities, organised visits, work placements, lone or out-of-hours working and authorised home/hybrid working.

Where the Academy operates within premises controlled in whole or in part by a landlord or other organisation, responsibilities shall be agreed and documented. The Academy shall not assume that a landlord's arrangements remove its own duties to manage risks arising from its activities.

The policy should be read with the Academy's emergency evacuation/fire safety arrangements, safeguarding arrangements, relevant risk assessments, codes of practice, staff handbook and any premises/landlord procedures.

## 2. Statement of intent

North West Academy of English is committed to maintaining high standards of health, safety and welfare and to developing a positive safety culture in which staff, students and other relevant persons actively contribute to preventing injury and ill health.

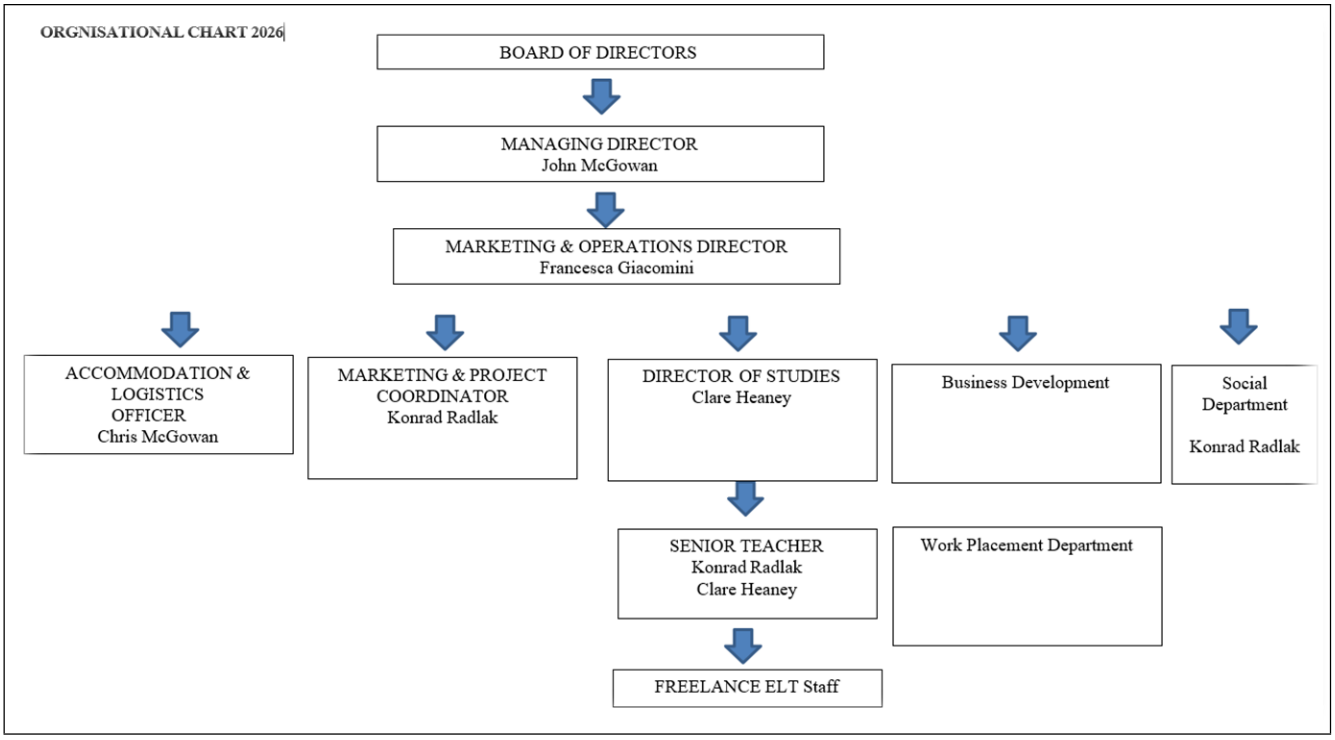
- Complying with applicable Northern Ireland health and safety legislation and relevant HSENI guidance.
- Identifying hazards, assessing significant risks and implementing proportionate controls.
- Providing safe premises, equipment, systems of work and welfare facilities so far as reasonably practicable.
- Providing suitable information, instruction, training, supervision and competent advice.
- Consulting workers and encouraging the prompt reporting of hazards, near misses, accidents, incidents and work-related ill health without fear of blame.
- Protecting vulnerable people and considering individual needs where required by risk assessment.
- Managing contractors and shared-premises interfaces so that work does not expose staff, students, visitors or others to unacceptable risk.
- Reviewing performance, learning from incidents and continually improving health and safety arrangements.

The Managing Director has overall accountability for health, safety and welfare. Day-to-day responsibilities are delegated as set out in Section 3. Delegation does not remove the Board's or Managing Director's accountability for ensuring that appropriate arrangements, resources and competent assistance are in place.

Signed: _____ Date: 29/10/26_____

Managing Director / authorised director

## 3. Organisation, roles and responsibilities




### 3.1 Board of Directors

- Approve the policy and ensure appropriate resources are available to implement it.
- Set expectations for health and safety performance and maintain visible leadership.
- Receive suitable assurance on significant risks, incidents, actions and compliance.
- Ensure health and safety implications are considered when introducing significant organisational or operational changes.

### 3.2 Managing Director

- Has overall accountability for the Academy's health and safety arrangements.
- Ensure a competent person or person is appointed to assist with health and safety.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner where circumstances require.
- Ensure significant risks are controlled and that corrective actions are resourced and completed.

### 3.3 Operations / Safety Officer

- Coordinate day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Maintain the health and safety action plan, risk assessment register and relevant records.
- Coordinate inspections, incident investigations and corrective actions.
- Ensure appropriate induction and refresher training arrangements.
- Coordinate with the landlord/building management on fire, electrical, emergency, maintenance and other shared risks.
- Seek competent external advice where risks exceed internal competence.

### 3.4 Department managers / line managers

- Implement this policy within their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure relevant risk assessments and safe systems of work are available and understood.
- Provide suitable supervision and act promptly on reported hazards.
- Ensure staff, freelance teachers and others under their control receive appropriate information and training.
- Carry out or arrange appropriate local inspections and investigate incidents within their area.

### 3.5 Teaching staff

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their work.
- Supervise students appropriately and follow approved arrangements for classrooms, activities, trips and work placements.
- Follow emergency, first-aid and safeguarding procedures.
- Report hazards, defects, accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences promptly.
- Remove defective equipment from use where safe to do so and report it for corrective action.
- Only use personal equipment where it is authorised and safe to do so.

### 3.6 Non-teaching staff

- Follow safe systems of work and report hazards or defects promptly.
- Maintain good housekeeping within their areas.
- Use equipment and PPE as instructed.
- Cooperate with risk assessments, training, emergency procedures and investigations.

### 3.7 Contractors and visitors

- Comply with relevant Academy rules and site requirements.
- Provide information needed to assess their work and cooperate with Academy/landlord controls.
- Use suitable competent personnel, equipment and controls.
- Report hazards, incidents and defects immediately.
- Contractors carrying out higher-risk work must provide suitable evidence of competence, insurance, risk assessment/method statement and any required permits before work starts.

## 4. Competence, consultation and communication

- The Academy will appoint or obtain competent assistance where necessary. Competence will be based on appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and, where relevant, training or professional qualifications. External advisers may be used where internal competence is insufficient.
- Health and safety information will be communicated through induction, briefings, training, notices, risk assessments, procedures and consultation. Staff must be given an opportunity to ask questions and demonstrate understanding; simply implementing a policy is not treated as sufficient induction on its own. HSENI states that employers should check employee understanding of the policy.

- Workers will be consulted directly and/or through safety representatives in accordance with the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996. Consultation will be proportionate and will include significant changes to work, controls and relevant risk assessments.

## 5. Risk assessment and safe systems of work

- Significant risks arising from Academy activities will be assessed by a competent person and appropriate controls implemented.
- Assessments will consider employees, students, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected.
- Assessments will be reviewed when there is a significant change, after an incident or near miss, when controls are found to be ineffective, or when the assessment is no longer suitable and sufficient. A routine review programme will also be maintained.
- Where five or more employees are employed, significant findings will be recorded.
- Where appropriate, assessments will consider young people, pregnancy/maternity, disability, temporary workers, inexperienced workers and other individual factors.
- Risk controls will follow the hierarchy of control, prioritising elimination and collective controls before PPE.

- High-risk activities will have documented safe systems of work or procedures where appropriate. Risk assessments are not a substitute for supervision, competence or effective implementation.

## 6. Incident, accident, near-miss and RIDDOR reporting

- All work-related accidents, injuries, near misses, dangerous occurrences and relevant work-related ill health must be reported promptly through the Academy's incident-reporting process. Records must be stored securely and access restricted to those who need the information.
- The Academy will investigate incidents proportionately, identify underlying causes and implement corrective actions. Serious incidents must be escalated immediately to the Managing Director/Safety Officer and, where necessary, emergency services and the landlord/building management.
- Where an incident falls within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997, the responsible person will report it to HSENI using the appropriate process and within the applicable statutory timescale. HSENI confirms that the NI RIDDOR position differs from the revised GB arrangements and remains governed by the NI regulations.
- Incident records will be retained and reviewed for trends so that risk assessments and controls can be improved.

## 7. Fire safety and emergency evacuation

- The Academy will maintain effective fire safety arrangements appropriate to the premises and its activities. The Academy's detailed fire/emergency procedure must identify the responsible persons, evacuation arrangements, assembly point, assistance for people requiring support,

rollcall/accounting arrangements, alarm arrangements and liaison with the landlord/building management.

- A suitable fire risk assessment will be maintained and reviewed when there is a significant change, after a fire or significant near miss, when deficiencies are identified, and as part of a planned review programme.
- Fire exits, escape routes and fire doors will be kept clear and usable.
- Staff will receive appropriate information and instruction on fire prevention, alarm response and evacuation.
- Evacuation drills will be conducted at intervals determined by the fire risk assessment and building arrangements rather than relying solely on a fixed annual statement.
- Fire alarm, emergency lighting, extinguishers and other life-safety systems will be inspected, tested and maintained by the party responsible in accordance with applicable requirements and manufacturer/competent-person arrangements.
- Where the landlord is responsible for building fire systems, the Academy will obtain suitable evidence that required checks and maintenance are being completed and will promptly report deficiencies.

## 8. First aid and medical emergencies

- First-aid provision will be based on a documented first-aid needs assessment. The Academy will provide, as a minimum, a suitable stocked first-aid kit and an appointed person to take charge of first-aid arrangements unless adequately trained first-aiders are available. HSENI confirms these minimum arrangements and recommends that first-aid provision be reviewed considering workplace circumstances and accident/ill-health experience.

- First-aid equipment locations and the identity/location of first-aiders or appointed persons will be communicated to staff.
- First-aid equipment will be checked and replenished at appropriate intervals.
- Emergency services will be contacted immediately about any serious injury or illness.
- First-aid arrangements for students, visitors and organised activities will be included in relevant risk assessments.
- First-aider numbers and cover arrangements will reflect staffing levels, working hours, activities and the premises.

## 9. Electrical safety and work equipment

- Electrical installations and equipment will be maintained so they remain safe for use.
- Inspection, testing and maintenance will be risk-based and carried out by competent people. A blanket PAT-testing frequency will not be used as a substitute for appropriate visual checks, maintenance and risk assessment.
- Only authorised equipment will be used. Personal electrical equipment must be suitable, undamaged and authorised before use in Academy-controlled areas.
- Defective equipment must be taken out of service where safe to do so, clearly identified and reported.

- Work equipment will be suitable for the intended task, maintained, inspected where required and used by competent people in accordance with relevant requirements.
- Where contractors undertake electrical or other maintenance work, competence and safe systems will be verified before work starts.

- The principal legal framework includes the Electricity at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1991 and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999.

## 10. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- PPE will be used where risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means or where it provides additional protection. It will be selected following risk assessment, be suitable for the user and task, be maintained, stored and replaced as necessary, and users will be instructed in its correct use.
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993 continue to apply, as amended by the 2024 Regulations. The 2024 amendment extended relevant duties from employees to workers.
- The Academy will not charge employees for PPE that it is required to provide for work.

## 11. Manual handling

- Manual handling will be avoided or reduced were reasonably practicable, including through mechanical aids, redesign, smaller loads or assistance.
- Where manual handling remains necessary, a suitable assessment will consider the task, individual, load and environment.
- Staff will not attempt a load beyond their capability and will request assistance.
- Training will be practical and task specifics were needed.
- Reports of pain, discomfort or injury associated with manual handling will be investigated and controls reviewed.

## 12. COSHH and hazardous substances

- The Academy will identify hazardous substances used or encountered through its activities, obtain current safety information, assess risks and implement suitable controls under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 and relevant amendments.

- A current inventory of hazardous substances will be maintained where applicable.
- Safety data sheets and supplier information will be obtained and considered.
- Exposure will be prevented or adequately controlled using the hierarchy of control.
- Appropriate storage, labelling, handling, spill response and disposal arrangements will be maintained.
- PPE and emergency arrangements will be provided where required.
- Staff will receive appropriate information, instruction and training.

## 13. Display screen equipment, hybrid working and workstation ergonomics

- The Academy will comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992. DSE users include workers who use DSE daily for an hour or more at a time; this can include laptops, tablets and smartphones used for work and can apply to home/hybrid working.
- DSE workstation assessments will be completed for relevant users and reviewed when a user/workstation changes or discomfort is reported.
- Assessments will cover equipment, furniture, posture, lighting, space, work patterns and individual needs.
- Work will be planned to allow changes of activity or breaks; the law does not prescribe a single universal break schedule.
- Workers may request an eye and eyesight test and, where necessary for DSE work, appropriate corrective appliances will be provided in accordance with the Regulations.
- Home/hybrid workers will receive suitable advice and assessment arrangements, with additional equipment provided where the assessment identifies a need.

## 14. Workplace health, welfare and mental wellbeing

- The Academy will provide suitable welfare facilities and a workplace environment appropriate for its activities.
- Work-related stress will be treated as a health and safety risk and considered through suitable organisational and individual risk controls.
- Managers will monitor indicators such as workload concerns, persistent conflict, excessive working hours, sickness absence and other relevant signs of stress.
- Reasonable adjustments and individual needs will be considered where appropriate.
- Health information will be handled confidentially and only shared where there is a lawful and necessary basis.

## 15. Lone working and personal safety

- Lone work will be risk assessed where it occurs, including teaching or administration outside normal hours.
- Controls may include check-in arrangements, restricted access, personal alarms, communication systems, avoiding isolated activities and escalation arrangements.
- Where two-person working is not reasonably practicable, a risk assessment must identify alternative controls.
- Staff must not undertake work they believe cannot be completed safely without assistance.
- Incidents of violence, threatening behavior or personal safety concerns must be reported promptly and investigated.

## 16. Students, visitors, educational visits and work placements

- Student activities will be risk assessed where required, including off-site visits, social activities, work placements and activities outside normal hours.

- Supervision levels will reflect age, numbers, activity, environment, competence and any individual needs.
- Students and visitors will receive relevant safety information and emergency instructions.
- Work placements will be subject to suitable checks, communication of responsibilities and proportionate risk assessment.
- Health and safety arrangements will interface with safeguarding and student welfare procedures; safeguarding concerns must be handled under the Academy's safeguarding arrangements.

## 17. Contractors, maintenance and building/landlord responsibilities

- Before higher-risk contractor work begins, the Academy will establish who controls the work, identify interfaces with staff/students and obtain suitable information on competence, risk assessments/method statements, insurance and emergency arrangements.

- Contractors must follow site rules and coordinate with the Academy and landlord/building management.
- Areas affected by maintenance must be segregated where necessary and hazards communicated.
- Permits or formal authorisation will be used for higher-risk work where appropriate.
- Where building systems are landlord-controlled, responsibilities and escalation routes will be documented.
- Defects affecting life safety, access/egress, electrical safety, fire protection, water, heating or structural integrity will be escalated promptly.

## 18. Asbestos and building fabric

- The Academy will not undertake work that could disturb the building fabric without first confirming the relevant asbestos information and responsibilities. Where the Academy is not the asbestos dutyholder, it will obtain and follow the landlord/building dutyholder's asbestos management arrangements.

- An up-to-date asbestos register/management plan must be available to people planning or carrying out maintenance where the duty applies.
- No drilling, cutting, fixing, demolition or intrusive work will begin without suitable checks.
- If suspect material is encountered, work will stop and the matter will be escalated to the responsible dutyholder/competent person.
- Contractors must be given relevant asbestos information before work begins.

## 19. Housekeeping, slips/trips and storage

- Walkways, entrances, corridors and emergency exits will be kept clear.
- Trailing cables and temporary equipment will be managed to prevent trips.
- Spills will be dealt with promptly using suitable procedures.
- Storage will be stable and heavy items will not be placed where they can fall onto people.
- Electrical sockets will not be overloaded.

- Damaged flooring, furniture, doors, lighting or other defects will be reported promptly.
- Work at heights will not be improvised using unsuitable furniture. Where work at height is required, it will be planned, supervised and carried out by competent persons using suitable equipment.

- The Work at Height Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 apply to relevant work at height. HSENI stresses planning, supervision, competence and selection of suitable equipment.

## 20. Training, induction, supervision and competence

- All staff will receive health and safety induction appropriate to their role and location. Induction will include, as relevant, emergency procedures, fire evacuation, first aid, incident reporting, hazards, risk assessments, lone working, DSE, manual handling, equipment and local rules.
- Refresher training will be provided where required by risk, competence requirements, changes to work, incidents, new equipment or changes in law/guidance. Training records will be maintained.

## 21. Monitoring, inspection, audit and review

- The Safety Officer will maintain a health and safety action log and monitor completion of corrective actions.
- Departments will carry out proportionate workplace inspections.
- Risk assessments will be reviewed according to risk and when circumstances change; annual review may be used as a minimum governance check where appropriate but is not a substitute for review following change or an incident.
- Incident trends, training, inspections, outstanding actions, contractor issues and significant risk controls will be reported to senior management/Board at an appropriate frequency.
- The policy will be formally reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant legal, organisational, premises or operational changes.

## 22. Consultation and worker participation

- The Academy will consult workers on health and safety matters in accordance with applicable Northern Ireland requirements. Consultation may be direct, through elected safety representatives, or by a combination of approaches. Workers will be encouraged to report concerns and suggest improvements.

## 23. Enforcement authorities and cooperation

- The Academy will cooperate fully with HSENI, Derry & Strabane district council or other relevant enforcing authorities and will provide reasonable access to information, records, premises and personnel as required by law.
- The Academy will promptly address improvement or prohibition requirements and maintain records of actions taken.

## 24. Records and document retention

- Risk assessments and action records.
- Accident, incident, near-miss and RIDDOR records.
- Training and competence records.
- Inspection, maintenance and testing records were applicable.
- First-aid checks and training records.
- Fire safety records and drill records.
- Contractor information and permits where used.
- Relevant asbestos/building information supplied by the dutyholder.
- Consultation records and health and safety meeting/action notes.

- Records containing personal or health information will be handled securely and retained only for as long as necessary under the Academy's applicable data protection and records management arrangements.

## 25. Relevant legislation and guidance

| Legislation / framework | Policy relevance |
|---|---|
| **Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978** | Primary framework for employer duties. |
| **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000** | Risk assessment, arrangements, competence and related management duties. |
| **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997** | Reporting and record-keeping requirements. |
| **Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1982, as amended** | First-aid arrangements. |
| **Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992** | DSE risk controls. |
| **Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993** | Workplace conditions and welfare. |
| **Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993, as amended in 2024** | PPE duties, including workers. |
| **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003** | Hazardous substance controls. |
| **Electricity at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1991** | Electrical safety. |
| **Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999** | Work equipment. |
| **Work at Height Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005** | Work at height. |
| **Control of Asbestos Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012** | Asbestos management and work. |
| **Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996** | Worker consultation. |

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|---|---|
| **Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1991** | Health and safety information/poster. |

## Appendix A – Local information to complete before approval

Current Managing Director / Overall accountable director: John Mc Gowan

- Current Operations / Safety Officer: Francesca Giacomini
- Named deputy / acting Safety Officer: Chris Mc Gowan
- Current Health & Safety Adviser / competent person: Laurence Black
- Landlord/building responsible person for fire safety: Jack Mac Lomhair / Brian Kelly
- Fire alarm/emergency lighting/: Michael Doherty (AMD Fire & Security) – 077 938 3603
- Fire extinguisher maintenance provider: Gladeon Safety Systems – 028 7136 0500
- Emergency assembly point: Outside the building on the right-hand side, in front of the old church car park.
- First-aiders: Kornad Radlock; Roisin Bradley; Clare Heaney
- Appointed person(s) for first aid: Francesca Giacomini; Chris Mc Gowan
- First-aid kit location(s): NWA Office
- Emergency contact / building management number: Jack Mac Lomhair - 07784478324
- Accident/incident reporting location/system: Held in NWA main server
- Asbestos duty holder and register location: Not applicable as building is post 2000
- Insurance certificate's location: Held in NWA main server
- Nearest emergency department / agreed emergency arrangements:

**Altnagelvin Hospital,**

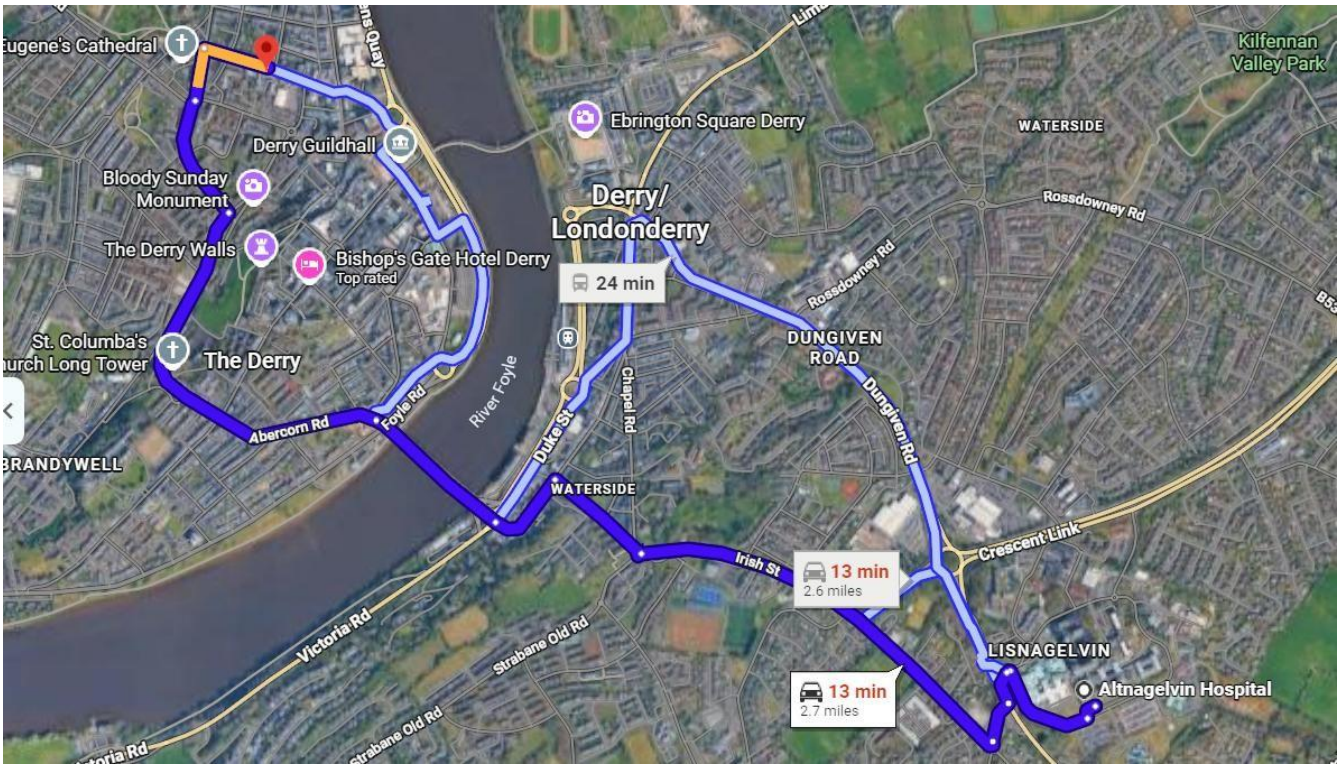
**Glenshane Road,**

**Derry,**

**BT47 6SB**

**Tel: 028 7134 5171**

THE NORTH WEST ACADEMY of ENGLISH




## Appendix B – Annual health and safety assurance checklist

| Check | Status | Action / evidence |
|---|---|---|
| **Policy approved, signed and accessible to staff.** | ☑Complete ☐ N/A | October 2026 - FG |
| **Organisation and named role-holders confirmed.** | ☑Complete ☐ N/A | Operational clarification received - FG |
| **Risk assessment register reviewed; significant assessments current.** | ☑Complete ☐ N/A | October 2026 - FG |
| **Fire risk assessment and emergency arrangements confirmed.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | Reviewed October – 2026 - LB |
| **Fire drills/emergency exercises completed at risk-assessed intervals and actions closed.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | Reviewed October – 2026 – LB/FG |
| **First-aid needs assessment, first-aid kit checks and training current.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | Operational clarification received - FG |
| **Incident/near-miss/RIDDOR records reviewed for trends.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **DSE arrangements include office and relevant home/hybrid working.** | ☐ Complete ☐ N/A | To be confirmed - FG |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Electrical/work equipment maintenance and inspection arrangements checked.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **COSHH inventory and assessments checked where relevant.** | ☐ Complete ☑ N/A | |
| **PPE arrangements checked where relevant.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **Lone-working controls reviewed.** | ☑Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **Student trips/work placements and relevant activities reviewed.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **Contractor controls and landlord interfaces reviewed.** | ☑ Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **Asbestos information/register confirmed before maintenance works.** | ☐ Complete ☑ N/A | Building infrastructure built post 2000 |
| **Staff consultation completed and actions recorded.** | ☐ Complete ☑ N/A | |
| **Training/induction records reviewed.** | ☑Complete ☐ N/A | |
| **Outstanding health and safety actions reported to senior management/Board.** | ☐ Complete ☑ N/A | |

**We, the undersigned, have received a copy of the above policy, have read, understand and are committed to abiding by the policy.**

| NAME: | SIGNATURE: | DATE: |
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THE NORTH WEST ACADEMY of ENGLISH