

Health & Safety Policy

Ensuring Physical and Psychological Safety for the SENbetweeners Community

Policy Administration	Details
Version	1.0
Effective Date	June 2026
Review Date	June 2027
Lead Authority	Board of Trustees / DSL

1. Policy Statement

SENbetweeners Hub UK is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children, young people, staff, and volunteers. We recognize that our community—primarily children with undiagnosed, hidden, or emerging Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) challenges—requires a heightened focus on both physical and psychological safety.

This policy establishes our framework for managing risks across all operational areas, including digital platforms, community workshops, and engagement within mainstream schools and alternative educational provisions (AEPs). We adhere strictly to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2. Statutory Compliance Framework

This policy is maintained in accordance with the following UK legislative requirements:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025).
- The Children Act 1989, 2004, and 2023.
- SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Equality Act 2010 (Reasonable Adjustments Duty).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Board of Trustees

The Board holds overall legal responsibility for health and safety, ensuring adequate resources are allocated for training, insurance, and risk mitigation.

3.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL,  Person, is responsible for integrating safeguarding with health and safety, particularly regarding the psychological well-being of vulnerable children.

3.3 Staff and Volunteers

All team members must take reasonable care of their own and others' safety, report hazards immediately, and follow the Assess → Plan → Do → Review cycle for all activities.

4. Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) Framework

SENbetweeners Hub UK utilizes Dynamic Risk Assessments to address the fluid nature of working with neurodivergent individuals and digital environments.

4.1 Events and Workshops

- **Pre-Event Audit:** Physical sites must be assessed for sensory triggers (noise, lighting, crowding) alongside traditional hazards.
- **On-Site Adjustment:** Staff are empowered to modify activities in real-time if a child displays signs of sensory overload or distress.
- **Ratio Management:** Staffing levels are determined by the complexity of needs, not just numerical age.

4.2 Digital Activities

- **Moderation:** All digital platforms are moderated within 24 working hours to prevent cyberbullying or the spread of misinformation.
- **Psychological Safety:** Digital resources must be "neurodiversity-friendly"—clear, predictable, and free from overwhelming content.
- **Boundaries:** No unmonitored one-to-one digital contact is permitted between staff and young people.

5. Working with Vulnerable Children

5.1 Physical Safety and Sensory Needs

We recognize that children with undiagnosed SEN may lack typical danger awareness.

- **Environment:** Spaces must be secured to prevent "bolting" or accidental injury.
- **Equipment:** Any sensory or fidget toys used must meet UK safety standards and be checked for recall notifications.

5.2 Psychological Safety and Trauma-Informed Care

- **Validation:** Staff must never mistake behavior linked to unmet needs for "bad behavior".
- **Crisis Prevention:** We prioritize early intervention to prevent "masking" from escalating into burnout or suicidal crisis.
- **De-escalation:** Use of low-arousal techniques is mandatory before any physical intervention is considered.

6. Working in Schools and Alternative Provisions (AEPs)

When operating within external educational settings, SENbetweeners Hub UK staff will:

- **Standardized Alignment:** Follow the "Attendance Banding Framework" to map health and safety risks to student absence and engagement.
- **Dual Compliance:** Adhere to both this policy and the host institution's health and safety protocols.
- **Safe Transitions:** Ensure dynamic assessments cover the transition between mainstream environments and Hub-supported activities, focusing on EBSA (Emotional-Based School Avoidance) triggers.

7. Emergency and Incident Procedures

7.1 First Aid and Medical Crisis

- At least one Level 2 Safeguarding and First Aid trained staff member must be present at in-person events.
- For home-educated students in crisis, staff must follow the **Immediate Escalation Checklist** (notifying DSL and SENCO where applicable).

7.2 Incident Reporting

All accidents, near-misses, and instances of significant psychological distress must be recorded in the Hub's central Risk Register within 24 hours.

8. Legal Statement

This policy constitutes a formal commitment by SENbetweeners Hub UK to meet its statutory duties under UK Law. Failure by staff to adhere to these protocols may result in disciplinary action. This policy does not replace clinical or medical advice; in the event of a medical emergency, emergency services must be contacted immediately.

Approved By:  Person

Role: Head of Governance / DSL

Date:  Date