First Aid Policy

Policy owner: Rosie Aylward, Director
Effective from: 18 September 2026
Updated: 01.10.26
Review cycle: At least annually, and sooner following material change or learning
Next scheduled review: 01.10.27
Status: Approved operational policy

1. Purpose and Core Standard

Compass Learning & Education is committed to ensuring that appropriate first-aid and emergency medical arrangements are established for all learners, staff and other individuals affected by its activities.

As an outreach alternative education provider, Compass delivers education, mentoring and therapeutic interventions across learners' homes, schools, partner premises, community locations and outdoor settings.

Compass does not operate a permanent education centre. First-aid arrangements are therefore assessed and agreed individually for every placement, taking account of the learner's needs, the delivery environment, the nature of the activities and the safety of staff.

Core Standard

No placement or activity will commence unless appropriate and proportionate first-aid arrangements have been identified, risk assessed, documented and confirmed as available.

Compass practitioners are not routinely responsible for administering first aid, managing medical conditions or administering medication. These responsibilities are allocated to appropriately identified individuals or services through the learner's programme plan and associated risk assessments.

In a life-threatening emergency, practitioners must contact emergency services immediately, without awaiting management authorisation, and follow the instructions provided.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, tutors, mentors, therapists, contractors, agency staff and volunteers delivering services on behalf of Compass.
- Learners receiving Compass services, including children, young people and adult learners aged 18–25.
- Education, tuition, mentoring, psychotherapy, counselling and other approved learning activities.
- Home-based, school-based, community, outdoor, partner-venue and online delivery, where relevant.
- Accidents, injuries, sudden illness and medical emergencies involving learners or practitioners.

The policy must be read alongside:

- Health, Safety and Lone Working Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Missing Learner and Absence Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Individual learner risk assessments
- Healthcare plans and programme plans, where applicable

3. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, where applicable.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005, where applicable.
- Health and Safety Executive guidance on first aid at work.
- Department for Education Non-school Alternative Provision: Voluntary National Standards (2025).

Compass recognises that its first-aid responsibilities extend to ensuring suitable arrangements for its workers and to managing reasonably foreseeable risks to learners and others affected by its activities.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Director

Rosie Aylward, Director, holds overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate first-aid and emergency arrangements are in place.

The Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring a first-aid needs assessment is undertaken for every placement and delivery location.
- Confirming that appropriate first-aid arrangements are identified before provision commences.
- Ensuring that significant medical needs are considered during placement planning.
- Confirming the availability and competence of any identified first-aid provider where necessary.
- Ensuring practitioners receive relevant medical and emergency information before deployment.
- Maintaining appropriate accident and incident reporting arrangements.
- Investigating significant incidents and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- Considering reporting requirements under RIDDOR.
- Suspending provision where essential first-aid or medical arrangements are absent.

4.2 Programme Lead

The Programme Lead is responsible for coordinating the operational implementation of agreed arrangements, including:

- Ensuring practitioners have access to relevant programme plans and risk assessments.
- Confirming that named emergency contacts and first-aid arrangements are available.
- Receiving reports of accidents, injuries and medical incidents.
- Escalating serious incidents immediately to the Director.
- Supporting communication with commissioners, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

- Ensuring changes to first-aid arrangements are referred for review before further delivery.

4.3 Tutors, Mentors and Therapists

All practitioners are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding the relevant learner, location and activity risk assessments.
- Familiarising themselves with the agreed first-aid and emergency arrangements before each placement.
- Identifying how to contact emergency services and obtain assistance.
- Checking that required first-aid arrangements are available before commencing a session.
- Reporting any change in medical needs, venue arrangements or identified risks.
- Contacting the named responsible adult or first-aid provider when minor injuries occur.
- Calling 999 immediately where there is a threat to life.
- Following emergency-service instructions within their practical capabilities.
- Reporting and recording accidents, injuries, medical incidents and near misses.
- Refusing to commence or continuing to suspend activity where essential safety controls are missing.

Practitioners must not undertake planned clinical or medication-related responsibilities unless these have been separately authorised, supported by appropriate training and competency arrangements, and reflected in an approved change to the relevant procedures.

5. First-Aid Needs Assessment

Prior to the commencement of every placement, Compass completes a first-aid needs assessment as part of its individual learner and location risk-assessment process.

The assessment considers:

- The learner's age, SEND, physical needs, communication needs and relevant medical history.
- Known medical conditions, including allergies, epilepsy, diabetes and other conditions requiring emergency intervention.
- Risks associated with behavioural, emotional or psychological needs.
- The type of learning or therapeutic activity taking place.
- The delivery location and access to emergency medical assistance.
- Whether a parent, responsible adult, school employee or qualified first-aider will be available.
- First-aid equipment and facilities available at the location.
- Risks arising from lone working.
- The potential for a practitioner to become ill or injured.
- Additional risks associated with outdoor, practical or community activities.
- Emergency communication and ambulance access.

The assessment must identify:

- The individual or organisation responsible for providing first aid.
- The location and accessibility of first-aid equipment.
- The procedure for obtaining medical assistance.
- Emergency contact arrangements.
- Any specific medical controls required for the placement.

These arrangements must be documented within the location risk assessment and the learner's programme plan before delivery begins.

Assessments are reviewed following an incident, a change in medical needs, a change of delivery location or any other significant change affecting the safety of the placement.

6. First-Aid Arrangements by Delivery Setting

6.1 Home-Based Provision

For education, mentoring or therapeutic services delivered within a learner's home:

- The programme plan will identify the parent, responsible adult or other agreed provider holding first-aid responsibility.
- For learners under 18, an agreed responsible adult will normally remain within the property, unless an alternative arrangement has been expressly approved in accordance with the Health, Safety and Lone Working Policy.
- Where significant medical needs are identified, the parent or specifically approved responsible adult must remain present throughout the session.
- The responsible adult must be able to access any necessary medication and obtain emergency medical support.
- Minor injuries will ordinarily be referred to the identified responsible adult.
- Compass practitioners will not undertake routine first-aid or medication administration.

The presence of a parent or responsible adult does not remove Compass's duty to ensure suitable first-aid arrangements for its workers. Where workers identify they have a significant health need, this will be risk assessed before placing them on an assignment.

Where required first-aid arrangements cannot be confirmed, the session must not commence.

6.2 School-Based Provision

When Compass delivers services on school premises:

- The school will ordinarily provide first-aid arrangements in accordance with the agreed placement plan.
- Compass will confirm the school's first-aid procedures, named contact and access to first-aid facilities before delivery.

- Practitioners will follow the school's procedures for reporting injuries and requesting assistance.
- The school and Compass will agree their respective responsibilities for recording and communicating incidents.

Where a learner has significant medical needs, the school's medical support arrangements and any additional responsible-adult requirements must be expressly agreed and recorded before the placement commences.

6.3 Community and Partner Venues

For provision delivered in community centres, libraries, partner premises and other approved locations:

- Compass will confirm whether the venue provides first-aid support.
- The venue's first-aid facilities, responsible personnel and emergency procedures will be identified during the location risk assessment.
- Where venue first aid is unavailable or insufficient, alternative arrangements must be agreed before the session.
- Practitioners must know how to obtain assistance and access emergency services.

The existence of a first-aid kit alone does not demonstrate that suitable first-aid provision has been established.

6.4 Outdoor and Practical Activities

Activities involving increased risk, including outdoor learning, cooking, vocational activities, sport or community-based practical work, will require an activity-specific risk assessment.

The assessment will identify:

- Foreseeable injuries or medical emergencies.
- The availability of suitable first-aid support.
- The need for appropriately trained personnel.
- Suitable equipment and communication arrangements.
- Ambulance access and location information.
- Any additional supervision requirements.

Higher-risk activities will not proceed unless suitable first-aid arrangements are confirmed and available throughout the activity.

6.5 Online Provision

Where Compass delivers services online, the learner's programme plan will identify appropriate arrangements for contacting the learner, parent/carer or emergency services if a medical emergency arises.

For learners with significant medical needs, the agreed responsible adult must be physically present with the learner during the session.

Practitioners must report any medical emergency or serious welfare concern arising during online provision and follow the agreed escalation arrangements.

7. Learners with Medical Conditions

Compass recognises that some learners may have medical conditions requiring additional planning and emergency arrangements.

Relevant medical information is obtained during the commissioning and admission process, with appropriate consent and information-sharing arrangements.

Where a significant medical need is identified, Compass will agree a written healthcare and risk-management plan with the commissioner, parent/carer and learner, as appropriate.

This plan will identify:

- The learner's relevant medical condition and associated risks.
- Symptoms, triggers and warning signs.
- Any prescribed medication or emergency treatment.
- The individual responsible for medication and medical intervention.
- The arrangements for responding to deterioration or a medical emergency.
- Emergency contacts and escalation procedures.
- Any reasonable adjustments required to support safe participation.

Where a significant medical need is identified, a parent or an alternative responsible adult approved in writing by Compass must remain present and immediately available throughout the session.

This requirement applies to home, community, outdoor and partner-venue provision.

Where delivery takes place in school, Compass will follow the arrangements as dictated by the school in the young person's healthcare plan, which may not necessarily require a responsible adult to be present. .

An alternative responsible adult may only replace the parent where:

- The parent has provided prior written notification and consent.
- Compass has approved the arrangement before the session.
- The adult understands the learner's medical needs.
- The adult is competent to carry out the agreed medical responsibilities.
- The adult has access to any necessary medication or equipment.

Where the learner is aged 18 or over, appropriate consent and capacity arrangements must also be considered in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Compass will not proceed with delivery if required medical supervision, medication or essential controls are absent.

8. Medication

Compass practitioners are not routinely authorised to administer, prepare or manage medication on behalf of learners.

Responsibility for routine medication and planned emergency medication will remain with the parent, approved responsible adult, school or other identified competent provider, as recorded in the healthcare plan.

This includes medication associated with conditions such as severe allergies, epilepsy or diabetes.

Practitioners must not independently administer medication outside their authorised responsibilities.

If a life-threatening medical emergency occurs, practitioners must call 999 immediately and follow the instructions of the emergency-service call handler, explaining any limitation in their training, ability or practical circumstances.

Compass will review any proposal for staff to undertake medication responsibilities separately, including training, competency, consent, insurance, risk assessment and the required changes to organisational procedures.

9. Responding to Accidents and Medical Emergencies

9.1 Minor Injuries

Examples may include minor cuts, grazes or bruises that do not require urgent medical intervention.

Where a minor injury occurs, practitioners must:

1. Ensure the immediate environment is safe.
2. Contact the parent, responsible adult, school first-aider or named first-aid provider identified in the programme plan.
3. Arrange for the individual holding first-aid responsibility to assess and respond to the injury.
4. Notify the Programme Lead or Director as appropriate.
5. Complete the required incident record.

Practitioners are not expected to provide routine first aid unless this is an expressly authorised part of their role.

9.2 Serious Injury or Medical Emergency

Examples include:

- Unconsciousness or significantly reduced responsiveness.
- Serious breathing difficulties.
- Suspected cardiac arrest.
- Severe bleeding.
- Suspected stroke or heart attack.
- A severe allergic reaction.
- A prolonged seizure or other potentially life-threatening medical deterioration.
- A serious injury involving suspected immediate danger to life.

In any life-threatening emergency, practitioners must call 999 immediately.

The following procedure must be followed:

1. **Assess safety:** Identify immediate dangers and avoid exposing yourself or others to further harm.

2. **Call 999:** Provide the exact location, the nature of the emergency and relevant information about the person affected.
3. **Follow instructions:** Remain on the line as directed and follow the emergency-service call handler's instructions within your practical capabilities.
4. **Obtain assistance:** Alert the named responsible adult or first-aid provider if they are available, without delaying the emergency call.
5. **Support access:** Help emergency responders locate and access the person.
6. **Notify Compass:** Contact the Programme Lead or Director as soon as it is safe to do so.
7. **Inform relevant contacts:** Ensure parents/carers, commissioners or other appropriate contacts are notified in accordance with the learner's age, consent, risk and agreed arrangements.
8. **Record the incident:** Complete a factual incident report within 24 hours.

Staff must not delay emergency assistance while awaiting permission from Compass management or the learner's parent/carer.

9.3 Emergency Involving a Practitioner

Where a practitioner becomes seriously ill or injured while working:

- Emergency services must be contacted where necessary.
- Compass's lone-working monitoring and escalation procedures will apply.
- The monitoring contact will coordinate appropriate assistance where the practitioner is unable to communicate.
- Compass will ensure the learner's immediate safety and arrange appropriate handover or support.

The safety of both practitioner and learner must be considered when determining any subsequent response.

10. First-Aid Equipment

First-aid equipment must be appropriate to the risk assessment and accessible during the session.

Depending on the location, this may be provided by:

- The school or host venue.
- The parent or agreed responsible adult.
- An approved external first-aid provider.
- Compass, where the risk assessment identifies a need for equipment under its control.

Where Compass supplies equipment, responsibility for checking, replenishing and maintaining it must be allocated to an identified individual.

Where equipment is provided by another organisation, Compass will obtain reasonable assurance that the arrangements are adequate.

Practitioners must report any absence, damage or deficiency in equipment required by the placement plan.

Where required first-aid equipment or provision is unavailable, the session will be postponed, relocated or suspended until suitable arrangements are established.

11. Infection Prevention and Control

Compass will take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of infection during education and therapeutic activities.

Practitioners must:

- Follow appropriate hand hygiene procedures.
- Use suitable cleaning arrangements for shared learning resources.
- Avoid direct contact with blood or bodily fluids.
- Report any exposure to blood or bodily fluids promptly.
- Follow venue procedures for cleaning, hygiene and disposal.
- Avoid undertaking cleaning or handling tasks requiring specialist protective equipment or training unless appropriately authorised.

Where blood, bodily fluids or other potentially infectious materials are present, practitioners should secure the immediate area where safe and seek assistance from an appropriately trained and equipped person.

Any significant exposure or related incident must be reported to Compass, and appropriate medical advice obtained.

12. Accident and Incident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, significant medical events and relevant near misses must be reported to Compass.

12.1 Immediate Reporting

Practitioners must telephone the Programme Lead or Rosie Aylward, Director, as soon as practicable following an incident.

Serious incidents must be reported immediately once emergency assistance has been obtained and it is safe to do so.

Where the Programme Lead is unavailable, the practitioner must contact the Director directly.

12.2 Written Reporting

A factual written incident report must be submitted within 24 hours through the secure reporting route identified during induction.

The record must include:

- Date, time and location.
- Name of the individual affected.
- Description of the incident.
- Nature of any injury or medical emergency.

- Immediate action taken.
- Details of first aid provided and by whom, where known.
- Emergency services contacted, where applicable.
- Witnesses.
- Parents/carers, commissioners or professionals notified.
- Any immediate changes required to the risk assessment.

Sensitive medical and incident information must not be shared through routine operational WhatsApp check-in messages.

Where an incident also raises safeguarding concerns, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed, including the required safeguarding recording and escalation procedures.

12.3 RIDDOR

The Director will assess incidents against the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Where an incident is reportable, Compass will identify the legally responsible reporting person and coordinate with the relevant host organisation or self-employed practitioner where appropriate.

Applicable reporting deadlines will be followed, including:

- Notification without delay and submission within 10 days for most reportable accidents.
- Reporting within 15 days for qualifying over-seven-day worker incapacitation incidents.

RIDDOR records will be retained for at least three years. Other accident and medical records will be managed in accordance with Compass's data retention arrangements.

13. Communication with Parents and Commissioners

Compass will ensure that parents/carers and commissioners are informed of accidents and medical incidents in a timely and proportionate manner.

The urgency and method of communication will depend on:

- The seriousness of the incident.
- The learner's age and consent arrangements.
- Any immediate safeguarding or medical risk.
- The learner's programme plan.
- Relevant contractual reporting requirements.

For serious incidents, communication will take place as soon as practicable following the immediate emergency response.

Where further action is required, Compass will liaise with the family, commissioner and relevant professionals to agree appropriate next steps.

14. Training and Staff Induction

Compass will ensure that practitioners receive information appropriate to their role and identified risks before deployment.

Induction will cover:

- The organisation's first-aid arrangements.
- The limits of practitioners' responsibilities.
- Emergency procedures and contacting 999.
- Learner-specific healthcare and risk-management plans.
- Identifying and contacting the named first-aid provider.
- Accident and incident reporting.
- Lone-working emergency arrangements.
- Infection prevention and control.

Where a risk assessment identifies that a trained first-aider is required, Compass will verify that suitable provision is available during the actual delivery period.

Where Compass specifically appoints a practitioner to undertake first-aid duties, the required training and competence must be confirmed and recorded.

First-aid certificates and relevant training records will be monitored, with renewal requirements identified where applicable.

15. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Medical incidents involving learners may also raise safeguarding concerns.

Practitioners must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy where there are concerns about:

- Neglect or failure to provide necessary medical care.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Deliberate injury or suspected abuse.
- Self-harm or immediate risk of significant harm.
- Unsafe arrangements for a learner with medical needs.

Immediate danger must be referred to emergency services without delay.

Information relating to medical conditions, injuries and treatment is confidential and must be handled in accordance with Compass's Data Protection Policy.

Information should only be shared with individuals who have a legitimate need to know, including emergency responders, responsible adults, commissioners or safeguarding professionals where appropriate and lawful.

Medical information and incident records will be held securely with restricted access.

16. Monitoring, Review and Quality Assurance

The Director is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of first-aid arrangements.

This will include:

- Checking first-aid provision during placement approval.
- Reviewing incidents, accidents and near misses.
- Reviewing the adequacy of healthcare and risk-management plans.
- Monitoring the suitability of school, partner and community arrangements.
- Identifying additional staff training requirements.
- Ensuring risk assessments are updated where necessary.
- Checking that required changes are implemented before affected provision resumes.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a significant incident, change in legislation, change in service delivery or identification of an operational concern.

Appendix A: First-Aid Arrangements Checklist

To be completed as part of placement planning and location risk assessment.

Requirement	Confirmation
Learner's medical needs have been considered	☐
Individual risk assessment completed	☐
Location and activity risks assessed	☐
Named individual/organisation responsible for first aid identified	☐
Required first-aid training/competence confirmed	☐
Appropriate first-aid equipment accessible	☐
Parent/responsible-adult arrangements confirmed where required	☐
Healthcare plan completed where applicable	☐
Emergency medication arrangements confirmed where applicable	☐
Emergency contacts available	☐
Ambulance access and exact location confirmed	☐
Practitioner understands emergency arrangements	☐
Arrangements documented in programme plan	☐
Outstanding concerns resolved before delivery	☐

Placement approved by: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Emergency Response Procedure

Medical emergency identified

1. Check immediate safety and assess whether there is a threat to life.
2. If life-threatening, call **999 immediately** and follow emergency-service instructions.
3. If not life-threatening, obtain assistance from the named first-aid provider or responsible adult. Seek appropriate medical advice where needed.
4. Notify the Programme Lead or Director as soon as safe.
5. Inform parents/carers, commissioners and relevant professionals as appropriate.
6. Submit an incident report through the approved secure route within 24 hours.
7. Review the risk assessment and any required controls before further delivery.

Important: No practitioner should delay calling emergency services to obtain permission from Compass management.