



West Oxford Community Association

Health and Safety Policy

Approved by WOCA Committee: February 2012
Date of next review: February 2015

Introduction

Management of health and safety is an integral part of how we work and is given the highest priority. Compliance with health and safety legislation is regarded as the minimum standard to be adhered to: our aim is to minimise the number of accidents and work-related illness to the lowest level practicable.

We accept our responsibility for providing a clean and safe environment in which all our people can work. It is our duty to take whatever reasonable measures are necessary for accident and fire prevention and to protect the health, safety and welfare of our employees, volunteers, customers, contractors and visitors to our premises.

We can only make this policy work with the full co-operation and understanding of all our employees. We all need to ensure we carry out our work in a safe manner. All employees and workers have responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and should report any potential risk (such as faulty equipment or process) to the appropriate manager, and follow all health and safety instructions that may affect them, their colleagues or the public.

Any neglect of health and safety requirements will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter. Where an action or neglect is so dangerous as to constitute gross misconduct, the employee concerned will be liable to summary dismissal and even prosecution.

We will endeavour to ensure that all equipment is safe, and will provide personal protective equipment if necessary. So far as is reasonably practicable we will also ensure that our people are given whatever training is necessary to understand the equipment they work with and to be aware of any potential risks to them.

Information will be provided to employees about particular hazards or dangerous substances related to their jobs. Safety notices throughout the workplace will be clear and prominent.

Organisation and responsibilities

Chair of WOCA Management Committee

The Chair of WOCA Management Committee is ultimately responsible for ensuring that:

- the proper operating practices and procedures to prevent injury are adhered to and encouraged
- all management are aware of their roles and responsibilities in all health and safety matters
- adequate resources are allocated to meet the requirements of this policy as regards instruction, information, supervision and/or training

The WOCA Management Committee

The WOCA Management Committee are responsible for:

- monitoring and auditing our health and safety procedures and working practices to ensure they are upheld and that we continually strive to make progressive improvements in health and safety

- the maintenance of safety records, investigation of accidents, provision of accident statistics and keeping a watching brief on safety legislation. The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring that notifiable occurrences and accidents are reported under RIDDOR.
- conducting, maintaining and updating our risk assessments, reviewing our working practices and assessing any risks to the health and safety of our employees (or of visitors to our premises) arising out of the performance of their duties
- ensuring our obligations in respect of our COSHH assessment, control and monitoring of hazardous substances are met
- ensuring that our Fire Risk Assessment is complete and up to date, that fire fighting equipment is inspected and serviced at least annually and records are kept and employees trained to use these properly, that fire drills and inspections take place on a regular basis, that any remedial action is taken to ensure quick and safe evacuation, and that the appropriate number of fire wardens are "in post" and fully trained
- ensuring that separate risk assessments are done for pregnant workers and any young people who work for us
- ensuring that our obligations in respect of assessment, control and monitoring of the workplace, work equipment, manual handling operations, personal protective equipment and display screen equipment are met
- ensuring that prompt action is taken regarding any reported damaged or defective equipment

The Centre Manager

The Centre Manager will:

- ensure that each new employee is given induction training which covers the precautions and procedures appropriate to his/her specific job and are given a copy of our health and safety policy and any safety rules applicable to their jobs; told of the procedures for reporting accidents; made familiar with the routine in case of fire or other emergency that might require evacuation of the premises; shown the location of first aid boxes, fire exits and fire fighting equipment; and are introduced to the first aid personnel and fire wardens
- ensure that staff reporting to them are only allocated tasks that they are able to carry out in a safe manner and for which they have been given the appropriate information, instruction and/or training
- ensure that staff reporting to them follow our safety rules and procedures and that a good level of housekeeping is maintained
- take appropriate action with regard to all reported defects and complaints relating to health and safety
- ensure all accidents that occur in the workplace are recorded, using the appropriate form
- ensure that the proper operating practices and procedures to prevent injury are adhered to and encouraged, and also that they themselves set a good example in safe behaviour
- keep up to date with health and safety matters applicable to our operation

All employees

All employees have a responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves, their fellow workers and others affected by their actions or omissions at work. They are required to:

- ensure they are aware of all their responsibilities regarding health and safety
- follow safe working practices and not remove or alter any safety devices on equipment
- record all accidents or injuries or "near misses" that occur in the workplace, using our Accident Report form, and seek first aid treatment where appropriate
- inform the Centre Manager of any serious or imminent danger and report any shortcomings that they see in the safety arrangements
- seek guidance if they are in any doubt concerning any health and safety issue
- follow our general safety rules and maintain a good system of housekeeping, including keeping workspaces tidy
- inform any visitors with whom they are meeting of any health and safety risks and precautions they must take

Authority to stop work

All members of the Management Committee have the authority to stop dangerous or illegal practices and, if necessary, to require workers to stop work.

Safety information

The Health and Safety at Work poster is displayed in the Community Centre office.

All accidents should be recorded in the Accident Book which is also kept in the Community Centre office along with copies of our risk assessments, COSHH assessment and fire regulations and evacuation procedures. All workers are instructed to read these carefully and to know what to do in the event of a fire.

The first aid box is also kept in the Community Centre office. Workers are requested to inform the Centre Manager if any replacement items are needed. Our first aiders are fully trained and should be contacted in the event that an employee requires first aid treatment.

Smoking

Our premises are designated "no smoking" areas and this must be observed at all times by all employees and visitors. Failure on the part of employees to comply with this request may lead to disciplinary action.

Alcohol and illegal drugs

Illegal drugs are not allowed onto our premises. Any employee who is found with these substances or whose ability to work is impaired due to alcohol or illegal drugs may be suspended and subject to disciplinary action.

We currently do not undertake any routine or random testing for drugs or alcohol.

Pregnant women and those of child bearing age

A separate risk assessment covering pregnant women and those of child bearing age is regularly reviewed by the Centre Manager. Once we are informed that an employee is pregnant or is breast-feeding, a specific risk assessment will be undertaken for that individual. All necessary steps will be taken to reduce any risk to the employee or her child.

Young workers

A specific risk assessment will be carried out before employing a young person (any person who has not attained the age of 18). In particular, we will consider the inexperience, lack of awareness or risks and immaturity of young persons; the fitting-out and layout of the workplace and workstations; the nature, degree and duration of exposure to physical, biological and chemical agents; the form, range and use of work equipment and the way it is used; the organisation of processes and activities; the required training as regards health and safety and other specified risks.

Manual handling

All reasonable effort is made to limit the need for manual handling, however, where necessary, employees will be provided with information and training on safe handling.

VDU users

Regular risk assessments are carried out for those employees who use VDUs on a regular basis and reasonable measures taken to reduce the risk of repetitive strain injury. In addition, training will be provided on the safe use of the equipment, and an assessment of each workstation undertaken. We will meet the cost of regular eyesight tests and also the provision of spectacles for VDU use where these are deemed necessary. Additional information is provided in a separate VDU users policy.

Security

All reasonable efforts are made to provide secure premises and to ensure that staff can enter and leave our premises safely.

Access to any potentially hazardous areas is limited to authorised persons.

When leaving work at the end of a shift, employees are responsible for locking away confidential documents or valuable items.

Anyone working on site or alone on our premises should be made aware of our lone workers policy and ensure that they comply with the safety rules relating to them.

Implementation, monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will take effect from February 2012 and replaces the existing Health and Safety policy implemented in 2004.