



# Health & Safety Manual

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**Section 1: Introduction and responsibilities**

## **Health & Safety introduction**

Wycombe Youth Action will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems for all employees, volunteers and visitors. Wycombe Youth Action will manage the risks and hazards its clients and volunteers, many of whom are under the age of eighteen, face when working for the charity, more often than not by appropriate levels of training and supervision.

Staff, volunteers and visitors are responsible for ensuring that they do not endanger the health and safety of others.

The allocation of duties for safety and the detailed arrangements for their implementation are set out below. These arrangements will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain relevant.

The management committee of Wycombe Youth Action will undertake to co-operate fully with the Environmental Health Department of Wycombe District Council and with the Health & Safety Executive (Home Counties) and if required will provide them with facilities and information to enable them to carry out their work.

A copy of this statement will be issued to all members of staff including volunteers, who must confirm by signature that it has been received, read understood and complied with. The Health & Safety Policy will be worked through during any induction process. A copy of this statement will be kept on file in the Wycombe Youth Action office and online on the BreatheHR system, and be available on request.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Wycombe Youth Action Trustees and the General Manager are ultimately responsible for Health & Safety matters. It is the Chairman's responsibility for the implementation of WYA's policy. In particular, she is responsible for ensuring that its effectiveness is monitored.

It is the General Manager's responsibility to ensure the policy is circulated and read by staff, and that they adhere to the day-to-day implementation of this policy. The responsibilities include Accident reporting, Fire Precautions, Buildings and Office Environment and providing information, advice recommendations and guidance on all aspects of Health & Safety in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

WYA requires that the General Manager approaches health and safety in a systematic way, by identifying hazards and problems, planning improvements, taking executive action and monitoring results so that the majority of health and safety needs will be met as part of the day-to-day management, although many health and safety problems can be rectified at little additional cost.

All employees, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to co-operate fully with the WYA Management Committee and the General Manager to ensure a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

If a Health & Safety problem is brought to the attention of the General Manager which cannot be immediately rectified, then the details will be logged, and action will be taken as soon as reasonably possible.

## **The Board of Trustees/Management Committee**

The Board of Trustees/Management Committee of Wycombe Youth Action recognises that the building and our programme and activities should be as safe as is reasonably possible. This includes identifying hazards and quantifying any associated risks.

The Board of Trustees/Management Committee will:

- Identify the risk assessments to be undertaken and delegate the responsibility of carrying out those assessments to The Safety Officer.
- Ensure that once risk assessments have been completed, preventative measures are evaluated, and improvements are made if necessary.
- Make sure employees and volunteers are trained appropriately.
- Make sure improvements to premises/activities/events/trips are made when needed.

The delegated person will make sure that:

- Risk assessments are carried out at regular intervals and for all new activities;
- The completed assessments are stored in the Health and Safety file;
- Staffing ratios of leaders to young people are adequate and DBS checks are in place if required.

### **Definitions:**

**HAZARD** – anything that can cause harm

**RISK** – the chances that (very high, high, medium or low) someone will be harmed by a hazard

### **Safety Officer**

The Safety Officer is a nominated manager responsible for co-ordinating effective health and safety policies and controls across the organisation. In WYA, unless stated otherwise, this is the General Manager, Nicola Workman.

The Safety Officer is responsible for:

- the production and maintenance of WYA's policy;

- its application, including ensuring the monthly, quarterly and annual checks are completed;
- monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the policy;
- the identification of health and safety training needs. The Safety Officer also acts on behalf of the Chief Executive, as WYA's formal link with the Health & Safety Executive, Environment Health Departments and other external agencies;
- the production and maintenance of Health & Safety Codes of Practice for all activities run by WYA.

## **Roles**

- Safety Officer: Nicola Workman, General Manager
- First Aider: Nicola Workman, General Manager
- Trustee overseeing Health & Safety: Nicola Workman, General Manager, Haseeb Nawaz, Assistant Manager, Yasmin Harris, Senior Project Officer

## **Training**

Health & Safety training shall be given to the Safety Officer, to equip them with an understanding of the responsibilities under this policy, and the role and purpose of safety representatives.

The Safety Officer will provide training to all members of staff to acquaint them with the main provisions of the law and its practical implication, the main features of this policy and key safety rules.

The Safety Officer will also give induction training for new staff and volunteers to acquaint them fully with the requirements and hazards.

## **Specialist Advisory Bodies**

If further specialist advice is required, this may be obtained by Managers from expert individuals or bodies outside WYA.

## **Records, Statistics and Monitoring**

WYA will operate systems for recording, analysis and presentation of information about accidents, hazard situations and untoward occurrences. Advice on systems will be provided by the Safety Officer, in conjunction, where appropriate with specialist advisory bodies for example local Environmental Health Departments. Information obtained from the analysis of accident statistics must be acted upon and, where necessary, bids for additional expenditure made to the Chief Executive.



## **Reports to the Health & Safety Executive**

The responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 to the Health & Safety Executive, shall rest with the Chairman as delegated to the Safety Officer.

## **Health, Safety and Welfare Guidelines**

It shall be the responsibility of the Safety Officer to bring to the attention of all members of his or her staff, the provisions of the guidelines. The model contents of a guideline are:

- a clear statement of the role of the charity;
- regulations governing the work of the charity;
- clear reference to safe methods of working, for example lone working, working with children, dealing with violence, etc;
- information about immediate matters of health and safety concern, such as fire drills, fire exits, first aid, etc;
- accident reporting procedures;
- office safety rules;
- fire procedures;
- health and safety policies for running external groups such as youth group etc;
- policies agreed by WYA.

### **Who this policy applies to**

#### **Individual Employee**

The Health & Safety at Work Act requires each employee 'to take reasonable care for the Health & Safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by their acts and omissions' and co-operate with management to enable management to carry out their responsibilities under the Act. Employees have equal responsibility with WYA for Health & Safety at Work.

The refusal of any employee to meet their obligations will be regarded as a matter to be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure. In normal circumstances counselling of the employee should be sufficient. With a continuing problem, or where an employee leaves themselves or other employees open to risk or injury, it may be necessary to implement the formal stages of the Disciplinary Procedure.

## **People Working On Company Premises Not Employed By WYA**

Persons working in WYA premises who are not employed by WYA, are expected to follow the Health & Safety Policies with regard to the safety of Company employees, their own personal safety (and that of other parties such as the general public if appropriate) and their method of work. This responsibility will be included in contracts or working arrangements.

## **Visitors and Members of the Public**

WYA wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of visitors to Company establishments will be of the highest standard.

Any member of staff who notices persons acting in a way which would endanger other staff, should normally inform the General Manager. If the danger is immediate, common sense must be used to give warning, call for assistance or give aid as necessary. It is equally important not to over-react to a situation.

## **Contractors**

WYA wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of Contractors working in WYA's establishments will be of the highest standards. In addition, Contractors and their employees have an obligation so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure all equipment, materials and premises under their control are safe and without risks to health.

Contractors must also observe WYA's Fire Safety Procedures. These obligations will be drawn to the attention of the Contractors in the contract document issued to them. In addition, the General Manager will be identified in the contract as having authority to stop the work of Contractors who are placing themselves, other staff, or visitors at risk. Any member of staff who judges there is a risk where contractors are working, should inform the General Manager immediately.

In tendering, Contractors will be asked to confirm they have a written Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. WYA's Manager will be responsible for monitoring the Health & Safety performance of the Contractor and the Contractor's performance will be a factor in deciding whether or not to invite the Contractor to tender again.

## **Section 2: The building/office space**

## **Buildings and Office Environment**

As part of its general duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees, WYA will provide and maintain a working environment that is, so far as is reasonably practical, safe and without risk to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees and volunteers at work.

WYA recognises its responsibility to try and make its buildings and services as accessible as possible and will positively seek to improve access as well as health and safety in any alterations to its premises or working practices.

### **Building Faults and Repairs**

WYA is required under the Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 to provide a working environment that is in good repair. All Staff, volunteers and visitors are required to report any faults to the structure or fittings of the to the General Manager, who will contact the Landlord.

### **Space**

Staff and volunteers habitually employed to work in the office on a part- or full-time basis must have a minimum space of 3.7 square metres of floor space and 11 cubic metres of air spaces. The general and overriding consideration is the duty to avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions.

### **Temperature**

During working hours, the temperature in all indoor workplaces must be reasonable.

There's no law for minimum or maximum working temperatures, eg when it's too cold or too hot to work, however, guidance suggests a minimum of 16°C or 13°C if employees are doing physical work.

There's no guidance for a maximum temperature limit.

Employers must stick to health and safety at work law, including:

- keeping the temperature at a comfortable level;
- providing clean and fresh air.

Employees should talk to their employer if the workplace temperature isn't comfortable.

### **Noise**

Every effort should be made to minimise noise and keep it at a comfortable level.

## **Ventilation**

All work carried out in the office of WYA involving fumes, should be carried out in well ventilated areas (also see section below on control of hazardous substances).

## **Access**

All exits should be clearly marked, free from obstructions and unlocked at all times that the building is in use. Door furniture must be properly maintained, those doors which are not fire doors and which are open must be fastened safely and securely. Access to the offices and within the rooms must be facilitated by ensuring that there are not trailing wires and that passageways are kept clear of obstructions.

## **Flooring**

Slips and trips are the most common cause of non-fatal injuries in office. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 WYA is required to ensure that steps are taken to control slip and trip risks.

Floors need to be checked for loose finishes, holes and cracks.

Objects must not be left lying around as they may cause a tripping hazard. Work areas should be kept tidy and if obstructions cannot be removed, people should be warned by using a sign.

## **Safe Storage**

All items of equipment, stationary etc. must be stored in such a way that retrieval is not hazardous. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that sharp items and power tools are stored correctly and that items cannot easily be dislodged from racks or storage holders.

All chemicals and cleaning products must be kept in clearly marked containers with the lids firmly closed. They should be kept where they cannot easily be reached by children and where they will not easily be knocked over or be likely to cause a fire.

## **Step Ladders or Footstools**

When using step ladders or footstools to reach high shelves they must be placed on an even floor surface and used with appropriate footwear that gives stability whilst standing on them.

Ladders or footstools should only be used when there is a second person on hand to assist.

## **Lighting**

Adequate lighting will be provided, with supplementary lighting being made available for close work. Anyone finding lights out of order should report the fault to the administrator who will immediately log the complaint in the faults book and report the fault to the General Manager.

## **Cleanliness**

The General Manager will ensure that the office space occupied by WYA at the centre is regularly cleaned. All staff are expected to ensure that they maintain the premises in a tidy condition:

- Keeping desks clear of files, paperwork and rubbish.
- Hoovering the carpet daily, including under the desks and tables.
- Wiping the tables and desks.
- Ensuring that any spillages are mopped up and at the end of the day, all items of food and drink are properly stored or disposed of.

## **Office Equipment**

All staff, volunteers and visitors are expected to pay due care and attention when using any office equipment. Under the Workplace Health & Safety Regulations 1992, WYA has a duty to maintain office equipment, devices and systems in efficient working order. Such maintenance is required for all equipment which would cause a risk to health, safety or welfare if a fault should occur. All staff, volunteers and visitors should be familiar with any piece of office equipment before using the first time.

## **Health and safety responsibilities in rented business premises**

Depending on the contract, the health and safety responsibilities in a rented business premises belong to the tenant, and in some cases the landlord.

### **Tenant responsibilities**

As a tenant in commercial property, employing staff, WYA must ensure the workplace meets a number of basic requirements under health and safety rules. These include:

- ensuring the workplace temperature is appropriate (it should be noted that there is no legal maximum or minimum temperature although it is recommended that the temperature should be no less than 16 degrees);
- providing sufficient space, ventilation and lighting;
- providing suitable sanitation and washing facilities;
- providing drinking water;
- maintaining equipment;
- keeping the premises clean and free of waste.

WYA must carry out a health and safety risk assessment (saved in BreatheHR) on a regular basis, in the workplace and take steps to remove any hazards and potential risks.

### **Landlord responsibilities**

Landlords and commercial property managing agents may have a duty to share these responsibilities if they exercise any control over your workplace. This is particularly relevant where several businesses operate in the same building and they share the use of common areas.

If, for example, you pay a service charge for the stairs or for a lift to be cleaned and maintained and for use of toilet facilities, it's likely that your landlord will have responsibility for ensuring compliance with health and safety rules in these areas.

### **Serviced offices or business centres**

In serviced offices or business centres, your landlord may also be responsible for conducting a regular health and safety risk assessment.

Remember, however, that if the landlord does take on such responsibilities, you must check that they are fulfilling them.



You should also co-operate with other tenants in the same building on health and safety issues.

The division of these health and safety responsibilities will often be the subject of negotiation between landlords and tenants from case to case. It's important to check what's set out in the rental lease. Commercial tenancy agreements often put the onus for safety on the tenant.

## Identification of Health & Safety Hazards

Employers are required to take reasonably practicable measures to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees whilst they are at work. To do this correctly, as part of your business management process you need to know the hazards and risks present in the workplace and faced by your workers when they are working at other locations.

Regulations make this a legal requirement. To comply you need to formally assess and think about what might cause harm to people and consider whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm. Risk assessment is simply a careful and sensible way of identifying what, in your workplace, could cause harm to people.

### Risk assessments

It is the policy of WYA to require risk assessments to be made of the office and working environment;

- monthly assessments of working environment to be completed;
- monthly assessment of fire risk in the environment;
- quarterly assessments of working environment to be signed off by the Safety Officer;
- annual completion of H&S induction form and Driving for Work by all staff;
- risk assessments to be made for any lone or remote working, and of the projects/provisions whether it be youth group or another venue.

A full list of all [the risk assessments](#) available is set out at the end of this document.

The responsibility for ensuring that audit activity is carried out as part of this policy rests with the Chairman and will be carried out by the Safety Officer.

It is the Safety Officer's responsibility to ensure that any deficiencies highlighted in the assessment are dealt with as speedily as possible.

The Safety Officer has a continual responsibility for the elimination of hazards in order to maintain a safe working environment and will also be expected to carry out regular risk assessments in line with the Health & Safety Executive Guidelines; that is follow the 5 steps:

- Identify the hazards;
- Decide who might be harmed and how;
- Evaluate the Risks and decide on precautions;

- Record the findings and implement the precautions;
- Review the assessment and update when necessary.

Record your safety risk assessment findings and implement them, acting on anything that needs acting upon.

It is important to accurately record the findings of the risk assessment and to file it in one place that can easily be found, so that it can be reviewed at a later date, if for example something changes.

When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example 'Tripping over rubbish: bins provided, staff instructed, weekly housekeeping checks', or 'Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation used and regularly checked'.

A risk assessment does not need to be perfect, but it must be 'suitable and sufficient'.

### **What your records should include**

It should show that:

- a proper check was made;
- you asked who might be affected;
- you dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved;
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low;
- you involved others in the process.

### **Things to consider**

- A key part of a risk assessment is the accurate identification of potential workplace hazards:
  - Take the time to walk around your work place, thinking about and looking for hazards.
  - Consider how the activities, processes or substances could or might cause harm. Familiarity with the workplace often means that it is easy to overlook some hazards.
  - Involve and consult others in the office
  - Think about long-term hazards to health such as high levels of noise, vibration or exposure to harmful substances.
  - Don't forget to think about hazards during building maintenance.

- Who is at risk from the hazards you have identified?
  - Workforce;
  - Contractors working on the premises;
  - Visitors;
  - Expectant mothers;
  - Young workers (under 18yrs);
  - Lone workers;
  - Others working in the same building as you.
- Consider the harm that the hazards you have identified might cause to the people at risk.
- Implement any changes that need to happen to limit the hazard as quickly as possible.

## **Section 3: Staff welfare**

## **General welfare issues**

### **Workplace Facilities**

As an employer we aim to protect the safety and health of everyone in the workplace. This includes people with disabilities.

Facilities include toilets that are accessible for disabled employees and visitors, an area to wash, and clean drinking water. We have also considered the lighting, ventilation and temperature in the working environment.

### **Welfare facilities**

For our employees' well-being we provide:

- toilets and hand basins, with soap and towels or a hand-dryer;
- drinking water.

### **Healthy working environment**

To have a healthy working environment, we make sure there is:

- good ventilation - a supply of fresh, clean air drawn from outside or a ventilation system;
- a reasonable working temperature;
- lighting suitable for the work being carried out;
- enough room space and suitable workstations and seating;
- a clean workplace with appropriate waste containers.

### **Safe working environment**

To keep your workplace safe we:

- properly maintain the premises and work equipment;
- keep floors and traffic routes free from obstruction;
- have windows that can be opened and also cleaned safely;
- make sure that any transparent (eg glass) doors or walls are protected or made of safety material.

## **Food Hygiene**

Any food bought by the Charity must be responsibly stored, processed and served. Any suspected outbreak of food poisoning or other unexplained and possibly food related incidents must be reported to the Safety Officer

## **Lifting and Handling**

Managers are responsible for informing staff of safe lifting techniques. The Safety Officer will identify specific training needs and ensure it is provided to staff who require it.

## **Smoking/No Smoking**

Staff are not allowed to smoke on duty, either on or off WYA premises. This includes the use of e-cigarettes.

Staff taking a break may smoke in designated areas outside the building but are not permitted to smoke in the building.

This policy has been developed to protect all employers, services users, customers and visitors from exposure to secondhand smoke and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006.

Exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not completely stop potentially dangerous exposure.

It is the policy of WYA, that all our workplaces are smoke free, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and substantially enclosed premises in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees, consultants, contractors, customers or members and visitors.

## **Control of Working Time**

WYA is committed to the principles of the Working Time Regulations. No member of staff is expected to work more than 48 hours per week (including overtime) unless there are exceptional circumstances. Similarly, all other requirements of the regulations e.g. in relation to breaks, night workers etc. will be complied with.

## **Safety Signs**

The appropriate safety signs which are displayed to prohibit certain actions, warn of hazards, state requirements or indicate safe conditions must comply with the Safety Signs and Signals Regulations 1996 and conform to BS5378 and /or BS5499.

## **First Aid**

It is the policy of WYA to make provision for First Aid and the training of 'First Aiders' in accordance with the First Aid Regulations (1982). The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring the Regulations are implemented and for identifying training needs.

At least one member of the Wycombe Youth Action staff should hold a current First Aid at Work certificate to be renewed every three years.

It is appropriate for the General Manager and other staff members to hold this certificate. Volunteers will be issued with names and phone numbers of their nearest First Aiders.

## **Accidents**

In the event of a serious accident at work, employees, volunteers or visitors have a duty to ensure the well-being of colleagues and in the absence of a supervisor or first aider should call an ambulance.

Employees and volunteers should be mindful of their own health and should wear disposable gloves if they need to clear up blood, vomit, urine or faeces. Disposable gloves will be kept in the First Aid box.

The Accident Book is to be kept in a designated place in the Wycombe Youth Action office. All information will be held in the strictest confidence. Staff members are required AT ONCE, to record all accidents or dangerous occurrences in the book and to inform the General Manager in order that appropriate action can be taken. All reported accidents will be documented and investigated in a manner similar to that of reports of bullying or violence.

First aiders and first aid facilities should be available at the offices and at all major events the Charity organises.

A First Aid Box is kept in a designated place in the office. The contents are to be maintained as per legislation. Any person removing items should report in the first aid inventory what has been removed and why.



## **Fire Safety**

The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that the staff receive adequate fire training and are aware of all exits and the whereabouts of all fire alarms and firefighting equipment.

The Safety Officer will:

- report and advise on the standard of fire safety in WYA's premises to the Trustees, and the standard of fire training of its staff;
- ensure regular risk assessments are carried out to reduce the likelihood of a fire (see the [monthly risk assessment]);
- ensure that the fire certificate requirements are met within the offices which WYA occupies;
- maintain fire equipment, arranging for its replacement when out of date;
- deal with any reports of infringements to these requirements;
- undertake overall responsibility for fire training, ensuring all staff are aware of all escape routes, fire alarms and fire doors as well as the assembly point, which is opposite the building;
- assist in the investigation of all fires in WYA's premises and to submit reports of such incidents.

## **On Discovering a Fire**

The following procedure **MUST** be followed:

- Operate the nearest fire alarm, if this is not possible, give a clear loud warning and ensure that it is understood.
- If it is possible to instantly and safely isolate the fire, do so. But at all times you must avoid placing yourself in any risk.
- Telephone the Fire Brigade on 999.
- The fire should only be tackled with the appliances provided if they present no personal danger and preferably by someone who has undertaken appropriate training.
- Everyone in the office or danger area must be evacuated immediately. Do not stop to collect personal belongings. No-one must re-enter the premises until an all clear is given by a member of the fire service.
- Only the proper fire routes should be used unless impassable.

- The General Manager should make a search of the office when safe to do so and without placing themselves at risk, to ensure no-one is left in danger.
- A check and formal registration will take place in the designated assembly point.
- Details of all fire drills and fire accidents must be recorded. The General Manager must be informed. The General Manager will, in turn, inform the Trustees.

## **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)**

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan is an assessment that should be carried out when someone is at greater risk of not being able to vacate the premises quickly should there be a fire. People to consider in these circumstances are:

- Children;
- The elderly;
- Someone with a disability;
- Anyone with limited mobility.

In carrying out an assessment, key things to consider are:

- What are the limitations to the individual's mobility, ie wheelchair, crutches etc
- Can they access the alarm without putting themselves at risk?
- Can they hear the alarm? Or does special equipment need to be obtained to assist with this?
- If they are wheelchair bound, and not on the ground floor, is there a safe place for them to be taken to?
- Is there a 'buddy' who can be assigned to the individual so that, if there was a fire, they could ensure the individual was safe before evacuating themselves, and who would take responsibility for advising the fire brigade of the individuals' whereabouts.

## **Bombs/terrorist activity**

All staff should be vigilant regarding suspicious items e.g. unattended bags or packages left in the building or through the post, and the owner cannot be confirmed.

If a suspicious item is identified DO NOT TOUCH IT. Immediately telephone the Police on 999. Confirm the object's location, size, shape and colour to the co-ordinator.

The fire alarm is to be activated. Everyone in the office or danger area must be evacuated immediately to the designated assembly point which is across the road from the Wycombe Youth Action building.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings. No-one must re-enter the premises until an all clear is given by an emergency service professional.

# **Electrical Equipment**

## **Guidelines for use of Electrical Equipment**

Under the Electricity at Work Act 1989, WYA expects that all staff will take due care and attention when using electrical apparatus in the office. Loose clothing and long hair should be secure at all times when operating machinery which contains exposed moving parts.

All staff, volunteers and visitors should be familiar with any electrical apparatus before using for the first time.

No one is allowed to work on or near live electrical equipment or equipment that has been labelled faulty.

All electrical equipment must be disconnected from the power supply before cleaning or making adjustments.

## **Maintenance, Faults and Repairs**

When not in use all portable electrical equipment, except that marked to the contrary (e.g. fax, file server) should be switched off.

All electrical equipment should be checked before use and if there are any worn cables, broken plugs or damage, the equipment should not be used and the fault reported to the Safety Officer.

Any reported faulty equipment should be immediately removed from use until repaired. All portable electrical equipment must be tested and recorded as satisfactory by a qualified electrician every two years.

New equipment should be supplied in a safe condition and not require a formal portable appliance inspection or test. However, a simple visual check is recommended to verify the item is not damaged.

## **Disposal of Equipment**

WYA commit to comply with the Health & Safety Executive's guidelines for the safe disposal of all equipment and the Safety Officer should refer to their guidelines before doing so.

## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) require WYA to identify those substances which are in use and which are hazardous to health (as legally defined) and to assess the risk of those substances.

These substances can take many forms and include:

- chemicals;
- products containing chemicals;
- fumes;
- dusts;
- vapours;
- mists;
- nanotechnology;
- gases and asphyxiating gases;
- biological agents (germs). If the packaging has any of the hazard symbols then it is classed as a hazardous substance.

Some examples where staff at WYA may experience hazardous substances are with some cleaning products, or aerosols.

WYA commits to use controls to prevent exposure to substances hazardous to health and provide information and instruction to employees in the event that they need to use them. In the first instance they will consider the following:

- What do they do that involves hazardous substances?
- How can these cause harm?
- Can these risks be prevented a source?
  - Can you avoid using a hazardous substance or use a safer process – preventing exposure, eg using water-based rather than solvent-based products, applying by brush rather than spraying?
  - Can you substitute it for something safer – eg swap an irritant cleaning product for something milder, or using a vacuum cleaner rather than a brush?
  - Can you use a safer form, eg can you use a solid rather than liquid to avoid splashes or a waxy solid instead of a dry powder to avoid dust?

The Safety Officer is responsible for implementing these Regulations.

## Computer Installations and Visual Display Units

All new computer installations must adhere to the British Standard Specifications and comply with the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

These Regulations only apply to employers whose workers regularly use DSE (Display Screen Equipment) as a significant part of their normal work (daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more).

These workers are known as DSE users.

These Regulations do not apply to workers who use DSE infrequently or for short periods of time. However, these controls may still be useful for these workers. If you have DSE users, you must:

- analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks;
- make sure controls are in place;
- provide information and training;
- provide eye and eyesight tests on request, and special spectacles if needed;
- review the assessment when the user or DSE changes.

### DSE assessments

WYA will regularly assess the risks associated with using DSE equipment and any special needs of individual staff. There is a DSE workstation checklist saved in Breathe HR and staff should be asked to complete this annually. This gives practical guidance on workstation assessments and is designed to encourage users to take an active part.

WYA will use the assessment to decide what needs to be done and the General Manager will check that action is taken.

The General Manager will make a record of any significant findings and include details in the report to the Trustees.

Any record should be simple and focused on controls. Where there are fewer than five employees, a report does not have to be written down, but it is useful to do this, so it can be reviewed at a later date, for example if something changes. For five or more employees, you are required by law to write it down.

The risks from DSE can be controlled using the following straightforward, low-cost controls.

## **Getting comfortable**

The following may help users:

- Forearms should be approximately horizontal and the user's eyes should be the same height as the top of the screen.
- Make sure there is enough work space to accommodate all documents or other equipment. A document holder may help avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange the desk and screen to avoid glare, or bright reflections. This is often easiest if the screen is not directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent intrusive light.
- Make sure there is space under the desk to move legs.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of seats on the backs of legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful, particularly for smaller users.

## **Well-designed workstations**

### ***Keyboards and keying in (typing)***

- A space in front of the keyboard can help you rest your hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep wrists straight when keying.
- Good keyboard technique is important – you can do this by keeping a soft touch on the keys and not overstretching the fingers.

### ***Using a mouse***

- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with a straight wrist.
- Sit upright and close to the desk to reduce working with the mouse arm stretched.
- Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support the forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.

### ***Reading the screen***

- Make sure individual characters on the screen are sharp, in focus and don't flicker or move. If they do, the DSE may need servicing or adjustment.



- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- When setting up software, choose text that is large enough to read easily on screen when sitting in a normal comfortable working position.
- Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice versa).

### ***Changes in activity***

Breaking up long spells of DSE work helps prevent fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache. The following may help users:

- Stretch and change position.
- Look into the distance from time to time, and blink often.
- Change activity before users get tired, rather than to recover.
- Short, frequent breaks are better than longer, infrequent ones. Timing and length of changes in activity or breaks for DSE use is not set down in law and arrangements will vary depending on a particular situation, although it is often considered good practice to move away from the workstation at least once an hour.
- Employers are not responsible for providing breaks for the self-employed.

### ***Portable computers***

- These same controls will also reduce the DSE risks associated with portable computers. However, the following may also help reduce manual handling, fatigue and postural problems:
- Consider potential risks from manual handling if users have to carry heavy equipment and papers.
- Whenever possible, users should be encouraged to use a docking station or firm surface and a full-sized keyboard and mouse.
- The height and position of the portable's screen should be angled so that the user is sitting comfortably and reflection is minimised (raiser blocks are commonly used to help with screen height).
- More changes in activity may be needed if the user cannot minimise the risks of prolonged use and awkward postures to suitable levels.

While portable systems not in prolonged use are excluded from the regulations some jobs will use such devices intermittently and to support the main tasks. The degree and intensity of use may vary. Any employer who provides such equipment still has to risk, assess and take steps to reduce residual risks.

## **Eye tests**

There is no evidence to suggest that DSE work will cause permanent damage to eyes or eyesight. Eye tests are provided to ensure users can comfortably see the screen and work effectively without visual fatigue.

WYA will pay up to £30 for an eye test per year for all employees and up to £30 for basic frame/lenses required for DSE work where any current pairs do not suffice.

## Driving for Work

Health and safety law applies to work activities on the road in the same way as it does to all work activities. Effective management of work-related road safety helps reduce risk. It could also result in, for example:

- fewer injuries to drivers;
- reduced risk of work-related ill health;
- reduced stress and improved morale.

Health and safety law does not apply to people commuting (ie travelling between their home and their usual place of work), unless they are travelling from their home to somewhere which is not the WYA offices, or travelling from the offices to another destination for work purposes, ie youth club etc.

WYA require that any vehicles used for business are:

- safe;
- right for the job;
- driven safely;
- regularly maintained, repaired and inspected.

Individuals are expected to follow the rules of the road as set out by the DVLA and therefore are not required to use a mobile phone whilst driving in any circumstance.

Similarly, WYA does not expect anyone to drive where they are uncomfortable to do so, ie where road conditions are poor for example after snowfall etc.

WYA require that those who drive for work provide a copy of the following when they become due:

- Driving license (usually only taken once in employment, unless the individual moves house and replaces it);
- Car registration;
- Car tax (note: this can be checked on the DVLA website);
- MOT (except where the car is under 3 years old, in which case a copy of any services would suffice);
- Insurance (note this should include business use).

Annually staff will be asked to complete and submit the 'Driving for Work form', saved on BreatheHR, confirming that they have submitted all of the above.

Please see 'Working with Children Manual' for guidance around driving young people.

## Full list of Risk Assessments

Timing	Assessment
Monthly	Fire Safety Inspection Checklist
	H&S Checklist
Quarterly	H&S Checklist by General Manager
Annually	DSE Assessment
	Driving for Work
Adhoc	Project Checklist
	Lone Working and Remote Working Assessment
	COSHH Checklist

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in September, and may be altered from time to time in light of legislative changes or other prevailing circumstances. All staff will be informed of any changes to the policy.

**Name:** Sarah Lawton  
**Designation:** Data Protection Officer  
**Date:** November 2022

**Reviewed By:** Sarah Lawton  
**Designation:** Data Protection Officer  
**Review date:** 8 December 2024