



## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This policy was agreed by trustees on: 1.09.21  
It will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.  
The next review is due by:1.09.23

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## CARAS Health and Safety Policy

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## **GENERAL STATEMENT**

**This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of:  
CARAS**

**Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**

Our statement of general policy is to:

1. To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities
2. To consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety
3. To provide and maintain safe equipment
4. To ensure safe handling and use of substances
5. To provide information, instruction and supervision for employees
6. To ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training
7. To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
8. To maintain safe and healthy working conditions
9. To review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT

### The Board of Trustees

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a statutory duty on all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all its employees at work and other people who may be affected by their activities, e.g. users, volunteers, members of the public.

The Board of Trustees as the employer, has overall and final responsibility for health and safety matters at CARAS, and for ensuring that health and safety legislation is complied with.

The Board of Trustees will periodically review the operation of its health and safety policy, and will ensure:

1. employees and volunteers as appropriate receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters
2. a risk assessment is undertaken and the results written up and made available to all employees
3. accidents are investigated, recorded and if any disruption to the organisation has occurred reported to the Board of Trustees
4. there are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of the premises and equipment

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to: **Eleanor Brown** (the Health and Safety Officer and Managing Director).

### All Employees

All employees have to:

1. co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters
2. not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
3. take reasonable care of their own health and safety
4. report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement).

### Fire Officer

The Board of Trustees will appoint a Fire Officer who shall receive appropriate training. At the time of issue of this policy this is **Eleanor Brown**. (All project staff hold this responsibility during their project activities).

The responsibilities of the Fire Officer are to:

1. Be instructed on potential fire hazards and the use of fire-fighting equipment
2. Ensure that the testing of fire alarms and fire drills is arranged
3. Assist with the efficient evacuation of staff and visitors
4. Liaise with the Fire Brigade at the assembly point
5. Ensure staff and volunteers at CARAS are aware of the fire alarm and fire drill.

*For detailed fire safety arrangements see section 9.*

### **First Aid Person**

At the time of issuing this policy, all staff have undertaken a recognised training course approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and are the first aid people for CARAS.

The office administrator will ensure that the first aid boxes are kept in the correct place, containing the items laid down in the Code of Practice and Guidance Notes published by the HSE and is regularly checked and restocked. They are checked every three months.

*For detailed first aid and accident arrangements see section 11.*

### **Risk Assessment**

The Board of Trustees will ensure that a risk assessment will be carried out by a competent person in accordance with the 1992 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP). The named Competent Person is **Eleanor Brown**, Managing Director. This risk assessment will be written up, and be made available to all staff. Individual project activities also need to have their own risk assessments. These are the responsibility of Heads of Service.

Written risk assessments will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they cover all employees against all risks, and to ensure that any action identified as needed in the risk assessment has been carried out. Risk assessments will also be updated every time that there is a major change in working practices. Risk assessments will cover all CARAS employees, volunteers, group members and visitors, and anyone else who may be impacted, wherever they may be based, and will cover all aspects of their work.

*See section 15.*

### **Training**

CARAS will ensure that new employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.

CARAS will organise training for employees and volunteers on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: general health and safety training, first aid, manual handling, fire safety, risk assessment. CARAS will also organise training for appropriate use of equipment, and any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work. All staff must attend first aid training every two years; this is to ensure that every activity has adequate first aid support.

If employees and volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should inform their line manager. Volunteers are made aware of this at their induction training.

Line managers must ask, at induction, whether new employees need any reasonable adjustments in order to make CARAS' work environment safe and accessible for them.

## **BUILDINGS**

CARAS has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff and volunteers.

All the staff of CARAS are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible, and should be reported to the office administrator.

### **Examples of Hazards**

- **Things Out of Reach:** Chairs or other furniture must not be used to stand on for the purpose of replacing light bulbs, reaching for things on top of cabinets, etc. A properly maintained, undamaged step ladder must be used. A stepladder is stored at Blakenham Road. It must not be used alone.
- **Damaged Equipment:** Regular checks must be carried out on furniture and equipment for damage which leaves sharp edges protruding or other hazards. Any damaged furniture must be reported for repair or condemnation straight away and must be removed from use.
- **Damage to Fabric of Building, Windows, etc:** All such damage must be reported immediately to the office administrator
- **Misplaced Furniture, Equipment or Supplies:** Any furniture, equipment or supplies left in an inappropriate place, for example obstructing a gangway, must be removed immediately and placed in an appropriate, safe place.

## **GOOD HOUSEKEEPING**

### **Aisles & Gangways**



Aisles and gangways must be kept clear from obstructions, and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances may goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed at CARAS and smokers should be a reasonable distance (at least 50m) from the premises when smoking and never smoke in the presence of children and young people.

### **Overcrowding**

CARAS will avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions, and will consult staff on any changes in office layout.

### **Ventilation**

CARAS will endeavour to provide a well ventilated workplace in which staff have control over their local level of ventilation. This is especially important in dealing with the covid-19 pandemic; windows will be kept open when more than one person is present in a room. Winter temperatures may make this impractical- we will review this practice every 3 months, allowing for the changes in seasons. Details of covid-safety rules are displayed in every room. Review and any changes to practice are the responsibility of the Competent Person.

### **Temperature**

In office workplaces a minimum temperature of 16°C must be maintained. Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to an uncomfortable level. A thermometer will be provided in such a position as to be easily seen. Where workplace temperatures become extreme, a decision to close activities will be taken by the Competent Person.

### **Lighting**

Adequate lighting must be provided. If lights are found to be out of order, the fault must be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.

### **Noise**

CARAS will endeavour to ensure that noise in its offices is kept to a reasonable level for the activity taking place at the time.

### **Office Atmospheric Pollutants**

Office equipment such as photocopiers and printers can emit pollutants into the atmosphere. The organisation will take reasonable precautions in ensuring that these levels are kept as low as possible. Employees and volunteers will not be expected to work in enclosed spaces with equipment that emits atmospheric pollutants. Spaces where these pollutants are present shall be kept well ventilated.

### **Equipment Storage and Usage**

Equipment must not be left lying around but must be suitably stored.

No wires must be left trailing across floors.

Non flammable rubbish bins must be positioned at various points

No paraffin, bar electric or Calor gas fires will be used at the premises of CARAS

### **Electrical Equipment**

All building maintenance such as electrical work, carpentry, painting, etc should be carried out by skilled people. Staff should not endanger themselves and others by carrying out such work.

Broken, ineffective or damaged electrical equipment must be reported. Staff should use electrical equipment in accordance with instructions.

All electrical equipment will be PAT tested annually.

### **Working at height**

Injuries are often caused by falls from:

- ladders
- scaffolding
- roofs and roof-edges - particularly fragile roofs
- gangways and catwalks
- vehicles

The poor selection, use and maintenance of equipment causes falls, e.g. using a ladder because it is easier than erecting a tower scaffold.

The Working at Height Regulations place duties on employers to ensure that:

- all work at height is properly planned
- those working at height are competent or supervised
- the risks of working on or near fragile surfaces are properly controlled

equipment for working at height is properly inspected and maintained

Work at height should be avoided where possible and equipment should be used to prevent or minimise the consequences of falls where working at height is the only option.

## **WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Toilet and Washing Facilities**

CARAS will ensure that suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities are provided for all staff in accordance with the minimum requirements of Health & Safety legislation.

The toilet will be in a separate, lockable room

Washing facilities will include a supply of clean hot and cold water, soap and suitable means of drying.

### **Drinking Water**

An adequate supply of drinking water will be provided for all staff.

### **Rest Areas**

So far as is reasonably practicable, CARAS will provide its staff with a seating arrangement where, during rest periods, they may have a break away from their workstations. CARAS is unable to provide a private area in which a pregnant employee may rest and lie down. CARAS will support pregnant employees to work from home more often if their duties allow.

### **Hours of Work**

The employees of CARAS should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest as indicated within their statement of terms and conditions of employment.

## **PERSONAL SAFETY**

### **Office Security**

It is in the nature of the organisation's work that staff or volunteers may, on occasions, find themselves in potentially dangerous situations whilst on CARAS business. The following policy is concerned to minimise the risk to people working for CARAS.

Staff who are working in CARAS premises on their own should not allow access to anyone apart from another staff member. The door should be kept shut at all times and the intercom used to speak to callers rather than through an opened front door. Such callers should be encouraged to make an appointment when there are multiple staff present.

Where staff are dealing with an individual but feel uneasy about being alone with them they have the right to refuse to make an appointment or give access if it would put them in that position. In these situations the management will trust the judgement of the worker.

All windows and entry doors will be lockable. If alone in the building, the front door must never be left open and unattended.

### **Working away from the office**

Staff who are going to be working away from the office, eg attending meetings, visiting another organisation, running off-site activities, should make it clear to other staff where they will be, how long for and how they can be contacted.

If in the course of a trip away from the office plans change significantly, this must be communicated back to the office.

Staff should make clear who they wish to be informed (outside of work) in the event of an emergency and how they can normally be contacted. These details will be held on CARAS' secure database.

Calendars should make it clear whether a staff member is working from CARAS premises or home.

### **Holding or carrying money or valuables for the organisation**

Staff who carry money for CARAS have the right to be accompanied by another person.

Large amounts of cash, over and above petty cash, should not be kept on the premises except immediately after an event, if it is not possible to deposit the money in the bank.

Visits to the bank should not be at a regular time.

Under no circumstances should staff put themselves at risk on account of the property of CARAS. If money is demanded with threats it should be handed over.

### **Personal awareness while working off-site**

All meetings, including locations, must be clearly marked on each worker's calendar.

Never stay in a situation where you think you may be at risk.

### **Reporting and recording**

All incidents of aggression or violence should be reported to management and recorded on Lamplight. Employers have a responsibility to provide a safe working environment. Staff should report any current or potential situation at work which is a threat to personal safety. A serious incident, even if it results in no physical harm, may cause feelings of fear, panic or despair which can carry on long afterwards. The Board of Trustees of CARAS recognises this and will be disposed to provide whatever support, counselling or time off work seems appropriate.

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASE**

### **Awareness and precautions**

CARAS will be prepared to respond quickly to notification by the health authorities that an outbreak of infectious disease has occurred which affects the organisation. A plan to change any or all parts of the operation to online working will be prepared and reviewed annually. Supplies of the following equipment adequate for three months' operation will be stored on site: 70+% alcohol hand gel, 70+% alcohol or Dettol cleaning equipment, masks.

### **Individual contact tracing**

In the event of one of CARAS's staff, current volunteers or recent beneficiaries being contact-traced as the carrier of an infectious disease CARAS will comply with the request of the health authorities for contact information for those who have been in contact with the affected person while on CARAS premises. Affected services will be suspended if the extent of transmission is uncertain.

### **Local or national outbreak**

CARAS's operations will be adapted to ensure the safety of its employees, volunteers and beneficiaries in accordance with government guidelines and any further steps management deems necessary.

Once immediate steps have been taken to ensure safety and conform to government guidance, a tailored response plan will be produced in consultation with staff, volunteers and beneficiaries. The plan will clarify how CARAS will continue to operate during the outbreak,

how the safety of staff, volunteers and beneficiaries will be ensured, and what steps need to be taken by all who attend or facilitate activities.

Before engaging in any in-person work during an outbreak, an additional risk assessment will be produced for each proposed activity. This will take into account government or health authority guidance and the requirements of third parties providing or hosting our activities.

## **HOMEWORKING**

When employees are carrying out work for CARAS at home, all health and safety rules and guidance in this policy apply in the same way that they do in the workplace.

All employees will be provided with a guide to creating a healthy and ergonomic home workplace. Line managers will ensure that this guide is read and understood.

The employee will discuss their homeworking needs with management and reasonable steps will be taken to provide an ergonomic homeworking environment, including a computer, an appropriate chair, and a desk and laptop peripherals if needed.

CARAS has conducted a Risk Assessment for homeworking employees. Line managers will go through the Risk Assessment and mitigations with staff and ask for confirmation that these have been implemented.

The employee will be asked to indemnify the organisation from damages caused by accidents in the home.

## **COMPUTER EQUIPMENT**

### **General**

It is the policy of CARAS to comply with the law as set out in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

CARAS will conduct health and safety assessments of all workstations staffed by employees who use computer screens as part of their usual work. All workstations must meet the requirements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.

### **Nature and Organisation of Work**

Appropriate seating must be available to all users, whether working at home or at CARAS premises.

Staff will take regular breaks (at least 10 minutes away for every hour at the screen). Short frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional longer breaks.

### **Equipment**

Resources will be sought by CARAS to provide appropriate equipment at each workstation as per the Schedule of Regulations

### **Maintenance**

Copies of manufacturers' detailed instructions on the maintenance of machinery will be held in the CARAS office, in a clearly marked folder. Maintenance contracts are adhered to and, where appropriate, renewed.

### **Eye and Eyesight Tests**

Where a member of staff is experiencing eyesight problems attributable to their work with computer screens they will be entitled to have an eyesight test paid for by CARAS

Where a test shows that as a result of work with the organisation's VDUs, a member of staff needs to purchase special corrective appliances (usually glasses), these will be paid for by CARAS. This excludes those normally used for purposes other than work with VDUs, and is subject to a maximum expenditure of £80.00

### **WRULDS/RSI/Back pain**

Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (also known as Repetitive Strain Injury) are often associated with keyboard work. Back pain is another common condition caused by long periods of desk work. It is the intention of CARAS, by following best advice, to provide computer equipment, peripherals and furniture which help prevent the development of these musculoskeletal disorders. Staff should contribute to their own safety and welfare by:

- avoiding sitting in the same position for long periods
- Acting on information on creating an ergonomic home workstation
- taking regular rest breaks from computer work (at least 10 minutes away from the screen in every hour) by doing some other work.

### **FIRE SAFETY**

#### **General**

The Fire Officer is **Mirza Baig**. They have completed relevant training to hold this office. It is not only the responsibility of the Fire Officer, but of all staff and members working at CARAS's offices to be aware of fire hazards, to know the location of fire exits and the assembly point. Everyone must know the fire drill instructions and these will be part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers.

Access to escape doors, extinguishers and other firefighting equipment must not be obstructed and the Fire Officer will be instructed on their use.

The Fire Risk Assessment for each office will identify fire risks and their mitigations.

### **Fire Drills**

CARAS's Fire Officer is responsible for carrying out staff fire drills and will arrange these to take place at regular intervals, reviewing the success or otherwise of the evacuation and making recommendations for improved practices. They are responsible for ensuring that every staff member is aware of the evacuation procedures and ensuring fire exits are free from obstruction.

The fire alarms shall be tested at weekly intervals by CARAS's Fire Officer and staff will be notified of any testing taking place during office hours.

Visitors and all staff, including volunteers, must be made fully familiar with the escape routes and CARAS's assembly point. Staff managing regular activities must conduct a fire drill at least once every six months.

### **Fire Drill Procedure**

If the fire alarm sounds

1. Evacuate the building immediately by the nearest exit, closing fire doors behind the last person
2. One staff member should lead people out, and another should be behind the group, ensuring that everyone leaves
3. Ensure any visitors leave the building
4. Do not put yourself at risk
5. Assemble in front of the building
6. Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the Fire Officer or fire brigade confirm that it is safe to do so.

If you discover a fire

1. Raise the alarm by operating the break glass switch at the nearest fire alarm call point. These are located in the small office, the activities room and the kitchen.



2. Evacuate the building immediately as above.
3. Call 999

## **HYGIENE**

All areas must be kept clean and tidy. The Staff Handbook details staff responsibilities.

At Blakenham Road, the office manager will ensure that all wash basins are provided with hot water, soap, clean paper towels or hand dryers. Tooting Works provides this service.

For Blakenham Road CARAS employs a professional cleaning company in order to ensure that standards of cleanliness and hygiene always remain high. Tooting Works provides this service.

For extra measures relating to outbreaks of infectious diseases see the relevant section.

## **FIRST AID AND ACCIDENT REPORTING**

### **First Aid**

First Aid provision will be available at all times in an appropriate and accessible First Aid Box.

First Aid Boxes are kept in the small office and in the kitchen.

All employees will receive appropriate first aid training within 3 months of induction. Line managers are responsible for ensuring this is completed.

All new employees will be told as part of their induction of the location of first aid equipment and all employees who have received first aid training.

A record of all first aid cases will be kept in Lamplight.

### **Accidents and Emergencies**

All employees must report all incidents which resulted or nearly resulted in personal injury to themselves or others, to the Health & Safety Officer and make sure the accident is recorded on Lamplight.

The Health & Safety Officer will ensure that personal details of individual(s) involved in any accident will be stored securely on Lamplight in compliance with our Data Protection Policy.

It is the responsibility of the Health & Safety Officer to ensure that any necessary follow-up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident recurring.

The Health & Safety Officer is responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the London Borough of Wandsworth Environmental Health Department. RIDDOR covers the following incidents:

- fatal accidents
- major injury accidents/conditions
- dangerous occurrences
- accidents causing more than 3 days' incapacity from work
- certain work-related diseases.

## **HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (COSHH)**

Organisations are responsible for ensuring that employees are safely protected from substances that might be hazardous to their health. This could include cleaning materials, printing materials or even correction fluid. These involve COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessments.

### **General Statement**

Under the 1992 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations employers have a duty to make an assessment of the risks related to hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc. In accordance with the Approved Code of Practice this assessment will be carried out and written down by a nominated competent person.

The person responsible for carrying out this assessment will be the Health and Safety Officer.

Following this assessment, in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) CARAS will:

1. In the first instance take action to remove any hazardous substances.
2. If this is not possible, action shall be taken to find a substitute for the hazardous substance.
3. If this is not possible, such substances shall be enclosed within a safe environment.
4. If none of the above is possible, protective equipment will be issued to ensure the safety of staff.

### **Monitoring**

If for any reason a member of staff or volunteer has been exposed to a possibly hazardous substance, levels of exposure will be monitored.

At all times levels of ill-health related to exposure to hazardous substances at work will be monitored.

### **Removal, Substitution, Enclosure and Protection**

All members of staff shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available they should be used (e.g. water based markers, correction fluid, non-bleach based cleaning products etc). If there is no way of avoiding such use, staff must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment which shall be made available.

### **LIFTING AND HANDLING**

The employees of CARAS should avoid manual lifting where possible. However, employees may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

Employees should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be taken apart or divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting is done by a team, instructions should be given by one person only.

Any employee feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the Accident Book.

Aids to reduce the risk of injury (e.g. trolleys) must always be used if available.

### **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

Stress at work is a serious issue. Workers can suffer severe medical problems, which can in turn result in under-performance at work and cause major disruptions to the organisation.

Stress is a workplace hazard that must be dealt with like any other. Thus the responsibility for reducing stress at work lies both with employer and employee.

CARAS will do all it can to eradicate problems relating to stress at work. In particular it will:

1. Ensure close employee involvement in decisions which will directly affect them, particularly during periods of change
2. Give opportunities for staff to contribute in the planning and organisation of their own jobs
3. Ensure staff have work targets that are stretching but reasonable
4. Implement effective policies and procedures for dealing with bullying and any form of harassment
5. Encourage good communications between staff and management
6. Promote the maintenance of a supportive culture in the workplace
7. Where appropriate take into consideration employees' personal situation/problems at home
8. Ensure employees avoid working long and unsocial hours.

CARAS will ensure as far as practicable that its policies, working practices and conditions of employment support its commitment to the above.

CARAS will conduct an annual staff survey to test the above, and respond to issues raised within one month with a full response and a timetable for the implementation of improvements.

Employees should ensure that they do not work in a way that could cause them to suffer an increase of stress, nor cause an increase of stress on others.

Employees must respect other members of staff, and ensure that interpersonal conflict is avoided or dealt with sensibly.

Employees must not make unrealistic demands on other workers by increasing others' workload.

Employees should participate with the organisation's intention to maintain a supportive workplace environment.

If an employee is suffering from stress at work, they should discuss this with their line manager at the first opportunity.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk assessment helps protect workers and everyone using the organisation. It is, as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describe: "a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people.... the aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill".

Guidance on carrying out a Risk Assessment is given in the Appendix. Wandsworth Health and Safety team can also be contacted.

## CONTACTS

Local health and safety inspector's office and telephone number:

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Health and Safety Executive Publications on all aspects of Health and Safety from  
[www.books.hse.gov.uk](http://www.books.hse.gov.uk)

Health and Safety Executive - London office

Rose Court  
2 Southwark Bridge  
LONDON  
SE1 9HS

Tel: 020 7556 2100

London Hazards Centre - Advice, training and COSHH data sheets etc:

Hampstead Town Hall Centre  
213 Haverstock Hill  
London NW3 4QP  
Tel: 020 7794 5999

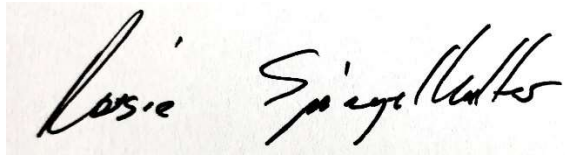
[www.lhc.org.uk](http://www.lhc.org.uk)

Email: [mail@lhc.org.uk](mailto:mail@lhc.org.uk)

Review

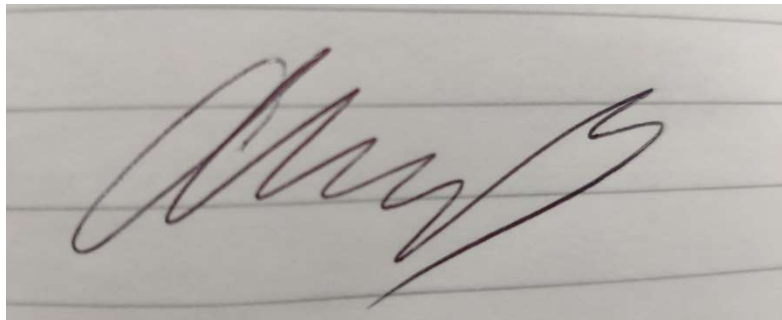
This policy will be reviewed annually.

This policy is agreed by the board of Trustees, and signed on behalf of them by:

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Rosie Spiegelhalter" in a cursive script.

Rosie Spiegelhalter  
Chair of Trustees

Date 1.3.21

A handwritten signature in black ink on lined paper. The signature is highly stylized and cursive, appearing to read "Suhan Rajkumar".

1.3.21

Suhan Rajkumar  
Trustee

## Appendix

### Risk Assessment

The HSE prescribes a 'Five Step' process:

#### Step One - Identify the hazards

First walk around the workplace identifying anything that could be potentially hazardous - **write everything down - make a list.** Include *everything* you can think of: not just things that are currently obviously dangerous, but anything with a *potential* risk. It is a good idea to get two people to do this separately (one of these could be a trade union safety representative if there is one) and to compare lists afterwards, in case either of you have missed anything out.

Then think about **invisible** hazards - for example, in the voluntary sector one of the biggest risks people endure is stress (often related to working long hours, under pressure, to tight deadlines) or physical assault. Invisible hazards often include fumes - for example, photocopiers and laser printers emit ozone when in use.

Finally consider whether things that might not normally be hazardous might be in relation to specific people - e.g. pregnant women, disabled workers.

#### Step Two - identify who is at risk

Once you have identified and listed all the hazards, you need to (i) identify what the specific risk is, and (ii) who is particularly at risk.

Some people will be more at risk from particular hazards than others - for example a VDU user will be more at risk of suffering RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury - also known as WRULDs - Work Related Upper Limb Disorders), a cleaner might have specific risks related to the chemical cleaning agents being used, etc. And there will be those particularly at risk in some circumstances for example because they may be working alone, or they may have a disability. **List those potentially at risk.**

#### Step Three - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Think about what you can do to remove the risk. Compare what you currently do with what is accepted as good practice. (You may need to seek advice on this from experts) The main purpose of doing a risk assessment is to be aware of the risks, so that you can take action to eliminate or at least reduce the risks. On a simple level if an electrical wire is exposed, you could replace it, or cover it with insulating tape. On a more proactive level, for example, if your cleaner is using potentially dangerous chemical agents - change the cleaning product - use something water-based. **Write down the actions currently taken and those actions you propose to be taken, and write down who will take the action, by when.**

#### **Step Four - Record your findings**

Ensure the written record of your findings is made available to staff, and that they co-operate with the carrying out of the recommendations made as a result of the assessment. This might involve a change in working practices, a change in machinery or equipment, and **appropriate training** being undertaken.

#### **Step Five**

Review your assessment. Few workplaces remain the same. You **must** review your assessment when there are major changes in the workplace, such as the introduction of new machinery, or new ways of working - but you must carry out regular reviews anyway - possibly annually. If your original assessment was properly recorded the review should be a relatively simple job but be aware of changing working practices.

#### **Other considerations:**

- \* if you share a building with other groups, it is a **legal requirement** that you all co-operate with each other in carrying out assessments.
- \* If your workers have a trade union health and safety representative, you should consult with them before carrying out the assessment, and again after carrying out the assessment - in case they strongly disagree with the results of the assessments, or the proposals you may be making to remedy a potential hazard.