



Surrey Council for Voluntary Youth Service
Supporting the Voluntary Youth Organisations of Surrey

Health, Safety, and Wellbeing at Work Policy
September 2009
(Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974)

Approved: Trustees meeting 23 September 2009
Review due: Sept/Oct 2010

This policy closely follows Guidance published by the HSE on their website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/guidance>

Context

Surrey Youth Focus is a small voluntary sector organisation currently comprising five staff (One f/t and four p/t). The Youth Development Worker in particular is sometimes at evening meetings with young people and so may be a sole worker.

There are two offices (Rooms 15 and 16) on the first floor of Astolat, being a two storey office building in multi – occupation by voluntary sector organisations.

The two offices are sub – let from Surrey Community Action (SCA) who provide a managed service (meeting rooms, toilets, lift and H&S services etc) for the whole building, which has several voluntary organisations within the building.

Surrey Youth Focus (SYF) is responsible for the health and safety of its staff, visitors, and in particular for the conditions within the two offices it sub leases.

Statement of general policy

Surrey Youth Focus will;

- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- Prevent accidents and cases of work related ill – health
- Consult with employees on Health and Safety matters affecting them
- Ensure all employees are competent to undertake their tasks and provide training as necessary
- Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- Ensure that the responsibilities between SYF and Surrey Community Action (landlord) are clear

Responsibilities

All employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety, and to report any concerns to the Chief Executive

Day to day responsibility for putting this policy into practice rests with the Members Services Manager

Overall and final responsibility rests with the Chief Executive (CX).

Health and Safety Risks

Office

The principal risks are potentially those of any small office – trailing cables, tripping, overloaded cabinets and shelves, poor seating/ ergonomics to desks and computers.

A formal Health and safety inspection will be conducted annually by the CX and Member Services manage using the attached form as appended. Any actions identified should be reviewed at Team meetings on a monthly basis thereafter until resolved, or more urgently as the problem dictates.

Outside meetings/ activities / lone working

The Youth Development Worker in particular engages with young people at meetings normally with other adults present. Details of the meeting venue should be listed on the office electronic meeting calendar and his/her mobile phone should be on.

He/she should not normally be alone, but if this does occur for any reason and there is a feeling of unease or jeopardy, he/she should exit immediately, and will be fully supported by Surrey Youth Focus in doing so.

It may be necessary for office based staff to work outside normal office hours, and whilst there are often other colleagues in the building, staff are not expected to work alone, particularly at night if they feel uneasy.

Events

Surrey Youth Focus convenes events from time to time. The “Celebration of Youth” is a regular event involving some 18 stage acts to an invited public audience of perhaps 200 at a public theatre, or school. Around 150 young people are involved and the health and safety responsibility rests with their supervisors. However once the venue is chosen a risk assessment should be done using the HSE form – “Five Steps to Risk Assessment”.

Consultation with employees

Health and safety will be a standing item on the agenda of monthly team meetings.

Safe plant and equipment

This is of limited relevance as we only purchase office equipment, however it is worth recollecting that even display boards can fall down, and we should check equipment as part of the H&S Inspection.

Safe handling and use of substances

Also of minimal relevance, especially now that Surrey Youth News is despatched by a sub – contractor. However all staff should be aware of the need to avoid taking risks with heavy weights or furniture.

Information, Instruction and Supervision

The Health and safety poster is located on a noticeboard in the first floor corridor. All existing and new staff will be given an HSE explanatory leaflet – “Health and safety and the law – What you need to know” (published April 2009) as part of their induction.

Training

Those with responsibility for health and safety, notably the Members Services Manager and the Chief Executive should attend (and log) the SCA “Health and safety

at Work “ one-day course. The log should be part of the general Pqasso training log – see Training and Development Policy.

Accidents, first aid and work related health – flu

Ongoing concerns

Even an “ordinary” office can be a place where personal health and well – being is affected – by stress, stained eyesight / hearing, backpain and infections. Such issues should be raised by any team member at the team meetings , or privately with the Chief Executive, who should address the issue on a problem solving basis so far as the organisation’s resources allow, and it is “reasonably practicable” to do so.

Flu

Currently – summer 2009 – there is a serious prospect of a wide ranging flu epidemic. This may impact directly on team members and in this event they must phone in to record their absence, but otherwise stay away from the office as recommended by the NHS, and exercise their judgement about whether to work from home. All staff have remote access to their emails at least.

It is recognised that in the event of a serious epidemic in which schools and other services are shut down, there will be serious implications for staff members with caring responsibilities. This situation is referred to in Surrey Youth Focus’ policy on “Flexi- Working and being Family Friendly “

Accident Book

The Accident Book is held by the Landlord, Surrey Community Action and is located in the Resources Room on the Ground Floor. Any accident should be recorded there, but also reported to the CX.

First Aid

SCA provides First Aiders and a current list is on the noticeboard in room 15. A First aid box is kept in the kitchen on the first floor.

Monitoring

Reference has already been made to the annual H&S inspection. Any serious accident or prolonged or exceptional sickness absence will be investigated by the CX and reported to the Management and Finance Committee of Trustees.

Emergency procedures/ responsibilities

SCA (Head of Support Services) is responsible for:

Activity
Fire risk assessment
Fire extinguisher checks
Testing of alarms
Emergency evacuation procedures
Electrical equipment

Within Surrey Youth Focus, the following are responsible:

Key holder (on call in emergency): Kate Peters, and Mike Abbott
Fire Warden: Kate Peters

Conclusion

It is the aim of all Staff and Trustees that the experience of working with, or for, Surrey Youth Focus should be a safe and enjoyable one, where people feel that their well – being is enhanced, and not diminished or at risk from work.

This policy statement and consequent actions are intended to ensure that this is indeed our experience by paying proper attention to these health, safety and well being issues.

Approved by Trustees on ...23 Sept.2009

Appendix: Risk assessment Inspection (Source HSE)

A risk assessment is when you carefully look at what could be dangerous and possibly cause harm to people, (this is also known as a hazard) and see at how this can be prevented. By identifying the danger you can look at what is already in place to prevent anyone coming to harm, and also look at what else could be done or put in place.

- **A hazard** is anything or anyone that could cause harm e.g. high stacks of chairs, uneven floors, unsafe electrical equipment, blocked fire exits, lack of fire escape signs, missing light bulbs, overfilled cupboards, high shelves, loose carpets, toxic paints, chemicals etc. horseplay, unknown workers (paid or volunteers), working in unsupervised situations, lifts in cars, challenging behaviour, smoking and drinking etc.
- **A risk** is the chance great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard.
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Five Steps to Risk Assessment

Step 1 – Identifying hazards/dangers.

- Walk round the building/venue looking out for things or situations that could be reasonably expected to cause harm.
- Ask other people about what they think could cause harm.

Step 2 – Who might be harmed/vulnerable? And how could this happen.

- Young People
- Children
- Activity Leaders/Organisers
- Staff and Volunteers
- Children or young people with special needs
- Visitors/Parents
- Members of the public

Step 3 – What are the risks? What can be done to remove or reduce them?

- How likely is it that the hazard could cause harm?
- Are there any existing precautions in place? Are they enough?
- What else can be done to reduce the risk, control or remove the hazard/danger?
- Think about how harmful the risk maybe – high, medium or low – both before and after you have taken action to reduce the risk.

Step 4 – Write down your findings and what you need to do.

- The record will show that a proper check has been carried out.
- Each hazard should be recorded, including an assessment of the risk, recorded as either high, medium or low.
- Any action taken should be recorded (next to the hazard), showing the date and the name of the person carrying out the remedial action.
- Once action has been taken, the level of risk that the hazard presents should be low.

Step 5 - Revise and evaluate your risk assessment regularly.