

**Health and Safety Policy**

**Aims**

The aims of this policy are:

* To ensure a safe and healthy environment for service users, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and the general public, in all our service settings at all times.
* To ensure trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities to themselves and others in relation to health and safety.
* To ensure Sutton Mencap’s compliance with relevant legislation.

**Introduction**

Sutton Mencap is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for its employees whilst at work and for service users and members of the public who are affected by its activities. It recognises its responsibilities under:

* the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
* regulation 3 of the 1999 Management of Health and Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations.
* The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005), in relation to an ‘action in the event of a fire’ procedure.
* the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1985
* the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
* the electricity at Work Regulations (1989).
* the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
* the European Directives in 1992 which apply to all places of work, including:
  + The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992,
  + The Provision and Use of Work Equipment 1992,
  + The Manual Handling Operations 1992, (amended 2002)
  + The Personal Protective Equipment at Work 1992
  + The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

Sutton Mencap will display a health and safety law poster, an employer’s liability insurance certificate and other notices such as 'no smoking' and ‘no nuts’ notices and exit signs.

Sutton Mencap will provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees. We will provide such information, training and supervision as is needed for this purpose. We also recognise our responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities, such as volunteers, service users, visitors, contractors.

All employees should observe Health and Safety regulations throughout the entire organisation’s areas of work, including offices, service areas and work-related activities elsewhere. Trustees and senior managers have a responsibility and all employees have a duty to do everything that is reasonably practicable to avoid and/ or reduce health and safety risks.

The Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed regularly and will be updated as often as is necessary to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and good practice.

**Scope**

All trustees, staff and volunteers of Sutton Mencap must abide by the policy. The policy covers:

* Activities carried out by employees whilst working for Sutton Mencap.
* Volunteers carrying out activities on behalf of Sutton Mencap.
* The provision of services and activities by Sutton Mencap.
* Activities that take place at Sutton Mencap premises.

**Responsibilities**

***Trustee Board***

Overall and final health and safety responsibility within the organisation lies with the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board shall ensure that a staff member is appointed to take the responsibility for drawing to the attention of the Trustee Board, staff and office volunteers any health and safety matters that need to be discussed and/or acted upon. In addition the trustee board will appoint one trustee who will act as a lead member for health safety.

***Chief Executive Officer***

Has delegated responsibility for the management of Health and Safety, and is responsible for providing strategic management support on Health and Safety issues.

Working with the trustee board, the Chief Executive Officer will:

* Ensure the development and implementation of Health and Safety policies and procedures through the management and supervision of core staff.
* Ensure adequate consideration is given to Health and Safety when developing new services and formulating budgets.
* Ensure competent persons are appointed as required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and 1999 legislation.
* With other managers and the Health and Safety lead officer, set a personal example in all matters of Health and Safety whilst at work.

The Chief Executive Officer will also appoint a named staff member as the Health and safety lead officer and will provide direct supervision and support to cover the role.

***Office Manager***

The Office Manager acts as the designated health and safety lead officer has the following responsibilities:

* To oversee the production and development of the high-level risk assessment (see risk assessment and management – below)
* To act as Sutton Mencap’s Fire Marshal and to organise fire drills.
* To oversee reporting and investigations of all serious injuries and accidents.
* To ensure adequate Health and Safety training and information for all employees.
* To ensure that the Chief Executive Officer or Service Manager is made aware of any member of staff not discharging their duties satisfactorily for Health and Safety matters.
* To liaise with the Facilities Manager over health and safety and building maintenance requirements.

***Facilities Manager***

* To maintain a register of health and safety checks to ensure compliance with procedures and any legal requirements.
* To carry out Health and Safety inspections as appropriate and at least every three months.
* To ensure that the fire alarm system, fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and other necessary fire equipment are available for use as is necessary.
* To ensure that First Aid boxes are provided and that used items replaced.
* To provide a regular report to the Chief Executive Officer and trustees on health and safety issues.
* To liaise with the Health and Safety Lead Officer, Chief Executive Officer and Service Managers over health and safety issues.

***Service Managers***

Service Managers are responsible for the management of Health and Safety within their designated areas, in particular through the management and supervision of their respective staff teams. Specifically, Service Managers will

* Ensure good working practices are developed in all areas of work and that these are carried out in accordance with statutory provisions.
* Promote the Health and Safety of staff, service users and visitors within their service areas.
* Ensure safe working practices are adhered to in their area of work.
* Ensure staff take up mandatory training on health and safety and first aid in accordance with the training policy.
* Ensure staff on their services complete accident and incident report forms. (See recording and investigating accidents, injuries and hazards – below)
* Review accident and incident report forms and implement any changes identified, e.g. to service delivery or personal support. (See recording and investigating accidents, injuries and hazards – below)
* Ensure their staff have access to required personal protective equipment and use it appropriately.
* Participate in health and safety inspections alongside the Office Manager, acting as designated lead officer.
* Participate in investigating accidents including near misses and report all incidents/accidents or the occurrence of injuries and dangerous diseases to the appropriate enforcing authority under RIDDOR 1985.
* Participate in the development of the high level risk assessment and ensure awareness of and use by staff.
* Ensure the development and use of service level and individual risk assessments.
* Participate in reviewing Sutton Mencap’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

***All staff and volunteers***

The law places duties on employees with regard to Health and Safety in the workplace. All members of staff and volunteers are expected to:

* Read and understand the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
* Attend mandatory health and safety training in line with Sutton Mencap’s training requirements.
* Ensure all rules, regulations and codes of practice to provide safe working conditions are complied with.
* Complete any health and safety checks required and report any defects. All health and safety and maintenance issues should be recorded on the health and safety check. Any immediate concerns in relation to health and safety regarding defective equipment or machinery or any defective area of the premises must be reported to the service Co-ordinator, Service Manager of the Health and Safety Lead Officer immediately.
* Complete an Accident/ Incident Report Form for any accidents or incidents involving staff, volunteers, service users or members of the public.(See Recording and investigating accidents, injuries and hazards – below)
* Adopt a safe system of work at all times and make use of any protective equipment or clothing which may be supplied for carrying out specific tasks. Failure to do so will be a breach of the Health and Safety Act Section 7B and could result in disciplinary action.
* Work in a safe way to ensure that their own safety and that of others is not jeopardised.
* Keep all work areas free from obstructions, refuse accumulation, etc.
* Ensure fire exit routes and fire protection equipment are not obstructed, tampered with or abused and that fire equipment is used for the purpose for which it was designed.
* Not interfere with any equipment that is provided for the purpose of Health and Safety.
* Not commit acts which are likely to endanger themselves or others, or which contravene the Health and Safety Act 1974.
* Co-operate with Sutton Mencap‘s efforts to comply with the statutory duties outlined above.

**Health and Safety Procedures**

Our health and safety procedures aim to create as far as is reasonably practicable an accident free working environment for all employees, volunteers, service users and visitors.

1. **External reporting and investigation arrangements**

Sutton Mencap will report all serious accidents, as defined in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1985. Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1985 Sutton Mencap will report to the Environmental Health Officer or the Local Authority any of the following incidents:

* Death or Major Injury
* Over three days absences as a result of an incident at work,
* Occupational diseases
* Flammable gas incidents

1. **Internal recording and investigation arrangements**

All accidents, injuries and ‘near misses’ or health hazards at work, however trivial, must be recorded without delay, by the injured party involved (wherever possible), or by the person to whom the accident / injury / near miss was reported. An Accident Report form must be completed immediately and the form filed in the administration office and made available for the Trustee Board representative. Forms are available in each coordinator’s file, and in the filing cabinet in the main office.

All accidents, injuries, near misses and health hazards at work, actual and potential are to be investigated as soon as it is reasonably practicable by the Service Manager and action taken to avoid recurrence.

1. **Risk assessment and management**

Sutton Mencap carries out risk assessments in the following areas:

* Organisational risk assessment: management of risks to the organisation as a whole.
* High level risk assessment: management of risks concerning the main areas of service delivery, such as: the use of the kitchen; activities and outings; hazardous substances and medication; use of electrical equipment, maintenance of premises (inside and outside), moving and handling, fire procedures, transport and the use of the minibus, physical injury (including by another person) and emergency procedures.
* Service level and activity risk assessment: management of risks associated with specific activities, venues etc.
* Service user risk assessment: management of risks associated with a specific individual.

All staff are required to familiarise themselves and act in accordance with Sutton Mencap’s Risk Assessment and Management Policy.

1. **Fire Safety**

Sutton Mencap’s Facilities Manager is responsible for the following regular checks:

* Fire extinguishers are in position with seals in place.
* Fire safety signs are in position.
* Fire-resisting doors are functioning properly.
* That the fire alarm system is working and that any malfunction of the fire alarm test is reported.
* Any faults on the emergency lighting are reported.
* Ensuring the Fire Protection Company checks equipment on a quarterly basis.

Sutton Mencap’s Office Manager acts as the Fire Marshal and is responsible arranging fire drills, which will take place at least twice a year. Outcomes of fire drills will be written up along with any actions required. The Office Manager will also carry out regular checks to ensure that:

* exit doors are available for use, unlocked and unobstructed
* escape routes are clear of storage and combustible materials.
* Fire alarm call points are unobstructed.

All staff and volunteers must:

* read and understand the Fire Procedure. Fire notices are located at a number of locations in the building.
* be aware of and confident about the fire evacuation procedure relating to the setting they are working in and the needs of the clients we support.
* Attend mandatory staff training on Health and Safety, which will include fire safety.
* Be made aware of the arrangements for fire safety as part of their induction.
* Only use fire extinguishers if they have been trained to do so, and can do so safely.
* ensure that fire doors are never propped open and that combustible items are not stored or left in a way that they present a fire risk.
* Keep all fire exit routes clear of obstructions.
* Not cover or remove notices regarding fire exits or procedures in case of fire and must inform the Fire Marshal if notices are damaged or need to be renewed.

1. **Control of hazardous substances**

The Control of Substance Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations lay down the essential requirements and a step-by-step approach for the control of hazardous substances and for protecting people who may be exposed to them. The Regulations set out essential measures that employers and employees have to take. Failure to comply with COSHH, in addition to exposing employees to risk, constitutes an offence and is subject to penalties under the Health and safety at Work Act 1974.

COSHH Regulations require Sutton Mencap to:

* Assess risk to health arising from work and the precautions required.
* Introduce appropriate measures to prevent or control risks.
* Ensure that control measures are used, that any protective equipment is properly maintained and that any safety procedures are observed.
* Monitor where necessary the exposure of employees and introduce an appropriate form of surveillance of their health.
* Inform, instruct and train employees on the risk and the precautions that need to be taken. Provide information in an easily accessible format and place on the safe handling and storage of each substance. Ensure information is covered as part of the staff induction.

The regulations covers a wide range of substances but generally include those, which are very toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant. These could include cleaning material for floors, toilets, polishes or dish washing detergents. All those substances are safe when properly used and employees must be made aware of any hazards.

General procedures for the use and storage of substances are as follows:

* All cleaning materials must be kept in a safe cupboard in an upright position and used only as directed by the manufacturer’s label. Substances should never be mixed with each other.
* Sutton Mencap does not use bleach or bleach-based cleaners and they are not permitted on the premises.
* Spillage of any solvent-based materials or chemicals should be dealt with immediately, avoiding skin contact and as directed by the suppliers.
* All flammable substances must be stored in first floor kitchen cupboards and marked “CAUTION-FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES”. At no time are they to be left around the building. ALL HAZARDOUS substances must be treated in the same Manner as FLAMMABLE substances. The same cupboard can be used.
* The barbecue and gas canister will be covered when not in use and will be subject to regular health and safety checks.

1. **Water testing procedure**

Sutton Mencap’s Health and Safety Lead Officer is responsible for ensuring maintenance and checks to the water system in relation to the control of Legionella bacteria. These are designed to ensure that there is no stagnant water in taps and that safe water temperatures are maintained (hot water at or just below 60 degrees Celsius and cold water at or below 20 degrees Celsius). Procedures in relation to this are as follows:

* On a weekly basis, any internal or external taps that are rarely used are to be run for 3 minutes to ensure stagnant water is cleared.
* On a monthly basis, checks on the temperature of the water at ‘sentinel’ locations (those furthest from the heater) and at the outlet and the inlet of the water tanks.
* On an annual basis, inspection and flushing of the heater.
* Where any temperature recordings for cold water are outside the required range contact will be made with the water company.
* Were any temperature recordings for the hot water are outside the required range, the thermostat will be adjusted and the temperature retested the following week. If the temperature is still not correct, a service will be arranged for the boiler.
* Signed records of these checks and any remedial action will be maintained in the water safety book.

1. **Safe use of equipment**

Use of equipment will be in accordance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) regulations, which require that equipment provided for use at work is:

* Suitable for the intended use.
* Safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not subsequently deteriorate.
* Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training.
* Accompanied by suitable health and safety measures, such as protective devices and controls. These will normally include emergency stop devices, adequate means of isolation from sources of energy, clearly visible markings and warning devices.
* Used in accordance with specific requirements.

All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out basic checks on electrical equipment before use, e.g. checking there is no damage to the cable, the plug is securely fitted and the equipment looks to be in a suitable condition.

1. **Use of display screen equipment**

Sutton Mencap aims to promote the computer equipment whilst safeguarding the health, welfare and job satisfaction of those involved in operating such equipment. Sutton Mencap will:

* Provide equipment and furniture that minimises the likelihood of harm to users (see checklist below).
* Carry out an assessment of each work-station, taking account of the display screen equipment, the furniture, the working environment and the worker and take all necessary measures to remedy any risk found as a result of the assessment.
* Take steps to incorporate changes of task within the working day, to prevent intensive periods of on-screen activity.
* Arrange for an employer to have an eye test when requested to do so by the employee. Regular eye test can be requested by VDU users every 12 months. If an employee suffers visual difficulties before the annual re-test an additional eye test may be arranged if necessary.
* Advise existing staff and all persons applying for work with display screen equipment, of the risks to health and how these are to be avoided.

When using display screen equipment, users should:

* Adjust chair to suit height of user.
* Adjust contrast and screen brightness to suit user.
* Use document holder if required.
* Use footrest if feet cannot rest comfortably on the floor.
* Adopt a good posture when sitting and working at screens.
* Take a 20 minute rest following 2 hours of continuous VDU operation.

When using display screen equipment, staff should take account of the following checklist:

Display Screen

* The screen image should be stable with no flickering
* The brightness/contrast control should be easily adjusted.
* The screen must tilt and swivel easily
* The screen height must be adjustable
* The screen must be free from glare
* The screen must be regularly cleaned

Keyboard

* The keyboard should be adjustable to allow a comfortable working position
* There must be sufficient space in front of the keyboard to support the users hands

Work desk

* The work desk should be large enough to allow flexibility in positioning all of the equipment
* The surface shall not cause reflective glare
* A document holder should be available, if required

Work chair

* The chair shall be stable
* It must allow the operator freedom of movement
* The height of the chair must be adjustable and the back must be adjustable for height and tilt.
* A footrest must be provided if required

Working environment

* The lighting should be satisfactory and suitable for the vision requirements of the user.
* Disturbing glare and reflection on the display screen from light fittings, windows and walls shall be avoided.
* Power cables should not provide tripping hazards
* Sufficient electrical sockets shall be available to prevent overloading and unnecessary trailing cables

In relation to the above, staff will be urged to consult the Office Manager, acting as designated Health and Safety Lead Officer for advice concerning any problems which arise.

1. **General Housekeeping**

All staff and volunteers should follow sensible practice in relation to ensuring the working environment is safe. In particular:

* Do not leave filing drawers open.
* Do not overload filing cabinets or shelves.
* Use step-ladders to get objects down from heights.
* Ensure adequate lighting in the work area.
* Ensure there is enough space to work comfortably and safely with adequate ventilation and an appropriate room temperature.
* Turn off equipment such as photocopier and computers that are not being used
* Take care of personal belongings, particularly handbags, purses, etc. Sutton Mencap cannot accept responsibility for these items.
* Refer to specific procedures in relation to service delivery areas: in particular, risk management, hoist and tracking, infection control and manual handling.
* Make sure you know which other staff are in the building.
* When you leave the building, make sure that the door closes properly behind you.
* Ensure that all access doors are locked and/ or shut so that any unauthorized entry is minimized.
* Take care of your keys – if you do lose a key report it immediately to your manager.

1. **Lone working**

Staff are expected to comply with Sutton Mencap’s Lone Working Policy.

1. **Visitors to Sutton Mencap**

Staff and volunteers are expected to comply with Sutton Mencap’s meet and greet procedure in relation to visitors to Sutton Mencap.

1. **Contractors**

All contractors working on Sutton Mencap premises are required to have their own organisation’s health and safety procedures and insurance in place. Contractors will be given an induction on building evacuation procedures and any additional health and safety requirements that Sutton Mencap requires them to adhere to.

1. **Work related stress**

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

The responsibility for reducing stress at work lies both with employer and employee. Employees should become aware of the causes of stress, and ensure that they do not work in a way which could cause them to suffer an increase in stress, nor cause an increase in stress on others.

If an employee is suffering from stress at work, they should discuss this with their line manager or the Chief Executive Officer at the first opportunity. Where practicable and reasonable, Sutton Mencap will seek to provide assistance to the employee.

Sutton Mencap will do all it can to eradicate problems relating to stress at work.

1. **Work related driving**

* Staff/ volunteers traveling as part of their work, or to and from work, should refer to the lone working policy and the leaflet from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust on personal safety.
* Staff who use their own vehicle whilst at work are required to ensure it is safe and roadworthy, has a current MOT certificate and that their insurance covers them for occasional business use.
* Care should be taken in providing lifts to service users. Decisions on whether a lift is to be provided must be made by a service manager, who will assess whether another member of staff is required to act as an escort.
* Sutton Mencap’s minibus may only be driven by those with an appropriate MiDAS certificate.
* In accordance with MiDAS procedures, the minibus driver is responsible for conducting a general check on the safety of the vehicle before use.
* Service managers will ensure that there are sufficient staff available to support the safe transport of service users.
* The minibus driver has overall responsibility for the safety of passengers, including the use of seatbelts and wheelchair restraints. The driver will ensure that appropriate escort support is used for the journey.

1. **First aid**

Sutton Mencap will ensure that it has sufficient staff trained in first aid to support the safe delivery of services. See the Training, Development and Supervision Policy for more information. A list of staff who have first aid qualifications is kept in the downstairs kitchen and parents’ room.

Staff who have not been trained should not attempt first aid, but should instead report the accident to their coordinator.

First aid boxes are located at:

* Main office stationery cupboard
* Large kitchen by the door
* Children’s area – by desk.

First Aid Boxes contain:

* Individually wrapped plasters
* Sterile eye pads
* Triangular bandages
* Sterile dressings in various sizes
* Safety pins
* Sterile eye wash

They must not contain medicine of any sort.

Staff are advised to seek treatment and notify for every injury, no matter how small, as any injury, left untreated, may become serious.

1. **Training**

Health and Safety training is included in Sutton Mencap’s mandatory training programme. Sutton Mencap also provides other health and safety related training as required, e.g. use of hoist and tracking, manual handling etc. For more information see the Training, Development and Supervision Policy.

**Responsibilities**

General responsibilities in relation to this policy are as follows:

Trustees

* To approve and review the policy on a regular basis
* To take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the policy is being implemented.
* To act in accordance with the policy

Senior staff

* To act in accordance with the policy.
* To communicate the policy to other staff and volunteers and to ensure it is being implemented correctly.
* To monitor performance of the policy and report to trustees

All Staff and volunteers

* To act in accordance with the policy

**Related policies**

* Staff training recruitment and supervision
* Risk assessment and management policy
* Risk register
* Business continuity
* Environment
* ICT policy
* Safeguarding children and Vulnerable Adults
* Volunteer policy and handbook
* Lone working policy
* Dealing with an emergency
* Missing Child
* Medication Policy
* Eligibility and referral process adults service
* Eligibility and referral process children’s service
* Positive Behaviour Management
* Managing children with allergies, or who are sick or infectious
* Out of Hours Support
* Hoist and Tracking
* Epilepsy
* Child Collection
* Sick Child Policy
* Gastrostomy Feeding Procedure
* Burglar Alarm
* Intimate Personal Care – adults and children
* Food Hygiene
* Fire procedure

**Signed on behalf of the Trustee Board of Sutton Mencap**

**Chairman:  Date: November 2019**

**Mavis Peart**

**Next review date November 2022**



**Fire evacuation procedure**

**On discovering a fire**

* Activate the fire alarm immediately.
* Only tackle the fire yourself if it safe to do so and you are confident in using the equipment. If you are unsure, or if the fire spreads, do not endanger yourself.
* Leave the building, closing doors behind you, and make your way to the assembly point.
* Do not attempt to go back in the building for anything or anyone.
* Call 999, informing the fire service of the position and severity of the fire if possible.

**On hearing the fire alarm**

* Evacuate the building immediately via the nearest exit, unlocking and closing doors behind you.
* Do not delay leaving the building.
* Do not use the lift. Evacuate upstairs areas via the stairs.
* If a wheelchair users is upstairs, they should be helped into the nearest upstairs room with a fire door, which should be closed. Staff should use their own judgement about whether to stay with the wheelchair user.
* The coordinator must be informed that there is a wheelchair user in the building, and should inform the fire brigade as a first priority.
* The service co-ordinator must take the register of service users and staff/ volunteers with them.
* Other organisations using Sutton Mencap premises are responsible for the safe evacuation of their service users in accordance with these procedures and should take any registers or staff, volunteers, service users or visitors with them.
* The Fire Marshal (or in her/ his absence, another core staff member) should collect the visitor’s book from the main office, as long as it is safe to do so.

**Evacuation point**

* Everyone leaving the building must end up at a single evacuation point so that we can check that everyone is out.
* The normal evacuation point will be at the far end of the children’s playground.
* Anyone evacuating the building via the front door who is unable to gain access to the children’s garden should walk round the outside of the building to the rear car park, where they will be let into the children’s playground by whoever is there.
* In the unlikely event that everyone leaves via the front door, and there is therefore no one in the children’s playground to allow access, the evacuation point becomes the rear car park by the minibus.

**Following evacuation**

* The service coordinator will take the register.
* No one shall re-enter the building until the coordinator has said that it is safe to do so.