



Down's Syndrome Support Group

Policy for avoiding accidents and running safe activities

This policy and plan apply to all staff, including managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of DownSouth.

Policy

The purpose of this policy:

- as far as possible, to remove hazards in our working environment and practices that could cause serious injury to children, young people or adults using our services or to our staff, volunteers or visitors;
- where such hazards cannot be removed, to put in place procedures and processes that protect children and adults from potential harm caused by hazards;
- to ensure that we take a balanced and proportionate approach to accident prevention, so that staff and volunteers can do their work effectively, and so that children and young people can be adventurous, and can learn to understand and deal with risks as they grow up;
- to provide staff, visitors and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to accident prevention;
- to ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we approach accident prevention.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the children/young people who come into contact with our services is paramount and should govern our approach to accident prevention;
- all children and adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from serious injury;
- risk assessment needs to take account of children's changing needs as they grow and develop, and should be mindful of needs resulting from disability and factors that may make some children and adults more vulnerable than others;
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people and adults to be responsible in their approach to accident prevention;
- we cannot and should not try to create a completely risk-free environment, as this would prevent us from being able to carry out any meaningful work with children and young people and would not be in their best interests; our emphasis is therefore on preventing serious or avoidable accidents and on managing risk appropriately.

We will seek to prevent serious and avoidable accidents by:

- ensuring that we are aware of and fulfil our responsibilities under health and safety and fire safety legislation;
- appointing a health and safety officer who is responsible for attending to our legal responsibilities in this area and to accident prevention measures;
- using our accident prevention plan to help us assess, monitor and review risks, both on and off the premises, and to take appropriate action to eliminate or manage hazards in a timely and organised fashion;
- involve children, young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers in developing and implementing our accident prevention measures;
- informing staff, volunteers, parents, carers and young people of their responsibilities to keep themselves safe, and making sure that they understand these and all relevant accident prevention procedures;
- making sure that any equipment we use is safe and stored appropriately, and that staff, volunteers and, where appropriate, young people are trained in how to use it safely;
- ensuring that we are aware of any allergies, health or developmental issues that could increase the vulnerability of individual children and adults;
- preparing, serving and storing food in a way that avoids dangers of food poisoning, burns, scalds, choking or accidents caused by such things as shards of glass or small components from kitchen equipment being mixed up with food;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers on accident prevention issues through supervision, support and training.

Plan

1. We will undertake a risk assessment check on our premises and activities at least annually, and will use this as opportunity to make sure that points for action identified in the previous check have been followed up and acted upon;
2. We will keep records of our risk assessments and reviews;
3. We will clean and check equipment regularly in accordance with legislation and/or best practice at least annually;
4. We will check and update our records on children's and adults' medical needs, allergies etc at least annually;
5. We will check our records of contact details for parents, carers and emergency health facilities at least annually;
6. We will check at least annually that our first aid boxes are in working order and adequately stocked;

7. We will ask our health and safety officer to provide a report to our management board on an annual basis, detailing our health and safety responsibilities, and the extent to which we are compliant with them;
8. We will have fire drills at least annually, which will form part of a regular review of our fire management plan;
9. We will review entries in the accident book at least annually, reporting any serious accidents to the management board and take action to prevent similar accidents in the future, as far as possible;
10. We will review our insurance arrangements on an annual basis.

The name of our health and safety officer, responsible for overseeing our health and safety and accident prevention work, is Clare McGrath

He/she can be contacted on 07972789095

We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on:

