



## **Health and Safety Policy**

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## **1.0 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The Learning Sanctuary treats the health, safety and welfare of the people in our care, staff and visitors as our top priority.

We will endeavour to comply with all applicable health & safety legislation, including the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and all regulations made under the act.

The Learning Sanctuary has established suitable policies, procedures, risk assessments and safe systems of work to support compliance and minimise risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

We shall foster a common sense and proportionate approach to health & safety matters.

This policy has been developed with regard to applicable UK health and safety legislation and Health and Safety Executive guidance, together with The Learning Sanctuary safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and person-centred practice framework.

This policy shall be reviewed annually, or following a health & safety related incident, feedback from an interested party, or significant changes to the service premises/activities.

This policy is available to staff, volunteers, service users, families/carers/representatives, commissioners and other relevant stakeholders on request.

Further information is available on request.

## **2.0 ORGANISATION**

### **2.1 Responsibilities of the Directors**

Jenny Mills and Andrew Mullane, Directors of The Learning Sanctuary, have overall responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of employees and all persons who may be affected by TLS operations.

Specifically, the Directors are responsible for:

- Reviewing the service health and safety policy annually and implementing new arrangements where necessary.
- Providing appropriate resources within the company's budget to meet statutory requirements and TLS health and safety policies, procedures and standards.
- Seeking specialist advice on health and safety matters which the company may not feel competent to deal with.
- Enable health and safety policies and procedures to be implemented and complied with.
- Ensuring effective health and safety management arrangements are in place for carrying out regular inspections and risk assessments, implementing actions and submitting inspection reports to the proprietors where necessary.
- Communicating the health and safety policy, and other appropriate health and safety information, to all relevant people, including contractors.
- Carrying out health and safety investigations.

- Ensuring all staff are competent to carry out their roles and are provided with adequate information, instruction and training.
- Ensuring that the premises, plant and equipment are maintained in a serviceable condition.
- Reporting any significant hazards which need rectifying.
- Monitoring purchasing and contracting procedures to ensure compliance with TLS policy.

## **2.2 Responsibilities of the office staff (in the case of no office staff being employed, this responsibility falls to the Directors)**

The office staff are responsible for supporting the Director in the day-to-day administration and implementation of the health and safety policy.

Members of the office staff will be allocated specific health and safety roles to be carried out as part of their job description.

In addition to responsibilities delegated by the Director, the office staff are specifically responsible for:

- Maintaining, or having access to, an up-to-date library of relevant published health and safety guidance from appropriate sources, and ensuring that all staff are aware of, and make use of, such guidance.
- Ensuring regular health and safety risk assessments are undertaken for the company's activities, and that control measures are implemented.
- Ensuring that appropriate safe working procedures are brought to the attention of all staff.
- Resolving health, safety and welfare problems when members of staff refer to them, and informing the Director of any problems to which they cannot achieve a satisfactory solution with the resources available to them.
- Carrying out regular inspections of all areas of the companies to ensure that equipment, furniture and activities are safe, and recording these inspections where required.
- Arranging for the repair, replacement or removal of any item of furniture or equipment which has been identified as unsafe.
- Collating and maintaining records related to health, safety and welfare.
- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable employees and service users to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety.
- Ensuring that all accidents (including near misses) are promptly reported and investigated using the appropriate forms.
- Ensuring that when contracts have been awarded, health and safety is included in specifications and contract conditions, taking account of TLS policy and procedures.

## **2.4 Responsibilities of all Employees**

Under the Health and Safety at work Act (1974) all employees have general health and safety responsibilities. Employees must be aware that they are obliged to take care of their own health and safety whilst at work, along with that of others who may be affected by their actions.

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others in undertaking their work.
- Comply with the TLS health and safety policy and procedures at all times.
- Apply the company's health and safety policy to their own department or area of work and be directly responsible to the Director for the application of the health and safety procedures and arrangements.
- Report all accidents and incidents in line with the reporting procedure.
- Co-operate with company management on all matters relating to health and safety.
- Not to intentionally interfere with or misuse any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Report all defects in condition of premises or equipment, and any health and safety concerns immediately to the relevant person.
- Report immediately to the appropriate staff any shortcomings in the arrangements for health and safety.
- Ensure that they only use equipment or machinery that they are competent / have been trained to use.
- Make use of all necessary control measures and personal protective equipment provided for health and safety reasons.

### **3.0 ARRANGEMENTS**

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### **3.1 Risk Assessments**

#### **General Risk Assessments**

The company risk assessments (for all activities, premises and one-off activities) will be co-ordinated by a member of the office staff, following guidance contained in this policy, and are approved by the Director.

These risk assessments are available for all staff to view and are held centrally.

Risk assessments shall be reviewed every term in line with the termly monitoring inspection, or following significant changes to the activity or premises, or following an accident/incident, or following feedback from an interested party. Staff are made aware of any changes to risk assessments relating to their work.

Risk assessments shall take account of the individual needs of all employees, service users, staff, volunteers, visitors and any other persons affected by TLS activities.

#### **Individual Risk Assessments**

Specific risk assessments relating to individuals, e.g. staff member or volunteers, are held on that person's file and will be undertaken and approved by the Director and/or the office staff. Such risk assessments will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Director and/or the office staff.

It is the responsibility of employees to inform the Director and/or the office staff of any medical condition (including pregnancy) which may impact upon their work.

Service users should be supported to share relevant health or medical information needed for safe support. Information from families, carers or representatives may also be considered where appropriate, but adult consent, confidentiality, legal authority and the Mental Capacity Act 2005 must be respected.

### **Activity Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments for off-site activities will be carried out by the responsible staff member, referring to the model risk assessments, and the office staff for advice if required.

Whenever a new course/program is adopted or developed, all activities are checked against the model risk assessments and significant findings incorporated into the course plan documentation.

### **3.2 Monitoring and Inspection**

A general inspection of the premises, equipment and facilities shall be conducted termly by a member of the office staff.

Monitoring inspections of individual departments shall be conducted at this time.

Monitoring inspections shall be recorded on the provided form and records of monitoring inspections shall be kept in the office.

The office staff are responsible for following up items detailed in monitoring inspections.

Inspections of technical and key safety related equipment (e.g. fire alarms, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, gas appliances, electrical equipment etc) shall be conducted by competent contractors, as detailed in the appropriate sections of this policy.

The Directors are responsible for conducting an annual inspection and report on the performance of health & safety management systems.

### **3.3 Training & Communication**

All new employees, including work experience service users, shall receive training in health & safety aspects related to their role as part of their induction.

Staff training includes, but is not limited to, manual handling, emergency procedures, health & hygiene, first aid, COSHH and working at height.

Any changes to health & safety arrangements shall be briefed to all applicable staff during regular staff meetings, or via an ad-hoc meeting if deemed necessary.

Health & safety is a standing item on all staff meeting agendas.

Training and briefing records shall be held in the office.

The Director or the office staff shall ensure refresher training is completed within the prescribed time limits.

The statutory health & safety poster has been completed and is on display in the staff room.

Employees are encouraged to provide feedback on health & safety issues. Feedback received shall be considered by the Director and acted upon if deemed appropriate.

### **3.4 First Aid**

#### **Assessment of Need**

The level of first aid provision (staff training, first aid kits and internal procedures) has been determined by risk assessment and shall be reviewed annually or following a related incident, or feedback from external stakeholders, or significant changes to the premises/company.

#### **First Aiders**

The Director is the designated staff member responsible for administering first aid. They hold a current Workplace First Aid, and have completed a Medication Training For Care e-learning course. They shall keep their certification up-to-date through regular refresher training.

All other staff members undertake the Workplace First Aid every 3 years.

#### **First Aid Kits**

First aid kits are located in the following areas of the service:

- Kitchen (FULL KIT)
- Transport kit for off site activities (2 x FULL KITS)

All first aid kits are clearly identifiable with a first aid sign and available to all staff.

First aid kits are replenished regularly. Supplies are kept in the TLS office. The nominated first aider is responsible for ensuring the contents of first aid kits are regularly checked, items are sterile/suitable for use, in-date, replenished when needed and stock ordered.

Each full first aid kit contains the following in sealed packages:

- Waterproof plasters.
- Blue plasters (for kitchen staff).
- Eye pad with bandage.
- Triangular bandages.
- Safety pins.
- Sterile dressings (assorted sizes).
- Moist wipes. (medicated, alcohol free)
- Disposable gloves.

#### **Medical Attention Procedure**

Should a volunteer suffer an accident or require urgent medical attention, the following procedure must be followed:

- Check for any immediate danger to the service user.

- Assess the volunteers condition.
- If you are not a trained first aider, request help from the nearest trained staff member.
- If necessary, call 999 - ask for an ambulance and answer all questions calmly.
- Administer first aid as appropriate until help arrives.
- Arrange for a member of staff to contact the volunteers families/representatives where appropriate/carer and make them aware of the situation.
- If families/representatives where appropriate/carer cannot be contacted, leave a message asking them to contact TLS urgently. The volunteers emergency contact person may have to be informed in the case of families/representatives where appropriate being unavailable.
- A member of staff must accompany the volunteer to hospital and stay with them until their family member/representative/carer arrives.
  - Complete a Medical Incident Form and hand to the TLS office.

### **Infectious Diseases including Covid 19:**

The following arrangements are in place in order to minimise the risk to staff and volunteers of infectious diseases:

- The director is responsible for keeping abreast of any new information relating to infectious, notifiable and communicable diseases and local health issues. New information shall be disseminated to staff members and families/carers/representatives where appropriate as necessary.
- Infectious (and Covid) diseases posters are displayed in the TLS
- If a volunteer feels unwell, is sick, has diarrhoea, has an accident and/or staff feel that they may have an infectious disease that may put other service users/staff at risk, they will be isolated in the back room and arrangements made for collection by their family member/representative/carer.
- For COVID-19 related symptoms, volunteers will be isolated in the designated area until collection.
- Emergency contact numbers will be used if the family member/representative/carer cannot be contacted.
- The volunteers and family member/representative's right to confidentiality shall be respected.
- The volunteer shall be treated in a sympathetic, caring and understanding manner.
- Parents/carers shall be kept informed of any infectious diseases occurring at TLS
- We expect, and inform, families/carers/representatives where appropriate/referrer to notify us if their service user is suffering from any infectious disease that may put others at risk.
- We expect, and inform, families/carers/representatives where appropriate/referrer to call or email the TLS office in the morning if their service user is unwell and will not be attending TLS.
- We expect, and inform, families/carers/representatives where appropriate to state the reasons for any absence when staff make contact (as per safeguarding policy)

Individual Health Care Plans



The Learning Sanctuary recognises that some volunteers may have medical conditions that require support so that they can attend TLS regularly and take part in TLS activities.

Health Care Plans will be developed for all volunteers with medical conditions requiring support during TLS time.

- Plans are developed with input from the family member/representative/carer/referrer and The Learning Sanctuary staff will familiarise themselves prior to a volunteer starting with us.
- Plans are reviewed as necessary by the Director, office staff or key worker with input from the family member/representative/carer.
- Parents/carers/referrers are expected to inform TLS of any change in their service user's condition or medication requirements.
- Parents/carers are expected to supply The Learning Sanctuary with any life-saving prescription medication their service user may require.
- Relevant staff are briefed on the volunteers medical requirements and administration of any medication.
- Copies of Health Care Plans can be accessed by all staff members

### Medication

Competent staff members shall only administer prescription or non-prescription medication to volunteers where there is a health reason to do so and we have received written consent from the family member/representative/carer (e.g., penicillin, ear/eye drops, cough mixture, allergy creams & pills and travel sickness pills - No Aspirin shall be administered). Staff members will not administer a greater dose than the official recommended dosage unless with doctor's prescribed permission.

Competent staff members shall only administer life-saving prescription medication to volunteers in accordance with their health care plan and with written consent from their family member/representative/carer

(e.g., for anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy).

All medication shall be stored in accordance with product instructions, in their original container and in a safe and secure location, out of reach of volunteers. If stated, the medication may need to be stored in the fridge located in the TLS office.

EpiPens and inhalers are kept in a locked medical cabinet, situated in the kitchen.

### Anaphylaxis

A list of volunteers who may require the use of EpiPens due to susceptibility to anaphylaxis is kept in the medical file in the back room, and kept up to date by the office staff.

All staff members have been trained in anaphylaxis awareness and the use of epipens.

The following procedure regarding anaphylaxis is briefed to all staff members and regularly reviewed during staff meetings:

- Educate susceptible volunteers so that during meal times they know what not to eat or touch.
- The volunteer may be unwell if they exhibit the following symptoms:

- Strange scratching at neck.
- Strange unformed sentences.
- Wheezing / gasping for breath.
- Tongue may be 'tingling'.
- This indicates their airway may be affected and requires action.
- Send for additional help and call an ambulance, stating anaphylaxis.
- Hold the volunteer on your lap or support their seating position
- Administer adrenaline.
- Call their family member/representative/carer.
- Administer a second dose if needed after 5 minutes.

### Diabetes

The individual care plan will be followed, keeping family member/representative/s informed at all times. All medical items i.e insulin, blood sugar level monitor, sweets/snacks kept in a single bag located in the service medical cabinet, dependent on the service user's/adults' individual care plan. If the volunteer is offsite this bag MUST ALWAYS BE WITH THEM, UNDER A MEMBER OF STAFF'S SUPERVISION.

All contact details and care plan instructions in bag and posted in the backroom in case of emergency. i.e., hypo situation.

### 3.5 Accidents

#### Accident Reporting - Internal

All accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near-misses, no matter how seemingly minor, must be reported to the director without delay.

A volunteer Accident Book and a Staff Accident Book is located in the office and must be completed following any accident. Details recorded include a brief description of the accident, who was involved, location, date, time and action taken.

The office shall investigate all accidents, report their findings to the Director and act accordingly to minimise the risk of further occurrences. Where equipment or systems of work are found to be a causal affect, remedial actions shall be taken immediately.

The Accident Book shall be reviewed annually by the office and any trends identified reported to the Director for action.

Completed Accident Books must be kept for a minimum of 3 years.

#### Accident Reporting - HSE

In accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Last updated 2013) (RIDDOR), the following must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive in writing by the director within 10 days of occurring:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/>

- Deaths (to be reported by telephone without delay).
- Major injuries (see HSE website for definitions - to be reported by telephone without delay).
- Injuries to an employee resulting in them being unable to work for 3 or more consecutive days (including weekends).
- Injuries to learners, and other non-employees, through activities connected to TLS activities, that lead to a hospital visit.
- Specified occupational diseases (see HSE website for guidance - to be reported by telephone without delay).
- Specified dangerous occurrences (see HSE website for guidance - to be reported by telephone without delay).

### Accidents - Volunteers

In addition, the following arrangements are in place should a learner suffer an accident:

- All The Learning Sanctuary volunteers, families/carers/representatives where appropriate are informed via a phone call of any accident that happened during the day.

### 3.6 Fire Safety

See separate Fire Safety policy for details.

### 3.7 Off site Visits

All trips are planned in advance and risk assessed, in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and The Care Act 2014.

### Planning & Preparation

When planning a trip, the responsible member of staff shall:

- Seek permission from the Directors for the trip, as they have ultimate responsibility for the volunteers, irrespective of whether they are present on the trip or not.
- Remember that they are responsible for all aspects of the trip, including preparation and post-trip activities, and that during the trip they are responsible for the care and welfare of the volunteers.
- Ensure that before a trip takes place, a member of staff visits the venue to assess the risks that may occur there, or on the journey, and check the availability of essential facilities, e.g. toilets, eating areas etc...
- Lead staff member to complete an off-site risk assessment form before trips which require a higher level of risk management e.g., Residential trips. Risk Assessment forms must be handed to the Director for approval in advance of any change to a prescribed program.
- Ensure that the location of the venue and the length of the journey are taken into account when considering the trip's suitability for the volunteers, in terms of their cultural requirements, physical disabilities, age, size and maturity..

### Transport

Staff of The Learning Sanctuary use their own transport and company mini bus to transport volunteers.

- Please see Lone Working policy and Driving at work policy
- The trip lead shall ensure that there is a seat available for every person going on the trip, and that suitable seatbelts are fitted.
- A first aid kit will be on board at all times,
- Insurance and other key documents will be part of the trip leads essential documentation

### During the Trip

Whilst undertaking the trip, the responsible member of staff shall:

- Ensure that the safety of the volunteers is the first priority.
- Ensure that all adults attending the trip, including family member/representative/carer/volunteers, are fully briefed on their role and responsibilities including safeguarding of volunteers, the aims of the trip, any emergency arrangements
- Ensure that all volunteers are prepared for the trip by explaining the aims of the trip, the expected standards of behaviour, the importance of following all rules and of not taking any undue risks.
- Ensure that a first-aid kit, sick bags (where transport is to be used) and mobile phone for emergency usage are taken on the trip.
- Ensure that volunteers are wearing appropriate clothing and correct footwear, as required for the trip including protective measures against the weather.
- Ensure that a list of all volunteers attending, including emergency contact numbers and medical requirements, is taken on the trip.

### After the Trip

Once the trip is complete, the responsible member of staff shall:

- Contact families/representatives where appropriate for feedback,

### Trips Involving Animal Contact

Trips with The Learning Sanctuary will include our therapy dogs and all the dogs who walk as part of The Learning Sanctuaries enterprise business 'Wanderlust Walkies' and all participants will need a signed disclaimer against injury caused by the dogs. The dogs will be off leads in a specified dog walking area. Participation will be optional for the volunteers.

Trips that may involve volunteers coming into contact with animals, e.g., farm or petting zoo trips, may present a risk of ill health to volunteers Risk assessments for such trips must consider the HSE Advice "Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions" and suitable hygiene control measures established and briefed to volunteers and staff.

### Higher Risk Activities

Trips involving activities such as trekking, caving, climbing, water sports etc... are considered higher risk. Venues providing such activities must hold a license, as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations (2004). This license shall be checked, and a copy kept on file, in the office, before the trip takes place.

### **3.8 Insurance**

The Learning Sanctuary have purchased, and shall maintain, public liability insurance of £10M to cover our activities and facilities.

Insurance certificates are filed and can be made available for inspection by all interested parties or external stakeholders.

### **3.9 Smoking**

The Learning Sanctuary operates a no-smoking policy applying to all staff, volunteers, families/representatives where appropriate, visitors, work experience service users and contractors when they are on or offsite.

The site is an entirely smoke free environment and this includes the use of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products.

Smoking is not permitted at any time anywhere in the grounds including toilets, corridors, staff room or the car park.

At The Learning Sanctuary aim to provide an environment where good health is promoted for all and to raise awareness of the dangers associated with exposure to tobacco smoke.

All transport provided or contracted by the company is smoke free and will display compulsory signage as required by the Health Act.

Smoking is not permitted during events held within or outside normal hours anywhere in the grounds or buildings.

All staff and family member/representative helpers are expected to refrain from smoking on all trips, activities and events.

### **3.10 Security**

The Learning Sanctuary treats the security of our volunteers as a top priority. Security arrangements are monitored and reviewed regularly by the service and following a security related incident or feedback from an interested party.

Security arrangements currently in place include:

Reasonable security measures will be maintained to protect people and premises. Doors or other security measures must not be used for the purpose of unlawfully preventing a service user from leaving. Where a person leaves unexpectedly and there is concern for their safety, staff must follow the TLS Leaving the Service Unexpectedly (Absconding) Policy.

- Keeping the front door locked as an extra security measure when the premises are empty.
- Front door is fobbed and linked to the firm alarm
- Ensuring all visitors and staff sign-in in the visitors book upon arrival, and sign-out when they depart, with the time recorded and witnessed by a staff member.

- Ensuring all visitors show identification upon arrival if unknown to the company.
- Requiring families/carers/representatives where appropriate/referrers to inform staff in advance in any change to transport arrangements.

Lone working with a service user must be based on the person's own consent where they have capacity, their individual support needs, safeguarding considerations and risk assessment. A family member or carer cannot consent on behalf of an adult unless they have relevant lawful authority or the Mental Capacity Act 2005 decision-making framework applies.

- Providing lockable metal filing cabinets for personnel files etc. to satisfy data protection, confidentiality and fire risk requirements.

### **3.11 Levels of Supervision**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises the importance of maintaining suitable levels of supervision for our volunteers. The minimum staffing ratios outlined below shall always be adhered to.

The following applies throughout the company:

- Volunteers will always be within sight of an adult.
- Registers will be taken at the beginning of the day to ensure learners are on the premises. Daily absence procedures operated by the office.
- Volunteers will be supervised when eating and drinking.
- Adults will be aware of volunteers using the toilet/bathroom.

### **3.12 Electrical Safety**

The following arrangements relating to electrical safety are in place:

- All employees shall visually check electrical equipment, including plugs and cables, before use to ensure that it is in safe working order.
- Electrical equipment is sited carefully to avoid trailing leads. Lead covers are available in every room.
- Volunteers are only allowed to use electrical equipment once trained and with staff supervision.
- Portable electrical equipment is regularly PAT tested by a competent person and records kept in the office.

### **3.13 Workplace Temperature**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises the importance of maintaining a reasonable temperature in all workplaces, in accordance with applicable legislation.

In accordance with the Education (Service Premises) Regulations (1999), the following minimum temperatures will be observed:

- Areas where there is a lower than normal level of physical activity (e.g., sick rooms): 21°C
- Areas where there is a normal level of physical activity (e.g., classrooms/canteens/ workshops): 18°C

- Areas where there is a higher than normal level of physical activity (e.g., gyms & drama workshops): 15°C

NB: All rooms shall be at least 18°C as service users are less able to withstand low temperatures than adults.

The office shall ensure that there are thermometers in every room and that regular checks are made of the room temperature.

### **3.14 Over-exposure to the Sun**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises the risk to volunteers of over-exposure to the sun and has made the following arrangements to minimise the risk:

- Parents/carers/referrers are encouraged to apply sun cream to their service user at the beginning of the day during periods of hot weather (especially if attending The Learning Sanctuary: Outdoors).
- Volunteers may bring a named bottle of sun cream to reapply at midday should they wish.

Supervising staff are to ensure that during hot weather:

- Volunteers wear sun hats when outside.
- Volunteers are encouraged to drink plenty of water.
- Volunteers are encouraged to sit in shaded areas when outside.
- Volunteers are taught about being Sun SMART
- Stay in the shade 11am to 3pm where possible
- Make sure you never burn.
- Aim to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses.
- Then use factor 30+ sunscreen.

### **3.15 Cleaning**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises the importance of maintaining clean and hygienic premises. The following health & safety arrangements are in place:

- A cleaning rota has been established for all areas of the building.
- A cleaning rota has been established for all equipment.
- Suitably competent staff have been employed to clean the premises.
- Cleaning staff are provided with suitable protective clothing (e.g., plastic gloves and aprons).
- Cleaning staff are provided with suitable hand washing facilities.
- All cleaning products are kept in locked cupboards out of reach of volunteers.
- All premises are to be cleaned and tidied before volunteers arrive.
- Hygienic and safe cleaning materials are available for use in emergencies.
- Toilets are regularly checked for cleanliness.

- Surfaces and tables are wiped clean between activities.
- Regular pest control visits are conducted by a competent specialist pest control contractor for preventative control.
- The office holds COSHH records of all products used by cleaning staff and the pest control contractor in case of emergencies.
- Good health and hygiene practices are actively promoted through notices, signs, posters, leaflets and staff meetings.

### **3.16 Personal Hygiene**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises the importance of promoting good personal hygiene practices. The following health & safety arrangements are in place:

- Staff and volunteers are encouraged to observe good practice in matters of personal hygiene at all times. Volunteers are encouraged to use the toilets correctly.
- Volunteers are encouraged to wash their hands regularly, especially before and after handling food, after using the toilet, after handling plants and animals, and after messy or dirty activities, particularly out of doors.
- Volunteers are encouraged to place their hands over their mouths when they cough or sneeze.
- Volunteers are taught to respect cultural differences that influence people's different attitudes to hygiene.
- Staff are encouraged to set a good example and model to volunteers in matters of personal hygiene.
- Good health and hygiene practices are actively promoted through notices, signs, posters, leaflets and staff meetings.

### **3.17 Kitchen Safety**

- Environmental health regulations are to be enforced.
- The floors are to be kept dry and free from obstruction - non-slip flooring has been installed.
- Care shall be taken when handling heavy and/or hot items.
- Training in food preparation and handling is offered to appropriate staff.

### **3.18 Vehicles on Site**

Only the company mini bus is to be left onsite

### **3.19 Slips, Trips and Falls**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises that slips, trips and falls are the most common cause of workplace accidents. The following arrangements are in place to reduce their occurrence:

- Non-slip flooring/matting has been installed in the kitchen and washroom/toilet areas.
- Steps are safeguarded with non-slip treads and heavy-duty edge tape.



- Manhole covers are covered with anti-slip products or marked individually for ease of location in the wet pour covered area.
- Playground surfaces are regularly checked for suitability and state of repair.
- Electrical equipment is sited carefully to avoid trailing leads.
- Corridors and walkways are kept clear of obstructions.
- Floors are thoroughly dried following cleaning and spillages.
- Yellow "wet floor" safety signs to be positioned when necessary.
- Leaves, ice and snow are removed from outside walkways.
- Employees are trained in the proper use of stepladders and kick stools.

### **3.20 Working at Height**

The Learning Sanctuary recognises that working at height can present a significant risk to health & safety. Where such activities cannot be avoided a risk assessment will be conducted to ensure such risks are adequately controlled.

The following arrangements are in place relating to working at height:

- When working at height, including accessing storage or putting up displays, staff are briefed to use appropriate stepladders or kick stools, not chairs, tables etc.
- Stepladders and kick stools shall be checked annually by the TLS office to ensure they are safe to use.
- The director shall ensure all work at height is properly planned and conducted in an approved manner. Scaffolding to be hired when necessary.
- Volunteers are not to use stepladders or kick stools.
- Contractors are to provide their own access equipment and their activities must be risk assessed before commencing work.

### **3.21 Display Screen Equipment**

In accordance with the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (1992), as amended 2002, the following arrangements are in place to manage the risk to significant users of display screen equipment:

- A display screen equipment assessment shall be conducted by a member of the office staff, and reviewed annually, or following significant changes to their work activities, or following a report of deterioration of the user's eyesight or general health.
- Where assessments indicate a risk to the user, changes to their work activities, equipment or system of work shall be considered.
- Significant users shall be provided with training and information relevant to their display screen equipment and workstation usage in order to minimise risks.
- Significant users are entitled to an eyesight test every 2 years by a qualified optician, and corrective glasses if required specifically for display screen equipment use.

NB: Significant users are those who use computers for continuous / near continuous spells of an hour at a time or more.

NB: The regulations do not apply to display screen equipment used by volunteers. However, it is good practice for staff to make sure volunteers are aware how to correctly set up and use their display screen equipment in order to minimise risks.

### **3.22 Contractors on Site**

The staff are responsible for ensuring that all contractors engaged to work on premises are suitably competent to conduct their activities and possess the correct levels of insurance.

All contractors are required to report to the office, sign the visitor's book and be briefed on any health & safety arrangements relating to their work on the premises (including fire procedures and vehicular access).

Contractors will be asked to provide the director with risk assessments and method statements for the work to be undertaken, which shall be agreed before work commences on site.

The office staff shall liaise with the Director to ensure that all necessary approvals have been received before major building works commence (e.g., planning permission, CDM compliance etc)

All work shall be arranged for suitable times of the day to minimise the risk to employees and volunteers.

All contractors, as visitors, on site during service hours must not be left alone with any volunteers for safeguarding reasons. Regular contractors, known to the TLS, who have to attend during service hours will have DBS clearance via the office.

The office staff shall monitor areas where contractors work and keep records of all work completed.

### **3.23 Lone Working**

Staff are encouraged not to work alone in TLS. Work carried out unaccompanied, or without immediate access to assistance, should be risk assessed to determine if the activity is necessary. Work involving potentially significant risks (e.g., working at height) should not be undertaken whilst working alone.

Where lone working cannot be avoided staff should:

Lone working with a service user must be based on the person's own consent where they have capacity, their individual support needs, safeguarding considerations and risk assessment. A family member or carer cannot consent on behalf of an adult unless they have relevant lawful authority or the Mental Capacity Act 2005 decision-making framework applies.

- Ensure they do not put themselves or others at risk.
- Ensure they have means to summon help in an emergency, e.g., access to a telephone or mobile telephone.
- When working off site, notify a colleague of their whereabouts and the estimated time of return.
- Key holders attending empty premises where there has been an incident or suspected crime should do so with a colleague if possible. They should not enter the premises unless they are sure it is safe to do so. Where necessary, contact appropriate emergency service and/or the Director.

- Report any incidents or situations where they may have felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

### 3.24 Manual Handling

Generic risk assessments for regular manual handling operations have been undertaken and are kept in the TLS office. Staff are provided with information on safe moving and handling techniques as part of their induction.

Staff should ensure they are not lifting heavy items and equipment unless they have received training and/or equipment in order to do so safely.

All manual handling activities which present a significant risk to the health and safety of staff shall be reported to the TLS office, and where such activities cannot be avoided a risk assessment shall be conducted to ensure such risks are adequately controlled. A copy of this risk assessment will be provided to employees who must follow the instructions given when carrying out the task.

### 3.25 Staff Well Being

The Learning Sanctuary recognises that the mental and physical wellbeing of our employees is key to the running of a successful provision and the service delivered to our volunteers.

All employees must declare to the Director any medical condition and regular medication they require, as well as providing emergency contact details for use in emergencies. All employee records shall be treated as confidential.

A designated room has been provided for employees to take their breaks, rest periods and refreshments in.

Employees may discuss in confidence with the Director any personal health or domestic issue which they feel may impact on their role with the company.

Employees must report to the Director any incidents relating to staff wellbeing such as violence, intimidation, stress or bullying.

### 3.26 Legionella

In order to minimise the risks from legionella, and similar waterborne bacteria, The Learning Sanctuary have made the following arrangements:

- **All volunteers and staff only drink bottled water and drinks provided by TLS.**

A member of the office staff is responsible for ensuring the following control measures are introduced and regularly conducted.

- Identifying and regularly flushing rarely used water outlets on a weekly basis
- Conducting monthly water temperature checks.
- Disinfecting and descaling showers, and other areas where water droplets may form, on a quarterly basis.
- Ensuring the water supply systems are regularly inspected and maintained by a competent contractor.

- Any contractors working on the water supply, or related systems, must ensure that they have taken into consideration measures to minimise the risk from legionella.

#### **4.0 INTEGRATED PERSON-CENTRED, SAFEGUARDING AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The detailed operational arrangements in section 3.0 must be applied alongside the following TLS principles. These provisions do not replace the practical controls above; they explain how those controls are to be applied within an adult community-based support service.

##### **4.1 Mental Capacity, Consent and Positive Risk-Taking**

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, a person aged 16 or over must be presumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity for the specific decision at the particular time. Staff must take all practicable steps to support the person to make their own decision. A person is not to be treated as lacking capacity simply because they make a decision that others consider unwise.

Where there is a genuine reason to doubt capacity for a particular health and safety decision, staff must follow the TLS Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy. Where a person lacks capacity, any act or decision on their behalf must be in their best interests and the least restrictive option available. Risk alone does not establish lack of capacity.

TLS supports positive risk-taking. Risk assessments should identify how a service user can participate as safely and independently as possible rather than automatically removing opportunities.

##### **4.2 Safeguarding Adults and Health & Safety**

A health and safety incident may also indicate abuse, neglect, self-neglect, exploitation, financial abuse, unsafe practice or inappropriate restraint. Immediate safety needs must be addressed and any safeguarding concern reported in accordance with the TLS Safeguarding Adults Policy and current North Yorkshire multi-agency safeguarding procedures. Health and safety investigation must not delay safeguarding or police action.

##### **4.3 No-Force and Least-Restrictive Practice**

TLS does not use force as a routine means of managing risk, behaviour, treatment, movement or compliance. Staff will use communication, reassurance, reasonable adjustments, de-escalation, environmental changes and other least-restrictive approaches.

Any exceptional emergency physical intervention must be dealt with under the TLS Positive Support, De-escalation and Physical Intervention Policy and applicable law. Where a person lacks capacity and an act may amount to restraint, the requirements of section 6 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 must be considered.

##### **4.4 Leaving the Service Unexpectedly / Missing Person**

Where a service user leaves or attempts to leave the service, a community activity or an agreed area unexpectedly, staff must follow the TLS Leaving the Service Unexpectedly (Absconding) Policy and the person's individual risk assessment. Staff must consider capacity, immediate risk, safeguarding, communication and the least restrictive response. An adult with capacity must not be physically prevented from leaving simply because staff disagree with the decision.

##### **4.5 Dynamic Risk Assessment**

Staff are expected to continually consider changing circumstances during day-to-day activities. A dynamic risk assessment is an immediate professional judgement about the person, environment, activity, hazards, likelihood and seriousness of harm and available control measures. Significant changes in risk, decisions and actions should be recorded where appropriate and should trigger review of formal risk assessments when necessary.

#### **4.6 Community, Animal and Practical Activities**

TLS activities include community access, animal care, dog walking, allotment and other practical tasks. These activities must be covered by suitable activity and individual risk assessments. Foreseeable hazards may include animal bites or scratches, zoonotic infection, allergies, manual handling, tools and equipment, traffic, members of the public, weather, terrain and environmental hazards.

Control measures may include hand hygiene, safe animal handling, suitable PPE where indicated, staff instruction and supervision, safe use of tools and equipment, first aid arrangements, mobile communication and appropriate emergency planning. Service users should be supported to undertake tasks as independently as their abilities and risk assessment allow.

#### **4.7 First Aid and Medical Emergencies**

First aid arrangements must be read with the TLS First Aid Policy. Named first aiders are Jenny Mills, Angie Ezard and Andrew Mullane, subject to current qualification records. Staff should seek consent before providing first aid where practicable. A person with capacity may refuse treatment. Where capacity is lacking, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the person's best interests must guide action. Emergency services should be contacted promptly where clinically indicated.

#### **4.8 Medication**

Any support with medication must follow TLS medication procedures and the person's individual plan. Staff must respect consent, capacity, prescribing instructions, safe storage and recording requirements. Medication must not be concealed or administered by force except where a lawful, properly assessed and documented arrangement specifically permits an approach consistent with applicable law and professional guidance.

#### **4.9 Infection Prevention, Hygiene and COSHH**

TLS will maintain proportionate infection-prevention arrangements including hand hygiene, cleaning, ventilation where appropriate, safe management of bodily fluids and animal-related hygiene. Hazardous substances will be assessed under COSHH, stored securely, labelled appropriately and used in accordance with instructions and control measures. Historic COVID-specific controls should not be treated as permanent requirements unless supported by current public-health advice or risk assessment.

#### **4.10 Food and Kitchen Safety**

Kitchen and food-related activities will be risk assessed. Good hygiene, allergen awareness, safe storage, prevention of cross-contamination and safe use of hot or sharp equipment will be maintained. The TLS kitchen is not used to prepare food for human consumption; where service users access kitchen facilities for practical activities, the relevant controls still apply.

#### **4.11 Transport and Driving at Work**

Where staff drive for TLS activities, drivers must hold the appropriate licence, be fit to drive, use a roadworthy and appropriately insured vehicle, ensure passengers use suitable restraints and comply with road traffic law. Transport arrangements should take account of individual mobility, communication, behavioural, medical and safeguarding needs and should be covered by the TLS Driving at Work arrangements and relevant risk assessments.

#### **4.12 Staff Wellbeing, Violence and Aggression**

Work-related stress, violence, aggression, intimidation, bullying and other risks to staff will be assessed and managed. Staff should raise concerns early. Serious unsafe practice or wrongdoing may also be raised under the TLS Whistleblowing Policy. Staff health information will be treated confidentially and only information reasonably necessary for workplace risk or adjustments should be requested.

#### **4.13 Complaints, Whistleblowing and Learning**

Health and safety concerns raised through complaints, whistleblowing, incident reporting, safeguarding or staff feedback will be considered for organisational learning. Significant incidents and trends should lead to review of relevant risk assessments, support plans, procedures, training, premises or equipment where necessary.

#### **4.14 Related TLS Policies**

Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure.

Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy and Procedure.

Relational and Behaviour Policy.

Positive Support, De-escalation and Physical Intervention Policy.

Leaving the Service Unexpectedly (Absconding) Policy and Procedure.

First Aid Policy and Procedure.

Handling People's Money Policy.

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Fire Safety, Lone Working, Driving at Work, medication and other relevant risk-management arrangements.

#### **4.15 Monitoring and Review**

This policy, including the detailed arrangements in section 3.0, will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a significant incident, safeguarding learning, material change to premises or activities, relevant changes in law or guidance, or material changes to TLS service delivery. Where current law or applicable local safeguarding requirements set a higher or different standard, the current requirement will take precedence.