



First Aid Policy and Procedure

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Learning Sanctuary is committed to providing prompt, appropriate and person-centred first aid to service users, staff, volunteers and visitors who become injured or unwell while attending or taking part in activities provided by The Learning Sanctuary.

First aid arrangements will be based on the risks arising from The Learning Sanctuary's activities and environment, including community-based activities and work with animals. The aim is to preserve life, prevent deterioration, promote recovery and obtain professional medical assistance when required.

This policy should be read alongside The Learning Sanctuary Health and Safety and Risk Assessment arrangements, 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 any individual health, support, risk or emergency plans.

2. AIMS

- To ensure adequate and appropriate first aid equipment, facilities and trained personnel are available in accordance with assessed need.
- To ensure staff know how to obtain first aid and emergency medical assistance.
- To provide first aid in a way that respects the person's dignity, communication needs, consent, capacity, wishes and preferences.
- To ensure incidents, injuries and first aid treatment are recorded accurately and reviewed where appropriate.
- To identify when an injury or presentation may indicate a safeguarding concern and respond in accordance with The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy.
- To ensure first aid arrangements cover both the main service and community/off-site activities.

3. LEGAL AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

The Learning Sanctuary will have regard to relevant health and safety law and current Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. This includes:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

- Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1979, where applicable to accident records.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005, particularly sections 1, 4, 5 and 6 where relevant.
- Care Act 2014 and adult safeguarding duties and guidance.

First aid provision will be determined by a first aid needs assessment appropriate to The Learning Sanctuary's circumstances, hazards, staffing, service-user needs, activities, location and access to emergency services.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Director

The Director is responsible for ensuring that:

- appropriate first aid arrangements are in place and reviewed;
- sufficient trained first aid cover is available for the service and planned activities;
- first aid qualifications are valid and training is renewed when required;
- first aid kits are available, accessible, appropriately stocked and checked;
- staff understand how to summon emergency assistance;
- relevant incidents are recorded, reviewed and reported to the HSE under RIDDOR where required;
- safeguarding concerns arising from an injury, disclosure or incident are acted upon promptly.

4.2 Appointed first aiders

The Learning Sanctuary's named first aiders are:

- Jenny Mills
- Angie Ezard
- Andrew Mullane

First aiders are responsible for:

- responding promptly to illness or injury and assessing the immediate situation;
- providing first aid within the limits of their training and competence;
- calling an ambulance or other professional medical assistance where required;
- remaining with the person, where appropriate, until further help arrives or a safe handover is made;
- recording treatment and the circumstances of the incident;
- checking and replenishing first aid supplies as allocated.

4.3 All staff and volunteers

- Know how to contact a first aider and summon emergency assistance.
- Follow individual risk, health and emergency plans relevant to the people they support.
- Do not provide treatment beyond their training or competence, except for reasonable emergency action where necessary.
- Report accidents, injuries, near misses and concerns promptly.
- Maintain confidentiality and share health information only where there is a legitimate need to know.

5. CONSENT, MENTAL CAPACITY AND FIRST AID

Where possible, staff should explain what has happened, what first aid is proposed and seek the person's consent before providing treatment. Information should be given in a way the person can understand, with appropriate communication support.

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.

A person with capacity may refuse first aid or medical treatment. Staff should explain foreseeable risks and encourage appropriate medical support where necessary, but must not use force simply to make a person accept treatment.

Where a person lacks capacity to consent to the particular first aid decision, staff must act in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and The Learning Sanctuary Mental Capacity Act Policy. Any act on the person's behalf must be in their best interests and the least restrictive option available.

In a life-threatening emergency, staff should summon emergency medical assistance immediately and provide necessary first aid within their competence. The Mental Capacity Act allows acts in connection with care or treatment for a person who lacks capacity where the statutory requirements are met. Any restraint is subject to the additional requirements in section 6 and must be necessary to prevent harm and proportionate to the likelihood and seriousness of that harm.

6. FIRST AID PROCEDURE – ON SITE

In the event of injury or sudden illness:

- Make the immediate area safe without placing anyone else at unreasonable risk.
- Assess the person and seek a trained first aider as soon as appropriate.
- Call 999 immediately where the situation appears life-threatening or urgent; staff do not need to wait for a first aider before calling emergency services.
- Provide first aid within the responder's competence and follow current first aid training.
- Use appropriate infection-control precautions and personal protective equipment where required.
- Do not move an injured person unnecessarily unless remaining in place creates a greater immediate danger or movement is required as part of appropriate first aid.
- Provide reassurance and communication appropriate to the person's needs.
- Arrange an appropriate handover to ambulance staff, family/carer/representative or another responsible professional where applicable.
- Complete the required accident/first aid record as soon as reasonably practicable.

7. COMMUNITY AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES

First aid arrangements must extend to community activities, animal-care activities, allotment work, dog walking and other off-site activities undertaken by The Learning Sanctuary.

Staff planning an off-site activity should consider:

- the activity-specific risk assessment and individual service-user risks;
- the availability of appropriately trained staff;
- a suitable portable first aid kit;
- access to a charged mobile phone and emergency contact arrangements;

- the location and how emergency services could access it;
- known health needs and emergency information that staff legitimately need to carry;
- weather, terrain, animals, tools, traffic and other activity-specific hazards;
- how the needs of other service users will be safely managed if one person requires emergency assistance.

There will be appropriate first aid cover for off-site activities based on the risk assessment and first aid needs assessment. The Learning Sanctuary will not rely on a host venue to provide first aid unless this has been explicitly established as part of the activity planning.

8. ANIMAL-RELATED INJURIES AND EXPOSURES

Because service users may take part in practical animal-care activities, staff must consider foreseeable risks including bites, scratches, allergic reactions, zoonotic infection, contamination and manual handling. Animal-related injuries must receive appropriate first aid and be recorded.

- Bites and scratches should be cleaned promptly in accordance with current first aid guidance and medical advice sought where indicated.
- Any serious bleeding, significant wound, suspected infection, allergic reaction or other concerning symptoms require prompt medical assessment.
- Where there is a possible exposure to infection, staff must follow hygiene, infection-control and relevant risk-assessment procedures.
- The animal-related risk assessment should be reviewed following a significant incident.

9. FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

First aid kits will be provided in locations identified by the first aid needs assessment. Contents will reflect the risks of the service and current HSE guidance rather than relying solely on a fixed generic list.

As a minimum, arrangements will include:

- clearly identifiable first aid supplies;
- sterile dressings and plasters in suitable sizes;
- eye dressings where appropriate;

- triangular bandages or other suitable dressings where identified as necessary;
- disposable gloves;
- cleansing materials appropriate for first aid use;
- additional items identified by the first aid needs assessment.

First aid kits must be checked regularly and after significant use. Expired, damaged or depleted items must be replaced. Medication will not be stored in general first aid kits. Any medication support must be managed under The Learning Sanctuary's separate medication arrangements.

10. SAFEGUARDING AND UNEXPLAINED INJURY

An injury may sometimes indicate abuse, neglect, self-neglect, exploitation, self-harm or another safeguarding concern. Staff should consider the context of the injury and remain professionally curious, particularly where the explanation is unclear, inconsistent, repeated or concerning.

First aid must not be delayed while safeguarding concerns are considered. The person's immediate health needs should be addressed and any safeguarding concern reported promptly to the Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure.

Where the injury may be evidence of abuse or a crime, staff should avoid unnecessary questioning or actions that could compromise evidence, while ensuring necessary first aid and emergency care are provided.

11. SELF-HARM AND MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Where an injury is associated with self-harm, suicidal thoughts or a significant mental health crisis, staff must address the immediate physical injury and the wider risk. Emergency services should be contacted where there is an immediate threat to life or serious harm.

The incident must also be considered under the person's risk or crisis plan and The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy. Where risk is escalating, relevant health, social care or multi-agency professionals should be involved as appropriate.

12. RECORDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

An accident/first aid record must be completed on the same day where possible, or as soon as reasonably practicable. Records should be factual, clear and proportionate.

Records should include:

- name of the injured or unwell person;
- date, time and location;
- what happened and any known circumstances leading to the incident;
- injury, illness or symptoms observed;
- first aid or other immediate action provided;
- whether emergency services or other professionals were contacted;
- who was informed and any handover arrangements;
- any safeguarding, risk-assessment or follow-up action required;
- name and signature/identification of the person completing the record.

Health and accident information must be stored securely and handled in accordance with data protection requirements. Information should be shared only where necessary for care, safety, safeguarding, legal reporting or other legitimate purposes.

13. NOTIFICATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Where a service user is injured or becomes significantly unwell, the appropriate person should be informed in accordance with the service user's consent, capacity, individual support arrangements and any legal authority held by a representative. This may include a family member, carer, advocate, social worker, commissioner or other relevant professional.

The service user should be involved in decisions and information sharing as fully as possible. A parent or carer of an adult does not automatically have legal authority to make healthcare decisions on that person's behalf.

Following a significant incident, the Director should consider whether the person's risk assessment, support plan, activity arrangements, environment, equipment or staff guidance requires review.

14. RIDDOR AND STATUTORY REPORTING

The Director is responsible for determining whether an incident is reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) and for ensuring any required report is made by the responsible person within the applicable timeframe.

Not every accident at The Learning Sanctuary is reportable. RIDDOR applies only where the statutory criteria are met, including specified work-related injuries, certain occupational diseases, defined dangerous occurrences, and certain injuries to people who are not at work where the accident arises out of or in connection with work and the reporting criteria are met.

Current HSE guidance and reporting arrangements must be checked when deciding whether a report is required, as statutory requirements and reporting processes may change.

15. TRAINING AND COMPETENCE

First aiders must hold appropriate, current training identified through The Learning Sanctuary's first aid needs assessment. Training records and expiry dates will be maintained.

The Learning Sanctuary will arrange renewal training before qualifications expire wherever practicable. Staff whose qualification has expired must not be presented as a current qualified first aider until appropriate retraining has been completed.

Additional training may be identified through risk assessment, for example in relation to anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes, life-threatening bleeding, specific medical needs, mental health emergencies or risks arising from particular activities.

16. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Director will review first aid arrangements, accident patterns, first aid supplies, training and the first aid needs assessment periodically and following significant incidents or material changes to the service.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where legislation, HSE guidance, safeguarding arrangements, service-user needs, premises, activities or The Learning Sanctuary's service model changes.

17. LINKS WITH OTHER THE LEARNING SANCTUARY 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.
- Risk Assessment and Health and Safety arrangements.
- Medication procedures and individual health/emergency plans, where applicable.

APPENDIX 1 – FIRST AIDERS / APPOINTED PERSONS

NAME	ROLE / QUALIFICATION	CERTIFICATE EXPIRY
Jenny Mills	Director	February 2028
Angie Ezard	Support worker	March 2027
Andrew Mullane	Director	April 2029