

The health and safety policy is important for everybody at The Link Centre. It sets out our arrangements for identifying and controlling hazards and risks faced by therapists, clients, supervisors, supervisees, trainers and trainees and other people such as visitors, hirers and contractors.

The centre, which does not have any employers or any employees, is a small organisation housed in moderate premises and is therefore not governed by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. However, in the interests of the health and safety of all people using the premises it is the responsibility of everyone using the centre to promote good practice. This includes taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all users of the centre.

Health and safety measures all have the same purpose - to minimise the likelihood and severity of injury, ill health and damage which arise from incidents and conditions within The Link Centre. The principle that 'prevention is better than cure' is important. This forms an important part of this health and safety document. The centre rules are attached to the end of this document.

As well as being good practice within the centre, proper regard for health and safety can help all users to appreciate hazards and precautions encountered elsewhere whether at work, in industry, research, commerce, during leisure activities or at home.

Most accidents do not just happen. They occur either because of unsafe physical conditions, incorrect behaviour or a combination of these. The control of safety hazards is an essential part of effective management. The same applies to the control of health hazards.

The Directors of The Link Centre have overall responsibility for health and safety within the centre. In practice this responsibility is met by ensuring that all users of the centre consider health and safety as follows:

Trainers/therapists using The Link Centre have some responsibility for health and safety.

They are responsible for the health and safety of people whom they have arranged to meet with on the premises within the areas and activities under their control

They have a duty to provide and maintain high standards of cleanliness, hygiene and housekeeping

They should meet their responsibilities by routine checks and discussions to enable them to identify and assess potential health and safety hazards. After identifying hazards, they should ensure that reasonable precautions are taken immediately and that the hazard identified, and where relevant the action taken, is reported to the Directors who will take the necessary steps to solve the problem. All communication regarding this will be logged.

They should investigate all accidents and 'near misses' and ensure that the incident/s are reported, to the Directors of The Link Centre. All communication regarding this will be logged in an accident report book. These are important functions which enable the causes of accidents to be identified so that prompt and effective steps can be taken to prevent similar incidents in future.

They should consider whether the introduction of any new type of machine, substance, system of work or any substantial alteration to existing ones will create new health or safety problems.

They should ensure that the level of risk assessment is reviewed annually.

They should consult the Directors of The Link Centre if further discussion or information is needed.

All Users of The Link centre have a duty to:

Take reasonable care for their own health and safety while at The Link Centre.

Cooperate with the Directors as far as is necessary to enable the centre to comply with good practice regarding health and safety.

Notify the Directors of any unsafe equipment, substance, system of work or other situation, including those relating to contractors, of which they become aware.

Not deliberately or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for the purposes of health, safety and welfare.

Common Health and Safety Matters

Different activities have different types of hazards.

Electricity and Gas

Electricity and gas have the potential to kill. There are no electrical appliances on the premises or in the kitchen that are over 50volts. No electrical appliance is to be brought on to the premises without the consent of the Directors. The Directors will arrange for all items of electrical equipment to receive an annual safety check by a competent person, all users of such equipment should be on the look out for defects such as damaged plugs and cables. Any defective item should be effectively taken out of use and reported to the Directors who will take responsibility for repairs or disposal of the item.

If any user of the centre smells gas or suspects that they can smell gas then it is their responsibility to inform everyone in the building and then evacuate the premises and to ensure that the emergency gas number has been contacted. Emergency numbers are supplied at the end of this document.

The Directors and the Site manager must be informed as soon as is reasonably possible.

Hazardous Substances

No hazardous substances that are a risk to health are to be brought on to the premises other than by a competent contractor authorized to carry out work by the Directors. When authorisation is given the Directors will ensure that:

Suitable precautions to protect persons against the hazards have been taken.

Adequate written and spoken information about the hazardous substances is given to all persons who may be harmed by them.

Fire Precautions

As in most buildings, fire can be a potential serious hazard at The Link Centre. Smoke is usually the main danger posed by fire because it obscures vision, is toxic and can cause panic. Although the main aim of fire precautions is to protect human life, they have an additional purpose of avoiding or minimising loss and damage to buildings and property through fire.

Preventative measures against fire are important. They form the basis of rules, which have been made to reduce the likelihood of fires occurring:

The centre is a no smoking area. Smoking is prohibited within the building.

Flammable liquids and gases must not be brought into the building other than by specialist contractors who are qualified to use them. All aspects of safety regarding their use must be observed. The Directors will authorise the use of such in the very unlikely event they will be needed.

Naked flames such as candles, matches or lighters are not to be used at any time within the building.

Reactive measures are also important as follows:

Physical measures such as fire doors, smoke alarm systems and fire-fighting equipment will be provided, tested and maintained where necessary.

Organisational measures include regular fire evacuation practices and the use of fire fighting equipment. Details about fire evacuation routes will be displayed in each room.

Matters relating to fire precautions will be recorded in a logbook. After any evacuation, for whatever reason, including practices and false alarms, a centre Evacuation Report form should be completed.

Contractors

Contractors can create temporary hazards in areas where hazards are not normally present. They can pose a risk for centre users and also be at risk themselves from centre users. The Directors are responsible for the safe employment and management of contractors. Wherever possible work will be carried out only when the building is empty.

First Aid

The Link Centre will provide and maintain suitable first aid equipment, stored in an easily accessible place.

Visual Display Units

This includes assessing the visual display unit and its associated equipment and furniture to ensure that it meets the standard specified by the Regulations. These standards cover matters such as control of glare and reflections, adjustability of seating to suit different people. The centre will aim, as far as is practicable, to provide people with visual display unit facilities of a level which would meet the standards of good practice.

Violence to Staff

Instances of violence, including verbal abuse, threats and assault are unprecedented at The Link Centre. Nevertheless, the Directors are committed to minimising the likelihood of violence to anyone as far as is possible. If you think a situation involving your work could put you at risk, discuss this with the Directors. If you have been subjected to violence, obtain and complete a Violent Incident Report form. If injury is involved you should also complete an Accident Report form.

Information and Advice

Information about health and safety matters is available in various forms from different sources. These include internal and external training courses, publications by the Health and Safety Executive, The Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision for Science Services (CLEAPSS), articles in professional journals and college booklets and leaflets.

If in doubt seek advice.

Communications

All reports concerning accidents, dangerous occurrences, ill health, violence and evacuations should be sent promptly to the Directors of The Link Centre.

This health and safety document will be subject to annual review and will be available to all users of the centre.

Contact Numbers:

Police	999
NHS Direct (for confidential health advice)	0845 4647
Hospitals: Lewes (Minor injuries)	01273 474153
Brighton (A and E)	01273 696955
Broyle Place site manager - Sean	07747 696749
Directory enquiries	118 118
Emergency gas reports	0800 111 999