

1. GENERAL STATEMENT

Hackney Play Association Health & Safety statement of general policy and arrangements

Hackney Play Association believes that all children and young people need and want to take risks in their play.

We believe that a degree of risk in play is often beneficial. Benefits of risk in play include: development of physical skills such as walking, cycling, climbing, swimming, learning to fall safely, balance, life skills, social skills, experiencing failure, resilience, health, fitness, exhilaration and fun, self-esteem, self-awareness and ability to make judgements and to deal with risk and challenge.

Hackney Play Association aims:

- to offer children and young people the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and learning environment
- to manage the balance between the need to offer risk in play and the need to keep children and young people safe from harm, using risk benefit assessment
- to enable our staff to use their judgement to make decisions about risk and play, based on the use of risk benefit assessment
- to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all our staff, volunteers and children and families who use our services
- to provide and to maintain equipment and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health
- to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- to provide information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of all employees and volunteers

Hackney Play Association works to improve play opportunities for children and young people in Hackney.
Registered Charity No. 272651.

- so far as is reasonably practicable, regarding any place of work under Hackney Play Association's control, to maintain it in a condition that is safe and without risks to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to from it that are safe and without such risks
- to provide and maintain a working environment for employees and volunteers that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Hackney Play Association works in the context of the following related legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1989; the Children's Act; and the guidance set out in *Managing Risk in Play Provision: a Position Statement*, Play Safety Forum, 2002 and *Managing Risk in Play Provision: an Implementation Guide*, Play Safety Forum, 2013.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT

2.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees as the employer has overall and final responsibility for health and safety matters at Hackney Play Association, and for ensuring that health and safety legislation is complied with.

The Board of Trustees will periodically review the operation of its health and safety policy, and will ensure:

- employees and volunteers as appropriate receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters
- risk assessments or risk benefit assessments are undertaken for Hackney Play Association for significant risks, and the results written up and made available to all employees
- staff are trained to use dynamic risk benefit assessment to enable them to make judgements about managing risk in play
- accidents are investigated and reported to the Board of Trustees
- there are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of the premises and equipment
- there are adequate arrangements to liaise and co-operate on health and safety matters with other organisations where we work, eg Britannia Leisure Centre.

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to: Nicola Butler (the Health and Safety Officer).

All Project Managers are responsible for implementation of health and safety policy for their projects, currently Bridget Handscomb (Training), Janine Brady (Clapton Park), Sarah Wilson

(Homerton Grove), Janice Barker (Inclusion). This includes development and implementation of Risk Assessments and Risk Benefit Assessments and ensuring that any staff and volunteers that they manage are aware of their responsibilities.

2.2 All Employees

All employees have to:

- co-operate with managers on health and safety matters
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others
- report all health and safety concerns to the senior playworker.

All the staff of Hackney Play Association are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible, or if not, reported to the Senior Playworker at each of HPA's premises.

2.3 Training

Hackney Play Association will ensure that new employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.

Hackney Play Association will offer employees and volunteers opportunities for training on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: managing risk in playwork, risk benefit assessment, first aid and fire safety. Hackney Play Association will also offer training for manual handling, food hygiene, appropriate use of equipment, and any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work, as and when required.

If employees and volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should discuss with their line manager.

3. PERSONAL SAFETY

3.1 Personal Security

It is in the nature of the organisation's work that staff or volunteers may, on occasions, find themselves in potentially dangerous situations whilst on Hackney Play Association business.

Where staff are dealing with an individual or individuals (including children and young people) but feel uneasy about having the person concerned on site they have the right to refuse to make an appointment or give access if it would put them in that position.

3.2 Lone Working

Staff who are going to be lone working (either at HPA's premises or elsewhere) should make it clear to other staff where they will be, how long for and how they can be contacted, by regular emails to colleagues.

Staff should work closely together to minimise lone working at any of Hackney Play Association's premises.

Staff may also ask for a colleague to accompany them for any appointment or work that they would prefer to be accompanied.

There is no lone working during play service opening hours. It is Hackney Play Association's policy always to maintain a minimum staff ratio of 2 playworkers during contact time with children. In the event that 2 playworkers are not available, the play project will close and staff may be redeployed to one of Hackney Play Association's other services.

3.3 Incidents

All incidents of aggression or violence should be reported to management and recorded using Hackney Play Association's incident reporting procedures.

Employers have a responsibility to provide a safe working environment. Staff should report any current or potential situation at work which is a threat to personal safety. The management committee of Hackney Play Association takes threats to our staff and volunteers very seriously and will be disposed to provide follow up action or support as appropriate.

4. HOMEWORKING

When employees are carrying out work for Hackney Play Association at home all health and safety rules and guidance in this policy apply in the same way that they do in the workplace.

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that their home working environment and equipment used in the home is safe. A risk assessment in accordance with the guidance given in this policy should be carried out.

The employee will be asked to indemnify the organisation from damages caused by accidents in the home.

5. FIRE SAFETY

5.1 Fire Officer

Hackney Play Association's Fire Officer is currently Polly Strettell. The responsibilities of the Fire Officer are to:

- be instructed on potential fire hazards and the use of fire-fighting equipment
- to arrange the testing of fire alarms and fire drills
- ensure staff and volunteers at Hackney Play Association are aware of the fire alarm and fire drill.

The Senior Playworkers are responsible for carrying out fire drills and will arrange these to take place at regular intervals, reviewing the success or otherwise of the evacuation and making recommendations for improved practices.

It is not only the responsibility of the Fire Officers, but of all staff and volunteers working at Hackney Play Association's offices to be aware of fire hazards, to know the location of fire exits and

the assembly point. Everyone must know the fire drill instructions and these will be part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers.

Visitors and all staff, including volunteers, must be made fully familiar with the escape routes and Hackney Play Association's assembly points.

Access to escape doors, extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment must not be obstructed and the Fire Officer will be instructed on their use.

5.2 Fire Drill Procedure

If The Fire Alarm Sounds

- Evacuate the building immediately by the nearest exit
- Ensure any visitors leave the building
- Do not put yourself at risk
- Assemble in front of the building
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the Fire Officer or fire brigade confirm that it is safe to do so.

If You Discover A Fire

- Raise the alarm.
- Evacuate the building immediately as above.

6. HYGIENE

All areas must be kept clean and tidy. All staff are responsible for keeping the areas around their desks clean and tidy.

Toilets are washed regularly and kept clean. All wash basins are provided with hot water, soap, clean towels or hand dryers.

Food Hygiene training is available to staff as appropriate.

7. FIRST AID AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

7.1 First Aiders

Hackney Play Association offers paediatric first aid training to all playwork staff, as needed to ensure that at least one employee at each Hackney Play Association site is a qualified first aider.

The Senior Playworker for each HPA project will ensure that the first aid box is kept in the correct place, containing the items laid down in the Code of Practice and Guidance Notes published by the HSE and is regularly checked and restocked.

First Aid provision will be available at all times in an appropriate and accessible First Aid Box.

All new employees will be told as part of their induction of the location of first aid equipment and which employees are qualified first aiders.

A record of all first aid cases treated will be kept in the Accident Book, which will be kept with the First Aid Box.

All Staff are encouraged to undertake training in Paediatric First Aid provided by Hackney Play Association.

7.2 Accidents and Emergencies

All employees must report all incidents which resulted or nearly resulted in personal injury to themselves or others, to the Senior Playworker on site and make sure the accident is recorded in Hackney Play Association's accident reporting forms and filed in a filing cabinet in the office at Homerton Grove or Clapton Park, as appropriate. The Senior Playworker must report all serious accidents and incidents to the Director, so that these can be reported to the trustees.

The Senior Playworker will ensure that personal details of individual(s) will be stored separately from the Accident Book in a secure location to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Playworker to ensure that any necessary follow-up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident recurring.

The Senior Playworker is responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the London Borough of Islington Environmental Health Department. RIDDOR covers the following incidents:

- (a) fatal accidents
- (b) major injury accidents/conditions
- (c) dangerous occurrences
- (d) accidents causing more than 3 days incapacity from work
- (e) certain work-related diseases.

8. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (COSHH)

8.1 General Statement

Under the 1992 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations employers have a duty to make an assessment of the risks related to hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc.

The persons responsible for carrying out this assessment will be the Senior Playworkers at Homerton Grove and Clapton Park.

Following this assessment, in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) the Senior Playworkers will:

- In the first instance take action to remove any hazardous substances
- If this is not possible, action shall be taken to find a substitute for the hazardous substance

- If this is not possible, such substances shall be enclosed within a safe environment
- If none of the above is possible, protective equipment will be issued to ensure the safety of staff.

8.2 Monitoring

If for any reason a member of staff or volunteer has been exposed to a possibly hazardous substance, levels of exposure will be monitored.

At all times levels of ill-health related to exposure to hazardous substances at work will be monitored.

8.3 Removal, Substitution, enclosure and Protection

All members of staff shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available they should be used. If there is no way of avoiding such use (eg the use of cleaning materials or arts and crafts materials) staff must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment which shall be made available.

9. LIFTING AND HANDLING

The employees of Hackney Play Association should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, employees may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

Employees should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be taken apart or divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads.

Any employee feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in Hackney Play Association's accident books.

Hackney Play Association will offer manual handling training for staff as appropriate.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

10.1 Risk Assessment and Risk Benefit Assessment

The Management Committee will ensure that risk assessments for Hackney Play Association activities will be carried out by a competent person in accordance with the 1992 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the guidance set out in *Managing Risk in Play Provision: an implementation guide*. Risk assessments for significant risks will be written up, and be made available to all staff.

The written risk assessments will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they cover all employees and service users against significant risks, and to ensure that any action identified as needed in the risk assessment has been carried out. The risk assessments will also be updated every time that there is an accident or a major change in working practices. The risk assessments will cover all employees of Hackney Play Association, wherever they may be based.

Hackney Play Association staff training will include training in playwork and the use of dynamic risk benefit assessment to manage risk in play.

1. What is a Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment helps you protect your workers and everyone using your organisation. It helps you focus on the risks that really matter, the ones with potential to cause harm. A risk assessment is, as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describe: "a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people.... the aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill".

2. Carrying out a Benefit Risk Assessment:

Carrying out a risk assessment is a relatively straightforward process, simply a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, and what precautions need to be taken.

Step One – Identify the hazards

First walk around the workplace identifying anything that could be potentially hazardous - **write everything down - make a list**. It is a good idea to get two people to do this together. Try to think also about any people who might be particularly vulnerable, eg disabled children. For example, the kind of things you might identify as potential hazards include:

Gas boiler, electrical equipment, climbing frames, rope, swings, fire, slips and trips, a child getting lost on a trip, etc.

Step Two – identify who is at risk – who might be harmed and how

Identify who might be harmed – this could be staff, children, parents or students.

Identify how they could be harmed, eg head injury, fume inhalation, broken bones, falls.

Step Three – Consider the Benefits

This step is only necessary when considering play activities and equipment – there are no benefits to a serious hazard involving the gas boiler or the electrical equipment.

Benefits of activities and equipment could include: development of social skills, physical skills development (eg health, development, fitness, locomotor skills), intellectual development (learning through play), creative skills (use of imagination), emotional skills (learning to deal with fear, to assess risks, developing resilience).

Step Four – Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Consider 3 factors when evaluating whether or not the level of risk is acceptable or tolerable:

- The likelihood of coming to harm, ie the probability of a serious accident or injury
- The severity of that harm, ie whether there is a risk of death or serious injury
- The Benefits, rewards or outcomes of the activity

Write down any actions that are currently taken to minimise the risk (eg supervision, support and/or maintenance arrangements), safety equipment provided (eg impact absorbing surfaces such as sand, grass or mud).

Consider any modifications or adaptations that could be made to reduce the likelihood of serious accident or injury, whilst still enabling children and young people to enjoy their play. For example, this could include removing any hazards from the immediate area, providing additional supervision and instruction (eg helping children to use tools correctly), moving the play to a different location, or stopping the play and offering an alternative.

Write down the actions currently taken and those actions you propose to be taken, and write down who will take the action, by when.

Step Five – Record your findings

If you employ five people or more, the law requires you to record your findings. Ensure the written record of your findings is made available to staff, and that they co-operate with the carrying out of the recommendations made as a result of the assessment.

Step Six – Review

Review your assessment. You **must** review your assessment when there are major changes on site, such as the introduction of new equipment, or new ways of working - but you must carry out regular reviews anyway - possibly annually. If your original assessment was properly recorded the review should be a relatively simple job but be aware of changing working practices.

Dynamic Risk Benefit Assessment

Play provision is constantly changing as children and young people initiate and respond to play cues. Hackney Play Association provides training for staff and volunteers in dynamic risk benefit assessment to enable them to make judgements about managing risk in play provision in a fast moving play environment and to intervene appropriately in play if necessary.

11. FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

HPA Risk Benefit Assessment Form

Health and Safety Executive, www.hse.gov.uk

Play Safety Forum, www.playsafetyforum.wordpress.com

Managing Risk in Play Provision: a Position Statement (available from the Play Safety Forum website)

Managing Risk in Play Provision: an Implementation Guide (available from the Play Safety Forum website)

Play Safety Forum: Risk-Benefit Assessment Form (available from the Play Safety Forum website)